

Lou Ronson:

Life experiences forge human rights champion

By CYNTHIA GASNER
Special to The CJN

Lou Ronson, an elderly statesman of the community, has dedicated his life to human rights issues and fighting discrimination.

The seeds for his quest to eliminate prejudice and racism were sown when Ronson, 92, was a school-boy and he was himself the victim of anti-Semitism.

Ronson has served on numerous committees and organizations and was the driving force behind the creation of B'nai Brith Canada's Anti-Defamation

Celebrating those who make a difference First in an occasional series

League, later the League for Human Rights.

The Toronto-born son of Russian Jewish immigrants, he was born Louis Rosenblatt in 1915. He served as a commissioner on the Ontario Human Rights Commission in 1985 and served as vice-chair until 1991. At that time, the commission was located on the exact site where his parents

rented a flat when he was a child — on Simcoe Street, midway between Dundas and Queen streets.

When Ronson was 10, his family moved to Port Colborne, Ont., where he was enrolled in the local public school and where he encountered the anti-Semitism that played a major role in his lifelong determination to champion human rights.

"My first day at school, during recess, five kids came charging across the schoolyard, pointing to me and shouting, 'There's the new Jew.' And then I was attacked."

He was excluded from all social activities at the school, and he had only one friend, the only other Jewish boy at the school. This left an indelible mark on young Louis.

In 1927, the family moved back to Toronto. The 12-year-old entered Jarvis Collegiate, where he was once again shocked when all the Jewish students were in one class, known as "the Jewish

class."

"Soon I was to learn that anti-Semitic taunts and jibes by students, and even some teachers, were not beyond the norm."

He adds that Jewish students maintained their self-esteem by achieving the highest class averages for each of their five years at the school and receiving a major number of scholarships.

When Ronson applied to chemical engineering at the University of Toronto in 1932 — a time when Jewish students were faced with strict quotas — he was one of six Jewish students accepted into the course from across the country.

After graduation, he was once again faced with blatant anti-Jewish rejection. After searching for a position in his field for a year, the university graduate accepted a menial job at a dry cleaning plant.

In 1943, he enlisted in the army, and when he filled out the required forms, the enrolling officer, who knew him in civilian life, suggested that he change his name from Louis Rosenblatt. He became Lou Ronson.

After the war, Ronson returned to the dry cleaning industry and rose to the position of president and chief executive officer of Sunshine Uniform Supply Co. Ltd. After Sunshine merged with 12 other companies, he assumed the presidency of Work Wear Corporation in 1975. From 1982 until his retirement in 1987, he served as chairman of the board.

Motivated by his early experiences, Ronson says he created the mandate for his life that "regardless of gender, creed, colour, ethnic origin, ancestry, disability or sexual orientation, everyone should be treated with total respect and freedom from discrimination."



Lou Ronson

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Advertising E-mail: ads@cjnews.com

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Moroccan community marks 50 years in Toronto

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Moroccan Jews are celebrating 50 years since they began to settle in Toronto.

Some community leaders who have been here since the beginning are reflecting on how far they've come in such a short time.

Maurice Benzacar, who was one of the first Moroccans to make the move to Toronto reflected on how quickly the community flourished.

Benzacar came to Toronto from Casablanca in 1957, a year after Morocco, a country that had previously been under French rule, gained independence. He worked with the Jewish Immigrant Aid Services [JIAS] for more than 30 years as the director of settlement.

He said that while he helped many eastern

European Jews settle in Toronto, he also volunteered to greet Moroccans at the airport and helped them find accommodation and work.

Although Benzacar and JIAS offered services and aid to help the new Canadians settle into a life in a foreign country, something was missing.

"When we first arrived here, we didn't have a place to pray... We have different *minhag*, we have different customs, we have different melodies, and it was impossible to blend [into the existing Ashkenazi congregations]... They are Jews like us, but we were different," he said.

"In those days, in 1957, we used to gather at the YMHA at Spadina and Bloor," which is known today as the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre.

A year later, the Petah Tikvah Anshe Castilla Congregation was formed, but it wasn't until 1968 that the community raised enough money

to purchase a synagogue on Brunswick Avenue.

From the community's humble beginning at a JCC, the population of Moroccan Jews in Toronto, which Benzacar estimates is at about 1,100 families, now have plenty of choices.

Petah Tikvah, Magen David Sephardic Congregation, Tiferet Israel Congregation and the Sephardic Kehila Centre are just a few of the synagogues in the Greater Toronto Area that offer the same Sephardic customs the community grew up with in the Northern African country.

Rabbi Amram Assayag, the

chief rabbi of the Abir Yaakob congregation at the kehila centre, who came to Toronto from Tangier in 1968 soon after Israel's Six Day War, is also amazed at the community's accomplishments.

"People came here without any religious leadership, contrary to other communities that moved with their rabbis. This community came by themselves and a few people had the vision that there was something to safeguard, and they began a congregation some 50 years ago. There wasn't much hope for anything big. They were happy if they could just continue [praying] in [another



Rabbi Amram Assayag

shul's] basement," Rabbi Assayag said.

"They have a culture that many years ago we were told that we have no chance to maintain outside of the Sephardic lands, and today, it is not any different than it was in the Sephardic lands... Today, what they experience in Toronto, they never dreamed they could have."

Max Benaim, a Petah Tikvah board member and a Sephardi Jewish community volunteer, said that the Sephardi community wouldn't be as strong today if not for the success of the Petah Tikvah Youth Organization (PTYO).

that kept Moroccans united.

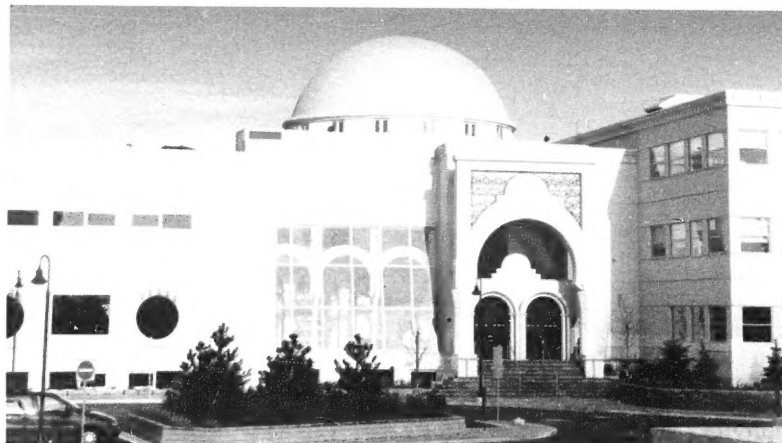
Benaim, who arrived in Toronto 43 years ago in 1964, began volunteering when he was only 15 years old. Soon after, he founded PTYO.

"In our community, in the Spanish-speaking community, it was like a brand name. Everybody knew the name, PTYO... It was the only Sephardic youth organization in the city. We used to do all kinds of social, educational and religious services. And out of that... close to 40 couples got married. That is quite an accomplishment," Benaim said.

"They got married, had children and grandchildren, and they always talk about PTYO and that brand name never disappeared. That's what I'm proud of."

Despite his disappointment that this organization no longer exists and that social programming for his children's generation isn't the focus it was when he was a teenager, Benaim said he is proud of the tight knit Moroccan community he helped build.

Continued on page 20



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Greater Toronto Area

Hatred's fellow-travellers

They share the same obsession with and loyalty to an ideology that crowns death and disparages life.

For them, alas, the dream of dismantling Israel has always trumped the dream of building Palestine.

Had the drive to sow and to build overtaken the drive to harm and to destroy, the ideologues might have somehow cast aside their hatred and found a way, these past 60 years, for the sake of

their own people, to reconcile with the idea of a sovereign Jewish state.

Co-existence would have surely led to prosperity. But prosperity has been only a fleeting chimera for the Palestinian people. Penury and poverty have been their primary way of life.

In the heady, but short-lived, post-Oslo days, there was a sense that prosperity was within their grasp. Business, commerce, agriculture and tourism expanded and joint ventures among Israelis, Palestinians and Jordanians were common place.

But it ended abruptly, a casualty too, of the terror that Yasser Arafat set loose upon the Jews and ultimately, upon his own people.

The Arabs of Israel, perhaps more than any other community in the Middle East, understand the horrible price their co-religionists in the West Bank and Gaza have paid for the duplicity of Palestinian leaders and for the opportunities those leaders have perpetually scorned in favour of the bloodlust dream of destroying the "occupying Zionist entity."

To be sure, Arab citizens of Israel face many unique challenges of identity and discrimination. But there is also no denying that they also benefit from the democracy that is Israeli society and the economy that spins from it.

According to a poll conducted in

the first week of December of some 514 Israeli Arabs over the age of 18 by Kevoon Research, Strategy & Communications, a Jerusalem-based public affairs company, "the overwhelmingly majority of Israeli Arabs would prefer to remain Israeli citizens rather than become citizens of a future Palestinian state."

Sixty-two per cent of Israeli Arabs said they would remain Israeli citizens rather than join a future Palestinian State. Only 14 per cent of the respondents said they would choose to join a future Palestinian state; 24 per cent did not express an opinion or refused to answer.

The strongest support for retaining Israeli citizenship was expressed by members of the Druze community, 84 per cent of whom said they would choose Israel.

According to the results, lower income households also showed strong support for holding on to Israeli citizenship with 71 per cent choosing to do so.

Men were more likely than women to choose to remain Israeli citizens (67 per cent vs. 56 per cent). Not surprisingly, the strongest support for becoming citizens of a future Palestinian state was among the students with 21 per cent preferring the Palestinian card of citizenship.

The margin of error in the poll results was 4.5 per cent.

More information on the poll results, can be obtained by emailing the organization at: research@keevon.com

These results are not surprising to anyone familiar with the truth of the way in which the Palestinian people have been led since the Jews embarked upon their own nation-building enterprise trying to live peacefully and to common benefit alongside their Arab neighbours.

MBD

From the editor's desk

If news, commentary and punditry were midwives, we could expect the newborn year which they bring to our homes this week to be a bleak child indeed.

I write these words four days before the calendar changes.

The brutal slaying of Benazir Bhutto and some two dozen of her supporters has just been announced. No one has claimed "credit" for the slaughter, but speculation has fallen on the usual suspects, of which there are no shortages - al-Qaeda and a cadre of extremists in the military, to name but two - all of whom share this one bone-chilling trait: they are utterly indifferent to and contemptuous of the sanctity of human life, any human life and all human life, even that of their co-religionists. Wanton killing is both ends and means to them.

Human life is subordinate to ideology. It is a relationship between cause and effect that is the exact obverse of that which underpins our values and our society. We believe human life is served by ideology.

We must shudder at and take direct, hard notice of the Bhutto assassination. We undermine our own country and our own values if we merely shrug at the killings. In every real and immediate sense, the killers are our enemies.

The instability that the Bhutto's assassination will bring to Pakistan was probably intended to affect Afghanistan as well to boost the fortunes of the Taliban and their confederates against the forces of the unbelievers. Canadian troops and their NATO allies are now at greater risk.

It is no exaggeration to say that our soldiers are defending us even as they defend ordinary Afghans trying to cement for them the conditions for safe, stable, secure day-to-day living.

Bhutto's killers are fellow-travellers with the Islamist extremists who daily plot the demise of the Jewish state.

SeeJN



WAVY WELCOMING COMMITTEE

A number of girls wave flags as they greet new immigrants to Israel from North America upon their arrival at Ben-Gurion International Airport last week.

[Reuters/RNS photo]

Greater Toronto Area

CJC condemns act of anti-Semitism

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

A residence in York Region was tagged with graffiti in the form of a swastika, and a car in the driveway was set on fire, police confirmed last month.

The Dec. 18 incident took place at 185 Royal Orchard Blvd. and echoed a rash of anti-Semitic incidents in the region this past October, when nine vehicles parked in front of six homes were painted with swastikas and anti-Semitic and anti-gay insults.

Sgt. Tony Brown of York Regional Police's diversity and cultural services office told *The C.J.N.* the attack is being investigated as a hate crime, but as of Dec. 19, it was being treated as a stand-alone incident.

The swastika was sprayed on the garage door, but Brown said the home was not a Jewish one.

"It's a crime and we'll investigate it to see what charges will be laid," Brown said. "We'll treat it as an individual [hate crime] until and if we have something more to connect it with [the crimes from October.]. But right now it's just one incident."

Canadian Jewish Congress condemned the attack.

"While we don't yet know the motivation behind this act of violence, the presence of a swastika is always upsetting and of great concern to our community, regardless of whose house it's painted on," said Wendy Lampert, Congress' new national director of community relations.

"In a place where tolerance and openness are values we hold dear... it's something we feel needs to be properly investigated and we're confident that [York Regional Police's] investigation will continue and they will lay the appropriate charges once the perpetrators are found."

Bagel Haven, Golden Chopsticks now under COR supervision

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Bagel Haven, a dairy bagel restaurant, and Golden Chopsticks Chinese restaurant, both located at Bathurst Street and Steeles Avenue West, are now receiving their kosher certification from the Kashruth Council of Canada (COR).

Both restaurants had been previously supervised by Rabbi Moshe Levy, who operates Mehadrin Kosher.

Michelle Nefsky, who owns Bagel Haven with her husband, Malcolm, said the restaurant had been supervised by Mehadrin since February 2006, and added that she commends Rabbi Levy for his service to the community.

When they were seeking supervision for their restaurant last winter, she said, COR had asked for things that were not realistic, such as having a shomer Shabbat partner and serving cholov Yisroel dairy products.

"Rabbi Levy accepted us for who we are, and he asked how he could help make our dream of running a kosher restaurant a reality."

"We were not trying to make a statement [by not going with COR.] Rabbi Levy followed things that we believe in. We felt [at the time] that COR did not represent the whole community, only the Orthodox. We supported a community supervision but thought it should include everyone."

In recent months, however, COR released a community message from rabbis Mordechai Levin, executive director; Yacov Felder, vice-chair; and Sholom Adler, kashruth administrator, that announced that COR is making changes to policies and practices "with our new vision in mind - a vision of consistency and transparency."



They said that a shomer Shabbat partner is no longer a requirement and a restaurant that does not cater outside is not required to use or serve cholov Yisroel. Adequate signage is necessary to inform consumers that this location is not cholov Yisroel.

Nefsky said they switched to COR only because they needed their business promoted in a way that Rabbi Levy was not able to provide. "We also needed a hechsher that was acceptable to the whole community."

"I always stress that Rabbi Levy did us a great service, and he was a catalyst for change. The only problem was that not enough people knew what he stood for and believed in."

Rabbi Levy said in a telephone interview that the benefit of running a small business is that he is able to supervise his establishments personally. "My business has nothing to do with making money. I want to make it easier for more people to keep kosher."

He cannot understand, he said, why anyone "would be bothered" by his *hashgachah*. "People do not become confused [from having options.] Those who are serious about keeping kosher can check me out and see that I am 100 per cent kosher."



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Greater Toronto Area

Reform leader wants to reclaim Shabbat services

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

When Elliott Jacobson attended his first biennial convention of the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) in 1993, worship services had much more English, far fewer kipot and talitot, and much less music, he recalls.

Jacobson, now president of the Canadian for Reform Judaism (CCRJ), told *The CJN* that this year's biennial, held Dec. 11 to 16 in San Diego, had services that were "basically Hebrew," with "very inclusive" music. "There is less performance and more worshipping together."

The changes he noted are reflective of some of the larger issues that were discussed at the convention.

Rabbi Eric Yoffie, president of the URJ, in a Saturday sermon at the biennial, urged Reform Jews to revive Shabbat observance. The Shabbat morning service has been appropriated by bar and bat mitzvah families, with the focus more on the child than the community, he said.

Rabbi Michael Dolgin of Temple Sinai, which had the largest delegation of any congregation in North America with some two dozen people, said that Canadian congrega-

tions have a larger participation Saturday morning than Friday night, but that Rabbi Yoffie's comments still resonate here.

At Temple Sinai, which has already begun a monthly initiative to bring in more people on Shabbat morning by offering study and enrichment, Rabbi Yoffie's ideas "will strengthen something that we've already brought into."



Rabbi Michael Dolgin

Rabbi Dolgin expressed his pleasure at related changes in the Reform movement. "It's wonderful to see that prayer has become a central part of Reform congregations. Where once people looked forward to the [biennial] sessions, now they look forward to the davening."

Although Canadian delegates, numbering about 110, made up a small proportion of the 5,000 attendees, issues such as membership recruitment and retention and finding ways to reach out to men — who, according to *JTA*, are less active in non-Orthodox synagogues than women — are big issues here as well as in the United States, said Rabbi Sharon Sobel, executive director of the CCRJ, which represents 26 congregations. There are more than 800 Reform congregations in the United States.

"It's our job to show we can enrich [members'] lives," Rabbi Sobel said, referring to social, educational and spiritual

aspects of congregational life.

Interestingly, services at the biennial used ideas borrowed from evangelical megachurches, a trend championed by Ron Wolfson, co-founder of Synagogue 3000, a Los Angeles-based organization dedicated to synagogue revitalization.

The ideas included music-driven services, new technologies, and a warm, welcoming atmosphere.

With the help of large screens, participants "never feel like they're far removed from the people leading the service," said Rabbi Sobel.

Rabbi Yoffie's speech also called for greater support for Israel and more dialogue with Muslims through the Islamic Society of North America, an initiative in which Mississauga's Solel Congregation is involved.

One issue that is particular to the Canadian Reform movement is the size of the country. "We are the largest [geographic] region, but the smallest in number of congregations," said Rabbi Sobel. Most of those congregations are in Toronto, or within driving distance of it.

"How do we connect our Reform congregations to each other and to Toronto so they don't feel we're so Toronto-centric?" she asked. She believes an event like the biennial is one opportunity to address that issue by bringing representatives of far-flung congregations, including some in Vancouver, Calgary and Winnipeg, together.

The next biennial, in 2009, will be held in Toronto.

With files from JTA



THE MODERN MACCABI: Nearly 50 students gathered last month at The House — an upper-level storefront that offers programs for Jewish young people — for an interactive lecture by Ami Ayalon (centre), an Israeli cabinet minister and former commander of the Shin Bet, Israel's security service. During the lecture, which was also sponsored by Hillel of Greater Toronto, Ayalon shared stories about his experiences in the Shin Bet and spoke about his vision of Israel's future.

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JIAS Toronto celebrates 85 years

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

JIAS Toronto celebrated its 85th anniversary last month with a concert at Leah Posluns Theatre featuring the talents of former JIAS clients.

Called A Journey Around the World Through Music and the Arts, the concert featured a wide variety of entertainment, including traditional Jewish melodies, contemporary Hebrew songs, jazz, classical music, ancient Ladino tunes, martial arts and ballroom dancing.

Joanna Sasson Morrison, who is responsible for community integration at JIAS, said that in planning its anniversary event, the organization wanted to do something that "acknowledged the immigrants' arrival in a way that the story would come from them."

The concert also included video clips of immigrants and culminated with the premiere of the agency's new video, *One Community for All: The Heritage of JIAS Toronto*.



Seen performing at the JIAS concert are sister and brother, Julia and Alexander Mirzoev, while father, Mikhail, turns the pages for his son.

On display in the lobby was a photographic exhibit prepared by four teens who participate in JIAS's youth group.

Janis Roth, JIAS executive director, said that the exhibit portrayed the teens views on beginning a new life. "Showed from the 'I' point of view, the pictures tell a story of what it means to re-establish themselves.

"One teen had a picture of a gazelle climbing a mountain, and said that being an immigrant is like climbing a mountain."

It is significant, Roth said, that everyone who took part in the evening, produced by David Waldman, spent a lot of time at rehearsals. "They are busy looking for work and getting settled [in their new homes] but they found the time to help make our evening a success. They put a lot of themselves into it. David, who also volunteered his time, had a vision of the event, and he met with the entertainers. It was wonderful."

A message that came out over and over, Roth said, was that JIAS has always been the gateway to immigration. "It is there to greet and assist, and it was obvious from the energy in the room that its tradition of caring and support is still very strong."

In the commemorative journal distributed to all guests, Jane Katkova, who came to Canada in 1992, said, "Immigration is never easy. You don't know how to connect to this new world. You're surrounded by different trees, driving on unknown streets, seeing unfamiliar faces. You need a place to seek advice and a smile. That's what JIAS does."

Roth said that JIAS's role has changed over the years. "Eighty-five years ago, its role was all about settlement - assisting with food and shelter. The focus now is getting people connected with the community. Without that, we would have a disengaged, unaffiliated group. If we offer more when they arrive, the [community] benefits."

Sharon Cohen, president of JIAS Toronto, said in the commemorative journal that the immigrants themselves have also changed over the years. "Most of today's immigrants have

applied as skilled workers, and are generally well educated, compared with the previous waves of immigrants, many of whom were refugees arriving under duress."

Roth said that although a lot of people prepare for their immigration ahead of time, when they arrive it is still a huge shock. "That is why our help is so important."

"[We have found] that recently, immigrants are determined early on to become part of the community. They have expectations, and assume that the Jewish community has programs for their family."

Roth said that one of "my great JIAS" moments was when one of the settlement workers in the office who is from Mexico spoke to an immigrant couple in fluent Yiddish. "They needed to find a common language, and Yiddish was it."

Sasson Morrison said that JIAS encourages immigrants to maintain their own culture while, at the same time, crossing over to the community at large. "The focus is about becoming part of a bigger community that has respect and place for everyone."

Past president Vickie Dombrowsky said in the commemorative journal that immigration is essential. "As the baby boom generation ages and birth numbers dwindle, immigration within all communities is important to build a stronger Canadian society. The established Jewish community must recognize how vital newcomers are to their own survival - and must learn to accept them and include them in their own lives."

"In the video, there were three families celebrating Shabbat, each in their own way," Sasson Morrison said. "One Shabbat can be reflected in three ways."

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Hudna hoodwink

At the start of the cabinet meeting on December 23, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert declared "Counter-terrorist operations [in Gaza] will continue as they have for months. There is no other way to describe what is happening in the Gaza Strip except as a true war between the IDF and terrorist elements. This war will continue even as we take strict care, as we have up to now, to avoid a humanitarian crisis which could harm civilians who are uninvolved in terrorism."

The week before Olmert's statement in the cabinet, the IDF struck down the head of the Islamic Jihad in the Gaza Strip and one of his key associates. Some 10 other Jihadist operatives were also killed by the Israeli army.

Last week the IDF struck against the leadership of the terror infrastructure in Gaza, killing eight terrorists, including the head of rocket and explosive manufacturing for Islamic Jihad in Gaza.

It is clear that the Israeli security services are penetrating the highest echelons of the Gaza's extremist military apparatus. And those who dwell within those echelons are obviously worried. The military and economic pressure on Hamas are having an effect.

How else to explain the message to Israel by Gaza's Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh, conveyed to a television reporter, that Hamas is ready to enter into a *hudna*, a temporary ceasefire, with Israel. Haniyeh's spokesman, Taher Nunu, elaborated: "Israel should stop its attacks and siege," Nunu said. "Then a truce would be possible, and not unlikely."

But the request for a *hudna* should be rejected.

Later this month, Hamas will commemorate the second anniversary of its electoral victory over the Palestinian Authority led by Mahmoud Abbas. They are very obviously intent on being able to show their people and a wider extremist, rejectionist Islamic public that they have successfully withstood both Israeli and international pressure. Israel should resist giving the radical movement more reason to celebrate by agreeing to a *hudna*.

Now that the military and economic measures appear to be bending Hamas resolve, those measures should not be lessened or lifted.

At that same cabinet meeting on December 23, Olmert told his colleagues that "this policy [of counter-terrorism in Gaza] requires both patience and fortitude. The State of Israel has no interest in negotiating with elements that do not accept the Quartet's basic principles. Thus we have declared and thus we will continue. This is true regarding Hamas, Islamic Jihad and all other elements. Whoever accepts the Quartet principles will be—in principle—a partner for negotiations. Whoever is unwilling to do so, to our regret, cannot be a partner for dialogue. This policy will not change."

A *hudna* may achieve a temporary respite but at the cost of greater killing down the road. If Hamas will not agree to live side by side with Israel, they should not be afforded the opportunity to broaden their arsenal and make more deadly their weapons under the guise of a *hudna*. It is simply a form of hoodwink.

25 years ago in The CJN

Controversy raged in the Jewish community about reaction to the Sabra/Shatila massacre. Debate centred on whether Jews in the Diaspora have the right to publicly criticize Israel at all, and what tone that criticism should take. Three Boston rabbis formed themselves into a *beit din*, and excommunicated several rabbis and academics, including well-known dissident Noah Chomsky, a professor at MIT, who placed a virulently anti-Israel ad in the *New York Times*.

Editorials & Letters

Dry Bones MEOW!



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B'nai Brith 'battle'

The "battle" that you refer to in "Battle Brewing at B'nai Brith Canada" (CJN, Dec. 6) is an internal matter that has been settled by B'nai Brith International's 164 year old Court of Appeals system, as mandated by the B'nai Brith constitution.

B'nai Brith International fully endorses B'nai Brith Canada's leadership, both volunteer and professional, and commends the organization for its outstanding work in combating anti-Semitism and racism, and for its superb government relations, pro-Israel advocacy and its affordable housing and community volunteer service programs. B'nai Brith Canada is a valued member of the B'nai Brith International family.

B'nai Brith continues to play a vital role in ensuring the welfare of Canada's Jewish community and the global Jewish community. The appeals process provided a forum for B'nai Brith members to express their concerns. The process, which has served our organization well since 1843, has now run its course. We stand by the decision and look forward to getting back to our good works.

Dennis W. Glick
Chair of the Executive
B'nai Brith International



'Sanitized' language in The CJN

Almost weekly I receive a request from Honest Reporting Canada or the Media Action Group to write a letter to the CBC or the *Globe and Mail*, *Toronto Star* or other Canadian media outlets to protest their anti-Israel bias, often reflected by their use of "sanitized" language when describing terrorist attacks and how they bend over backward to avoid using the word "terrorist," and instead call Hamas, or Islamic Jihad, "militants" or "insurgents," etc.

So I was very disturbed to read in *The CJN's* Dec. 20 front-page story, "Sderot endures Qassam rocket strikes," a horrific description of the impact of the bombardment of Sderot, "by an almost daily barrage of Qassam rockets fired by Palestinian militants in Gaza." Later in the same piece, we read that since the start of the second intifadah, these "gunmen" have fired nearly 6,000 Qassams and mortars at Sderot.

If our own Jewish media and journalists are guilty of using such euphemisms for the word "terrorist" in their writing, how can we expect anything more from the CBC or other Canadian newspapers?

Marilyn Kraft
Toronto

LET THEM GO...

Rón Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman,
Ehud Goldwasser, Guy Hever,
Yehuda Katz, Eldad Regev, Gilad Shalit

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info@cjnews.com

From She'arim's child study team

We, the child study team at She'arim Hebrew Day School, are very concerned about the future of Jewish education for Toronto's special education students ("She'arim parents fear school will close if funding ends," CJN, Dec. 20).

For the past 26 years, She'arim has provided its hundreds of students and graduates with the tools, strategies and academic and emotional support needed to be successful. Our graduates have moved on to secondary and post-secondary education and fulfilling careers.

We use various therapies and techniques in our small classes (a maximum of nine students). She'arim sees itself working with the whole child. Our students develop self-esteem and a love of learning.

The possibility for our students to remain within the Jewish education system is a responsibility of the community. Without a setting like

She'arim, we believe our students will be denied the chance of a Jewish education.

Shelley Allen, Alan Bardikoff, Andy Goldberg, Aaron Lightstone, Alisha Marks, Doris Wexler, Tami Zimmer
She'arim Hebrew Day School
Toronto

From a former She'arim student

I'm currently in Grade 12 and planning on going to York University when I graduate. She'arim Hebrew Day School is responsible for my ability to succeed at TanenbaumCHAT ("She'arim parents fear school will close if funding ends," CJN, Dec. 20).

I spent four years at She'arim, where I learned the necessary strategies to get the high marks I'm currently achieving. When I heard that She'arim might close next year, I was very upset. Why should the students who can't function in mainstream day schools not have the opportunity for a proper Jewish education? I can assure you that had I not gone to She'arim, I probably wouldn't be completing my day school education.

I hope that Mercatz (formerly the Board of Jewish Education) doesn't decide to close She'arim down. You may not end up knowing if your child needs to go there until it's too late.

Zachary Perlmutter
Toronto

Perspectives

Nu? Aren't there enough Yiddishisms already?

By HOWARD RICHLER

While some languages such as French treasure chastity, the bawdy English language tends to sleep with whomever it finds most attractive. Since the 20th century, one of its most common bedmates has been Yiddish, and, as a result, countless Yiddishisms, such as "bagel" and "kibbitz" now pepper the mainstream vernacular. (I am defining Yiddishism as a linguistic feature influenced or derived from Yiddish. Many words that are deemed Yiddishisms actually derive from Hebrew, and occasionally from Slavic languages.)

Yiddishisms probably came of age in North America more than 75 years ago because of the dual influence of Borscht Belt comedians such as Myron Cohen, George Burns and Milton Berle, and Jewish producers and directors in Hollywood.

Sometimes Yiddishisms even popped up in mainstream humour. Most children watching the Three Stooges, who were popular between the mid-1930s and mid-1950s, probably didn't realize it, but a grasp of Yiddish was required for a full understanding of many of their jokes. In one episode, when Larry hears that Moe is heading to a hock-shop, he says, "While you're there, hock me a *tshaynik*!" What must have sounded like pure nonsense to most viewers was in fact a Yiddish pun. A *tshaynik* is a teakettle, and *hak*, (or *huk*), comes from a verb meaning "to knock."

The connection comes from reflecting on a boiling teakettle. The more it boils, the emptier it gets, and the louder and more mad-deningly the lid bangs. The very popular phrase "*Hak mir nisht kein cheinik*" literally means "Don't knock me a teakettle." Figuratively, however, it means, "You don't have to shut up altogether, but I'd really appreciate it if you'd stop prattling on incessantly."

So by the 1960s, when Johnny Carson used to describe his accountant as H. & R. Goniñ, he knew that would get a laugh, and not just from a Jewish audience.

Still, as a Jewish person living in Canada, I am surprised by the plethora of Yiddish usage. In 1997, I started to notice a plot to "Yinglishize" my mother tongue by members outside

my tribe. That year, I phoned then-Montreal *Gazette* books editor Bryan Demchinsky, who is of Ukrainian descent, to see if he had received a book I wanted to review. The book in question was titled *The Bible Code*, and it purported some *narishkayt* that there were coded messages hidden inside the Torah that predicted events such as the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City on April 19, 1995 and the assassination of Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin on Nov. 4, 1995.

Demchinsky told me he had perused the book, and that in his opinion, "it looked like a bunch of *druck*." This astounded me, but not because I held a contrary view of the book. No! What stunned me was the editor's knowledge of the word *druck*.

I then noted this phenomenon had become common among other *Gazette* staffers. On Aug. 21, 1999, columnist Don MacPherson wrote "Perhaps [then-] Quebec Premier Lucien Bouchard was just trying to avoid unnecessary *turris* at the next meeting of the Parti Québécois-national council."

I soon realized the ubiquity of Yinglish. Some years ago, I caught the following written by Elizabeth Renzetti in the *Globe and Mail*: "I know that he was once fat, on the precipice of obese, and dreading sailing off into the floaty stage, the point at which the *zafitig* give up all fashion sense and begin dressing like Mama Cass." Around the same time Maureen Dowd stated in the *New York Times* that U.S. Vice-President Dick Cheney and his aides "shoehorned all their *meshugas* about Saddam's aluminum tubes, weapons labs and al Qaeda links into [then secretary of state Colin] Powell's UN speech."

The Feb. 21, 2005, edition of *Time* magazine featured this line by J.F.O. McAllister on the then-upcoming marriage of Prince Charles and Camilla Parker Bowles. "Last week there were a few signs of apathy in the sea of *schmaltz* about enduring love." Also in 2005, Liam Lacey reviewed the movie *Prime* in the *Globe & Mail*. It was headlined "What a *shemozzle*" and Lacey painted Meryl Streep as a stereotypical Jewish mother: "She *kvetches*, *plotzes*, gets *verklemp* and all those other Yiddish things."

Given the tendency in the media, I was not too surprised in 1998 when then-U.S. president Bill Clinton referred to then-treasury secretary Robert Rubin as using a "sort of cold *shick* when he talks economics."

But now, even quintessential Wasps such as Stephen Harper have jumped on the *shickwag-*

on. In June 2007, when asked whether he'd follow Paul Martin's example as leader and have a private meeting with U2's Bono, he announced that "it's not my *shick* to talk to rock stars."

Of course, many times Yinglish isn't so much used as it's misused. This is often rather



Great Yiddish and Hebrew writers, from left, Mendeley Sforim, Sholem Aleichem, Mordecai (Rabbinowicz) Ben-Ammi and Hayyim Nahman Bialik in Odessa, circa 1910. Their works helped bring the Yiddish language into the consciousness of Jewish life in North America. [Photo from the YIVO archive]

amusing, because not every Yinglish term rolls off every Gentile tongue with panache.

In an episode of his short-lived 1998 sitcom *George & Leo*, Bob Newhart pronounces his pal a *smuck*. When I was in business some years ago, I remember once *kibbitzing* with a secretary named Anna, who was of Italian and Yugoslavian heritage. In response to a joke I related, she responded, "Howie, you're such a *shmuck*." I gave her a chance to recant and asked if she really wanted to call me a *shmuck*, and she timidly replied, "Doesn't it mean joker?"

Around the same time, I had a black customer in Brooklyn who, when he was under a lot of pressure, was prone to saying "I'm *shivitz-ing*."

Some years ago, before the Canadian Alliance Party had been created, then-Reform Party backbench MP Lee Morrison, from Saskatchewan, wanted to refer to then-human resources minister Jane Stewart's gall. But I guess he felt that the word "gall" wasn't strong enough, so he said, "You got to admire the *jutsper* of the minister of Human Resources." Parliament realized a travesty had been committed on the Yiddish language and convulsed in laughter.

Then-Liberal MP Herb Gray, who happens to be Jewish, responded that he had two words to describe Morrison's question: "*Gornisht* and absolute *narishkayt*." This again less the distinguished members, notwithstanding the fact hardly anybody understood what Gray had said. This caused then-Speaker Gib Parent to pitch in with, "Order please. I have no way of knowing whether these words are unparliamentary."

But why are there so many Yinglish terms in English? While certain words, such as *naches* were absorbed into English because they introduce a new concept, there are many Yinglish

terms that aren't really needed. For example, English has many derogatory words for people, but *shlemiel*, *shlemazel*, *shmegeggy*, *shmendrick*, *shmo*, *shmuck*, *shlub*, *shlump*, *shnook*, *shvartzer*, *putz*, *pisher*, *nudnik*, *noodge*, *nebbish*, *meshugene*, *klutz* and *kvetch* roll off non-Jewish tongues with glee. Sprinkling one's English with

Yiddishisms seems to be considered hip, particularly in North America.

Nor are we talking only about vocabulary. The speech patterns of Montreal Jews contain many Yiddish characteristics, and sometimes they even affect our grammar. My daughter, Jennifer, was apprised of her sub-standard English during her first year at Yale University. Jennifer was enjoying a nosh with her dorm mates, some of whom were Jewish, when she exclaimed, "This cake is so good! You want?" This generosity was greeted with consternation by her roommates. Notwithstanding that Jennifer was majoring at the time in linguistics, she was informed by her peers that this sentence didn't correspond to the elementary grammar that had been drummed into them over the past 15 years. After all, it lacked a direct object.

This conversational style, though, is quite common among Montreal anglophones who are Jewish. If asked by someone whether a particular object is available in Montreal, a Jewish person might answer, "You could find." If asked whether dessert is included in the price of a meal, the answer might be, "It comes with." This lack of a direct object follows the grammatical structure of the Yiddish expression, "*Es kumt mit*."

In addition, it's common to respond to a question with another question, which is often peppered with an implied or stated complaint. Hence the seemingly innocuous question, "How are you?" could elicit, "How should I be with my knees?"

It's difficult to transcend roots. In my aforementioned years in business, I had a non-Jewish business associate from Massachusetts with whom I became quite friendly, and we would regularly shoot the breeze over the phone.

Often, in response to some wry comment he made, I answered him by saying "Go know!" After years of using this expression, finally he said to me one day, in an exasperated tone, "Howie, you keep saying, 'Go know' to me. What the hell do you mean?"

I was surprised that he didn't know what I meant, so when I got home, I checked in my *Joy's of Yiddish* by Leo Rosten. Under the heading "Go Know," it stated, "Yinglish. From the Yiddish expression '*Gey vays*' (meaning, 'go know')." It said the expression could mean "How could I know?", "How could you expect me to know?" or "How could anyone know?" Probably if I had said "Go figure," my friend would have known what I meant.

Go know?

Howard Richler is a Montreal-area author and columnist. His latest book *Can I Have a Word With You?* was published in November.

Opinions

Getting there isn't any fun

Travel used to be fun for me. It no longer is.

Going to unfamiliar places, seeing new sites and embracing new experiences still is. But getting there is not.



Norma Baumele Joseph in Montreal

I have travelled a great deal lately, especially between Montreal and New York. I would rather drive than fly. How do business travellers manage with all these hassles?

Security means arriving at the airport earlier. No complaints if it's necessary, but it adds hardships. I especially dislike taking off my shoes and walking barefoot on dirty floors. But that is the least of the problems. Long lines are to be expected.

But what about the cancellations? Yesterday, my son was told that his flight was cancelled due to bad weather. Well, what can you do about that, right? But the call came on Wednesday for a Thursday flight! How did they know on Wednesday morning that Thursday night there would be bad weather? No weather report I've ever heard is that reliable.

Airlines often cancel if they don't have a full plane or some such thing. So due to "weather" or the ever-present "mechanical problem," we are often left scrambling for new flights.

My son tried for a refund. Three calls told him absolutely no refund. Then a fourth agent produced a 100 per cent refund! Go figure.

The hassle of it all — long lines, perverse connections and harried agents — all make for an unpleasant experience.

Stress!

Airports are all about rushing in order to wait. Hurry up, get in line, wait — that describes much of what goes on. Walk for miles, run and then get in another line and wait.

But one of the most perplexing aspects of airline travel is the cost of tickets. I firmly believe that each seat on a plane has a different price tag. Next time you travel, ask your seat mate what they paid.

When my husband and I flew to Toronto, we had to return earlier than planned. There was no cost to change his ticket. But my seat, right next to his, booked at the same time, paid for at the same time, on the same credit card (you get the picture), was of a different class and couldn't be changed!

Prices fluctuate. Recent trips to New York have varied from less than \$400 to more than \$1,000. Week to week. One week the proposed flight would have taken me to Florida or Calgary first! I was able to fly to New York via Ottawa and Florida for less than the cost of a round-trip Montreal-to-New York fare.

And some carriers cost much more than others.

Surely some form of regulation or stabilization is called for. At the very least, it's buyer, beware, and remember that travel agents can ease the situation.

Travel is enriching and often necessary. But getting there is no fun. Pity!

Teaching Christians how we Jews fish

From time to time, our synagogue hosts visiting church groups who want to learn about Judaism. Sometimes they come during the week and take a tour of the shul and look at items in our Judaica museum. Often we take out the Torah so that they can see the form of the scroll. We tell them about the services and the way a scroll is written, and about how we chant the weekly or special portions.

Sometimes they come on Shabbat, wanting to experience the actual worship service. Since our service is in Hebrew, we have devised a way they can participate in part of the morning service, including the Torah reading, and then go with a congregant to get further explanation and ask questions. Then they join the congregation for the rabbi's teaching before the kiddush, which they are invited to share with us.

Recently, a Danish Lutheran church group arranged for a Shabbat visit. They came wanting answers to three questions. The questions were well chosen. They caused us to consider our own beliefs and practices in light of how we explain them to non-Jews who are deeply committed to their own faith.

The questions they wanted discussed were: how does Judaism affect daily life; how do we celebrate Shabbat; and what makes something holy (or not)?

The group attended our Shabbat morning

service, coincidentally on the Shabbat of Chanukah. Thus they got a forceful impression of the service—one that included *Hallel*, which, although in Hebrew, they did enjoy — of course the liberal use of the word "halallelah" gave them some idea of what was going on. They remained in the service for part of the Torah reading, which continued the Joseph saga — a familiar story to all — and then adjourned for a discussion of the issues that their questions had raised.

Shabbat rules are simple to explain in theory — the minutiae were left as an exercise, as we used to say, to the reader. It seemed more important to stress Shabbat as a time for reflection, for concentration on study and prayer.

But how does Judaism affect daily life? Where to begin? We gave them examples taken from a variety of commandments — after explaining that a "mitzvah" is not merely a good deed done when the spirit moves, but something incumbent on us whether it's convenient or not.

We stressed that in Judaism there is no firm boundary between the daily and the sacred. For example, one should not open a business close to a similar one if it will detract from the original business. One must give charity, the highest standard being the act of freeing the recipient from the need to accept charity. In other words, don't hand out fish —

teach the person how to catch a fish.

We talked about speech, and the critical importance attached to words and how they can destroy or create. They learned the form of a brachah whereby we imply that God is present in the act we are about to perform.

But the hardest part was defining what, in Judaism, is, or makes, something holy. Christianity has sacraments that invest human acts with sanctity — marriage, baptism, communion. We have no such sacramental tradition. So how to explain our approach to the transcendent?

Martin Buber taught that in Judaism the division is between the holy and the not-yet-holy. Everything can be holy if its potential for holiness is realized. Our role is to bring God into the world, to make the ordinary become holy through our actions.

Thus it is not through a particular sacrament that holiness enters the world, but through the actions of humankind. And, unfortunately, what mankind defiles through action or through word takes holiness out of the world.

For centuries, Christianity saw Judaism as a barren, rule-bound, law-encumbered religion inferior to the New Covenant of love. It is my hope that this brief encounter with us as a living people taught the visiting church group that Judaism is a vital religion of word and deed, and that both Jew and Christian have beliefs that, translated into action, can repair the broken world we live in, and make the not-yet-holy a place of sanctity for all.



Jean M. Gerber in Vancouver

Religious accommodation

In Canada, issues have arisen that challenge the relationship between religious and secular society, and raise questions about the nature of Canadian multiculturalism. While these issues reinforce the importance of protecting minority religious rights, in some cases they demonstrate how, for some, assertions of religious freedom can lead to dysfunctional consequences.

Recently, the notion of reasonable accommodation came to public attention in the province of Quebec as a societal response to issues of minority religious assertions. In one example, chassidic Jews objected to the public visibility of women exercising in a fitness facility. In response to religious sensibilities, the facility voluntarily covered its windows.

As in this case, most of the instances that have given rise to the discussion of reasonable accommodation have been settled through voluntary measures. However, some issues need to be resolved through the courts. For example, the objection raised by Hutterites in Alberta to mandatory photographs on drivers' licences will shortly be heard by the Supreme Court of Canada.

In response to this debate, the Quebec government created the ill-conceived Bouchard/Taylor Commission on reasonable accommodation. The commission has recently completed its hearings and will be reporting in March 2008. The work of the commission, however, has led to two unfortunate consequences.

First, it conducted some of its hearings through a series of "town hall" meetings that, like radio phone-in shows, encouraged participants to vent

bigoted views without restraint. Many of those views reflected anti-immigration attitudes akin to those in the now-famous Herouxville code of conduct for newcomers.

Secondly, the proposals made in response to the commission by some Quebec political parties raise some concerns. For example, the Quebec government has proposed and has begun the process of amending the Quebec Charter of Rights granting primacy of one right over another. More specifically, it will create a hierarchy of rights, giving priority to gender equality over freedom of religion. Some Jewish organizations have opposed this measure.

In addition, the Quebec Liberal party proposed that, as part of the immigration process, newcomers be required to sign a "moral commitment" to the province's core values.

Most recently, the Parti Québécois has suggested that the Quebec Charter of Rights be amended to permit the courts to protect and promote Quebec culture. It also advocates the promotion of Christian tradition by the display of symbols, like the crucifix, in state institutions.

Ironically, rather than developing a legal formula to deal with issues of reasonable accommodation, the commission's work to date promotes majoritarian values and predictably will result in diminished accommodation for minority religious beliefs and practices.

Over the past two years, policy-makers have wrestled with the issue of the role of religious law in an otherwise secular society. Specifically, this matter arose in the context of a proposed amend-

ment to Ontario's Arbitration Act. This amendment would have allowed the use of *sharia*, or Islamic law, to deal with primarily matrimonial issues. After much discussion, the Ontario Government chose to disallow the use of all religious law in any formal proceedings. This, however, has not precluded the private use of *sharia*, Halachah or any religious law by those who strongly adhere to religious legal dictates.

In a recent decision, the Supreme Court of Canada (*Braker vs. Marcovitz*) dealt specifically with issues of Jewish halachic law involving the withholding of a *get* and other related matters. What is most significant in this case is that religious law is subject to the review and scrutiny of our domestic courts. In fact, despite his reliance on Halachah, the husband argued that his rights were infringed under the Quebec Charter of Rights.

Although the argument did not succeed, this case underscores that religious law is itself subject to regular domestic law.

Moreover, the majority of the Supreme Court of Canada held that Canada rightly prides itself on its evolutionary tolerance for diversity and pluralism. This journey has included a growing appreciation for multiculturalism, including the recognition that ethnic, religious or cultural differences will be acknowledged and respected. However, not all differences are compatible with Canada's fundamental values and, accordingly, not all barriers to their expression are arbitrary.

As a society that is vibrant, multicultural and secular, we must strike a delicate balance. While we must respect and accommodate differences, we must also recognize the competing values that reflect the principles of equality and justice applicable to all.



Gerald L. Gall in Edmonton

The Kirshner File

Israel's last frontier finally being developed

Go south, implored David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first prime minister. In 1956, when Israel marked its eighth anniversary of statehood, he warned that unless it developed the Negev Desert, comprising almost two-thirds of its land mass, Israel would be hard-pressed to "ensure the security of the state or achieve economic independence."

Convinced that its future lay in the sands, gravel plains and mountains of the Negev, Israel's last frontier, he heeded his own advice and settled in Sde Boker, a kibbutz facing a spectacular desert crater. But Ben-Gurion was no naïf. As he put it, "Populating [it] is impossible unless we change our priorities."

Israelis paid only lip service to his admonition, content to live on the verdant coastal plain, in Jerusalem and in the lower Galilee. The Israeli government all but ignored Ben-Gurion's Zionist rhetoric, pouring scarce resources into building settlements in the West Bank and other areas conquered during the 1967 Six Day War. As a result, the Negev used by the Israeli army and air force as a training ground – remains virtually empty today, with only eight per cent of Israel's population residing there. As Israel prepares to mark 60 years of statehood this coming spring, 92 per cent of Israelis live on 40 per cent of the land.

This situation has begun to change since the government, spearheaded by the Jewish National Fund – an organization that has played a vital role in developing the country – took the decision to build 25 new communities in the Negev.

Zukim, 120 kilometres north of Eilat, is one of them. A village whose single-family dwellings blend harmoniously into its surroundings, Zukim sits on a bluff in Wadi Zofar, deep in the desiccated Arava Valley and facing the purplish mountains of Jordan. "We're the first new settlement in these parts in the past 25 years," said Tete Dagani, who manages the project.

Dagani, 50, was born in Kiryat Ata, near Haifa, and lived in Hod Hasharon, close to Tel Aviv, before moving down here with his wife

and two children in the summer of 2004. They were among the first three families to settle in Zukim, whose infrastructure was laid out by the Jewish National Fund. There are 25 families in Zukim today, and 150 are expected to join them within a few years. The region is sparsely populated. Excluding Eilat, only about 900 families reside in the Arava, which stretches southward from the Dead Sea.

Zukim, overlooking a stunning vista of untouched wadis and canyons and practically within shouting distance of a Canadian-funded flood-water reservoir, intends to be a tourist destination. "We'll have bed-and-breakfast places, two spas, restaurants and shops," said Dagani, who runs a construction inspection business on the side. "And we'll offer desert tours with jeeps, horses and donkeys. We'll sell isolation, relaxation and the power of nature."

In Hod Hasharon, he and his wife, a landscape architect, had a big house and a good life, but the frenzied pace and clutter turned them off. In Zukim, where a nice cottage with a modest garden sells for \$150,000, peace of mind is the leitmotif.

The Daganis have adjusted, though their daughter needed several months to acclimatize herself to this wilderness. "Now she thanks me for having brought her here," he said. His son, a strapping fellow, said that making new friends in the Arava is a snap.

Despite its attractions, life can be hard in the Arava. It takes Dagani's wife two hours to commute by plane to Tel Aviv, but the sweltering dry heat seems to pose no problem. "I suffer more from the humidity,"

said Dagani, who believes that Israel should focus its energies in the Negev rather than in the contested West Bank. "Instead of fighting with the Arabs for a few dunams, we should be settling the Negev."

In the western Negev, in the remote Halutza area south of the Gaza Strip, adjacent to Israel's border with Egypt, the government is building a chain of settlements near existing ones such as Avshalom, Yevul and Nizana. Elisha

Mizrachi, the district forester, said that they will be ready for occupancy next year now that the infrastructure has been completed by the Jewish National Fund.

This is a bleak and generally neglected region of low sand dunes. Until recently, the army used it as a firing and training zone, said Gabi Benisti, a Jewish National Fund forester who supervised the planting of 50,000 trees – eucalyptus, pine, tamarisk, fig, almond and olive in the vicinity.

During the Oslo peace process era, there was speculation that Israel, in proposed land swaps with the Palestinian Authority, might exchange Halutza for major settlement blocs in the West Bank. But such talk is rarely, if ever, heard these days.

The new communities are being built mainly for Jewish settlers uprooted from Gush Katif settlements in Gaza under Ariel Sharon's 2005 unilateral withdrawal. According to Mizrachi, the plan was in place before the disengagement was announced.

They will build their own homes with government compensation funds. Up to 15 per cent of the evacuees will resume their work as farmers. The rest will commute to distant jobs.

"This land is excellent for agriculture," said Benisti, noting that the soil is composed of sand and loess, blown in from the Nile delta. Winter vegetables, fruit and citrus will be grown. The Jewish National Fund levelled the terrain for fields and greenhouses. Since this is an exceedingly arid area, he added, a combination of fresh water and treated sewage water will be used.

Mizrachi said that established settlements, from Telme Yosef to Degel, regard the new outposts like a breath of fresh air.

Though resourceful and inventive, farmers in the Negev need a helping hand. The Central and Northern Arava Research and Development Station in Hazeva, 150 kilometres north of Eilat

and underwritten by the government, the Jewish National Fund and the Jewish Agency, fills that need by providing the latest information on crops, strains of cut flowers, water usage, pest control methods and so on, said Ran Segev, a biologist in charge of its aquaculture unit.

"In terms of weather, this is Israel's best area for agriculture," said Segev, who specializes in raising ornamental tropical fish. "Ninety per cent of the inhabitants of the Arava make a living from farming." Consequently, the Arava accounts for 60 per cent of Israel's fresh produce and 15 per cent of its cut flowers.

Farther south, on Kibbutz Grofit founded in 1966, inhabited by some 50 families and living off a variety of agricultural exports ranging from melons to dates – two Canadians are riding high. Kathy Shoval, a Montrealer, and Ami Bonder, a Torontonian, are employed

as therapists at the Red Mountain Therapeutic Riding Center, whose trails were built by the Jewish National Fund. A joint venture of the kibbutz and the Hevel Eilat Regional Council, it was founded in 1996. It is one of 10 such centres in Israel, but the only one south of Be'er Sheva. Its raison d'être is to assist people handicapped by cerebral palsy, emotional and behavioural disorders and learning disabilities.

Shoval, 39, made aliyah in 1988. She lives on Yotvata, a nearby settlement famous for its dairy products, while Bonder, 24, a resident of Grofit, immigrated to Israel a little more than two years ago. "The work we do here is very fulfilling," said Shoval. "It's great to help someone feel good about themselves." Bonder, whose father, Daryl, is a horse veterinarian, loves what he described as "the supportive and stress-free lifestyle" of the kibbutz. But they admit that coping with extreme weather can be difficult.



Sheldon Kirshner in Israel



Zukim, a partially built village in the Arava Valley [Sheldon Kirshner photos]



Elisha Mizrahi

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Quarter 2 2007	9.99
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Quarter 4 2006	9.56
Quarter 3 2006	10.18
Quarter 2 2006	9.84
Quarter 1 2006	9.80



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Jewish Life

Each of us always has God's attention

By **RABBI YOSSE MICHALOWICZ**

This week's parshah marks the beginning of the Exodus process. It begins with the 10 plagues – specifically the first plague of blood. We know that the beginning sets the tone for what comes after. We will look into this first plague and see what message of freedom it sends to the Jewish People.

In Exodus, Chapter 7, the Almighty tells Aaron to strike the Nile River. In verse 20, it says: "All the water that was in the river changed to blood; the fish that were in the water died, and the river became foul. Egypt could not drink water from the river, and the blood was throughout the land of Egypt."

The Midrash tells us how far-reaching this plague was. It got to the point where the Egyptians really wanted water and they couldn't get any. But they realized that the Jews did have water – the water pitchers in Jewish homes were filled and the Egyptians saw them drinking water. Out of frustration, an Egyptian would grab hold of a jug belonging to a Jew and start drinking. But, lo and behold, the water turned to blood. When the Egyptian gave the jug

back to the Jew, the blood became water once again.

The Egyptians got smart. They would say to the Jews, "Come here – we'll drink the water together." But even though each one was drinking from the same pitcher at the same time, the Jew would be drinking water and the Egyptian would be drinking blood.

What was the message for the Jew who was experiencing this miraculous turn of events?

If God does a miracle across the board, certainly no one is going to think that the miracle was done just for him. For example, when the Jews crossed the Sea of Reeds, it was a miracle. What did every Jew think at that moment? They thought: "I sure hope God isn't looking at me too closely, because if He does, He'll probably throw me into the sea along with the Egyptians, because I'm no better than the Egyptians." They probably wanted to cover their faces and get to the other side before God noticed anything about them. When a group miracle happens, we feel that God loves the Jewish People as a whole, but doesn't necessarily love little ol' me.

Rabbinic Reflections

events?

But when a miracle happens so that when you're drinking the very same jug of water that the Egyptian is drinking, and the very same water turns to blood for the Egyptian, we understand that God is singling out each and every Jew!

With the first plague, the Jew was suddenly transported back to the world of the First Man before the sin. It was at that point that every Jew felt that God had created the whole world just for him, and that Hashem was tampering with all the rules of nature just for him. Each Jew experienced this miracle, because each Jew drank the water at the same time as the Egyptian. Otherwise, he wouldn't have noticed that God was making a miracle specifically for him.

We learn from this that redemption begins when the Jew can absorb the feeling that Hashem, our loving God, is watching us and caring for us all the time. The Jew should be able to say, "The world is here just for me." Only when a Jew realizes that he always has God's attention, and all his actions do make a difference, can he have hope to self-actualize and develop a meaningful relationship with God through the freedom he is about to receive.

Rabbi Yossi Michalowitz is spiritual leader of the Westmount Shul and Learning Centre in Thornhill, Ont.

A timely reminder about 'women's issues'

Dec. 6 this year was just an ordinary Thursday. That's the problem.

On Dec. 6, 1989, a young man murdered 14 women on the campus of Montreal's Ecole Polytechnique because he was "fed up" with the advances women had made in engineering. He was upset about affirmative action, which guaranteed a fair chance to women. He was tired of the constant attention to "women's issues."

Since 1989, there have been yearly memorials on Dec. 6 to mark that tragic event. Dec. 6 is a date seared into many Canadian women's minds.

Yet Dec. 6 seems to go by awfully quietly in most of the Jewish community. I can remember only one memorial service in a synagogue offered by a Jewish group, a year after the massacre, and nothing since. Is this because there were no Jewish women murdered that day? Are we also fed up with talking about violence against women? Are we Jews tired of all the "women's issues?"

Do we recognize our own intolerance when it's sanctified in the name of religion? Need I remind us all of the 16-year-old Muslim girl who was killed last month by her religious

father for not wearing a head scarf, lest we think that the killing had nothing to do with religion and "women's issues?"

This Dec. 6 wasn't quiet for me, though – it was filled with "women's issues." I spent the day on the phone

with a family that was searching for a rabbi to perform their child's bar mitzvah ceremony at a synagogue whose rabbi was unavailable that week. For various reasons, they needed someone right away and, not surprisingly, the vast majority of rabbis serving congregations were not available.

Finally a rabbi volunteered to help – a female rabbi, it just so happened. A series of embarrassed and apologetic phone calls followed from the various leaders of the synagogue involved, politely explaining the "problem" of having a woman rabbi. Then the family themselves called, exasperated and desperate. Couldn't I just help them find a male rabbi – right away – since they didn't want a woman rabbi? Since they didn't want her – based solely on her gender – couldn't I help them find someone of the "right" gender?

Never mind that in any other realm of Canadian life, such blatant job discrimination based on gender would

be illegal. Never mind that not too long ago, Jews in general were also the object of such discrimination in the job market. Let's talk about violence to the soul.

I understand and accept that not all Jews are comfortable with or even recognize female rabbis. But do not ask me to facilitate a woman's delegitimization. It would be unthinkable spiritually, morally and politically to have apprehensions about black people in a certain job, or Asians in a certain school, or Latinos in a certain apartment building. But if you did, you would hopefully be respectful enough of them as people to think twice before sharing your issues about them to their face, or asking them to help you find someone more "suitable" than they are based solely on race.

It was ironic that this devaluing of a human being based on her gender happened on Dec. 6. In the Jewish community we will continue to disagree, I am sure, about the changes and accommodations we are prepared or not prepared to make because of modernity. But remember that there is more than one way to do harm to a woman with sexism that is so subtle and pervasive that we aren't even aware of it.

On this Dec. 6, I was reminded that "women's issues" are Jewish issues.

IDEAS ON IDENTITY



By Rabbi Goldstein

Jewish Life

It's sad when the giving of a large charitable gift becomes the source of friction and lawsuits. In 1991, Sears Canada donated \$10 million to Ryerson University and is currently initiating legal action in an attempt to force Ryerson to have the Sears name associated with an academic facility on its campus or to receive damages for breach of contract in return for the school's failure to do so.

While a plaque has been put up acknowledging the donation, Sears claims that its name was, according to its understanding of its agreement with the university, to appear on an academic building. Ryerson, not surprisingly, claims that all agreements were adhered to and that Sears agreed that the plaque would serve as due recognition for the donation.

What is interesting about this case is that it has taken 16 years for legal proceedings to begin. While Jewish law has no official statute of limitations, one must make a claim for monies owing at the first available opportunity. A delay is legally assumed to be an admission that the current situation is acceptable, and later claims to the contrary would then be dismissed.

Thus, for example, Jewish law rules that an employee's claims for unpaid wages must be made immediately when such payment was originally due. If it's proven, as Ryerson officials claim, that Sears offi-

cially attended the dedication of the building containing the Sears plaque and did not at the same time protest the company's alleged non-recognition, they would forfeit the right to any future demands of recognition.

There is little doubt that Jewish law insists that a donor's demand for recognition be honoured, and if the agreed upon recognition is not given, the donor has the right to request their money back. This is irrespective of the propriety of such an approach to charity, which should be given quietly and without fanfare. Such demands for recognition may, however, only be given at the time of the gift – a donor may not demand specific recognition for a previously donated gift.

It's well known that giving anonymously has always been the Jewish ideal and thus charity should be given with no strings attached. This is true both from the perspective of the recipients who can thus avoid feelings of dependence and embarrassment, and the donors who should cheerfully donate between 10 to 20 per cent of their net income with a sense of gratitude for their blessings and a desire to help others. The seeking of honour should not be part of the equation.

Unfortunately, the development of this

crucial goal of modesty in all that we do at times conflicts with the greater needs of society. Jewish law fully understood that human nature is such that public recognition and honour can and usually does have a major impact on our decision-making process. Thus theory must give way to practical reality.

Jewish law thus not only permits but actually encourages (even obligates?) one to have their name displayed in recognition of gifts given. Such recognition will undoubtedly encourage additional giving both from the donor themselves and others, and thus it would be inappropriate to deny the community potential increased revenues. One's character development may have to be "sacrificed" for the general needs of the community.

Furthermore, while the donor should not, in theory, seek recognition, the recipient has an obligation to acknowledge such generosity. The need for proper acknowledgment, it could be argued, is even more acute when dealing with a corporate donor, to whom issues of personal humility are not germane. Whatever the ultimate resolution of this dispute, it highlights the sad, if necessary, fact that charity today is often no longer about helping those in need, but rather a slick form of marketing.

Send comments to rabbijay@torahinmotion.org.

Money Matters



By Rabbi Jay Kelman CA

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By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

No one is going to try to convince you that your bubbe didn't teach you the best recipe for chicken soup, especially me. But if you are looking for a bit of help or for something a little different, there are plenty of suggestions from plenty of people's bubbes on the web.

Let's start off with some traditional recipes. Sure, Genevieve Goldshaw's chicken soup has racked up a prestigious award. But the real moment of truth came earlier when she tried to pass muster with the toughest judge around. "Finally, after eight years of practising and perfecting my soup, my grandmother admitted defeat. I can remember her facial features as if it was yesterday – she slowly put the spoonful in her mouth and as the spoon came out, a smile began to form on her face and I knew I was victorious." [<http://tinyurl.com/29ggdl>]

If you're not fortunate enough to have your own bubbe to share her secrets with you, don't fret. Bubbe Bayla is available. Her full name is Bayla Sher, and she and her grandson Avrom Hogen have put together a delightful series of videos that you watch free online – and glean her secrets. There are videos about borscht, blintzes, tzimmes and more. But the real star of the show is chicken soup, which merits three episodes. [tinyurl.com/2egucr] For more video variations, check out Lauren Groveman's kitchen and technique [tinyurl.com/2xorzu] as well as this one that throws in instruc-



tions for matzah balls. [<http://tinyurl.com/2krrlc>]

The Jewish-Food Chicken Soup Archives (isn't it great to know that such a place exists?) boasts about two dozen recipes including Harsha's Spicy, Farmhouse and Sickbed. [tinyurl.com/2bu6um] The Jerusalem Post has several recipes, including a "zingy" variation that doesn't spare the garlic (about 15

cloves.) [tinyurl.com/ywudjfl]

Meanwhile, University of Utah Hiller offers a vegetarian "chicken soup" recipe that doesn't call for any chickens at all. [tinyurl.com/you5ho]

Many people prepare a Shabbat cholent on Friday and let it cook overnight so that they can enjoy a warm meal on Saturday afternoon. For something different, why not try chicken soup on Shabbat afternoon? Cooks.com has several recipes for soups that you let stew for several hours. If you do plan to leave your soup in a slow cooker on Shabbat, you may want to experiment during the week to perfect how much water to use. [tinyurl.com/2s9f4j]

Next time you're in Israel and need a break from the country's wonderful and exotic restaurants, why not settle down to a bowl of you-know-what? Food critic Daniel Rogov has surveyed several Israeli restaurants in search of great soup. Tel Aviv's Batia Restaurant serves chicken soup "so full of fat and flavor that it will bring tears of nostalgic joy to

your eyes." [tinyurl.com/yvbsxul]

"Why Don't More Jewish Men Cook?" That's the name of a blog "designed to teach Jewish men, especially from ones, that cooking and housework is not women's work; it's everyone's work." The site is sprinkled with recipes many of which begin with the word "easy" as in Easy Meatloaf and Easy Broccoli. The site's chicken soup recipe promises to be both delectable and not too difficult to make. [tinyurl.com/2y3zwdj]

No one has to convince Jerry Greenberg that Jewish men can cook. Greenberg was a finalist in the first national Chicken Soup Challenge. Four years ago, the National Jewish Outreach Program set out on a daring and daunting journey: to find the best chicken soup in America. Five hundred amateur cooks sent their recipes to Jeffrey Nathan, executive chef and owner of the acclaimed kosher restaurant Abigail's in New York. Nathan chose five finalists to compete at the four-hour cook-off. [tinyurl.com/ytbogk] The winner? Rosely Himmelstein with her somewhat traditional soup (carrot, onion, celery, leek, parsnip, sweet potato, rutabaga and dill). Finalist Jerry Greenberg (the only male in the final five) threw tradition to the wind with his Jamaican-Inspired Soup: yucca root, plantain, crimini and coconut milk.

Speaking of which, next time: chicken soup like Bubbe never used to make.

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based website producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rangers.com



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Israeli high school big band to perform in Toronto

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

A 20-member Israeli high school big band is coming to Toronto later this month to participate in the International Association for Jazz Education (IAJE) conference and perform concerts throughout the Greater Toronto Area.

The band will be representing the Thelma Yellin High School for the Arts, the best school of the arts in Israel, located in Givatayim, a Tel Aviv suburb.

The school was founded 45 years ago in memory of Thelma Bentwich Yellin, an Israeli cellist whose dream it was to establish a high school for gifted music and arts students.

Students come from all over the country – from kibbutzim, moshavim, development towns and large cities – to study their chosen field of specialization, whether it's dance, classical music, jazz, drama, film or visual arts, and have to audition to be accepted into the school.

This year the big band was invited to participate in the annual IAJE Conference, from Jan. 9 to 12, for the second time in four years.

The IAJE is the biggest association of its kind and initiates programs that promote "the understanding and appreciation of jazz and its heritage."

Cong. House of Jacob-Mikveh Israel, an Orthodox shul in Calgary, Alberta, is searching for a pulpit rabbi. Please e-mail: herb.rosenberg@ucalgary.ca for details.

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The Thelma Yellin High School for the Arts big band

The conference, which attracts about 7,000 jazz professionals each year, provides leadership and educational seminars and schedules performances by the participants.

Yossi Regev, the head of the jazz department at the school, who is accompanying the big band on the trip, said that it had to audition to be among the hundreds of jazz musicians who will perform at the conference.

For the past six years, there has been a group representing the Thelma Yellin school at the conference.

"I think we are among very few high schools that pass each year," Regev said.

He said that last year, the April Quintet represented the school, and in 2006, the Red

Square, a six-member female a cappella group, performed.

This year, it will be the second time that the 20-member big band will perform at the conference since it did so in New York in 2004.

Regev said that although the students "are eager to perform," it is very costly for the students' parents who must foot all the travel costs in addition to paying tuition.

"The students and the parents have to pay for the whole thing. It's not in the school's budget, and we get nothing from the city and the state though we represent them," Regev said.

"But since we think it's important to show our music and bands all over, we are doing every effort to go abroad."

He said the school has to rely on donations and sponsors to help finance the trips.

The Canada-Israel Cultural Foundation, headed by Cheryl

Weinstein, is one of the organizations that helped bring the big band to Toronto this year.

During their visit, they will perform throughout the city at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre on Jan. 13, and at the Rex Jazz and Blues Bar the following day.

"They are also performing at Rosedale Heights School for the Arts. The kids there at the school and the kids who are coming [from Israel] are going to perform together. The music has been sent to Rosedale Heights and they will perform together for the students at the school," Weinstein said.

"The cross-cultural aspect of it is very interesting that they're performing at that school. They are acting as ambassadors for Israel."

For more information or for free tickets to the performance at the Miles Nadal JCC, call 416-924-6211, ext. 0.



MITZVAH KNITTERS:

The Shaar Shalom Mitzvah Knitters recently completed their 1,100th handcrafted item, which like all their other work was donated to someone in need. Since its inception in 2006, the group has grown to 60 active knitters and crocheters of all ages. Yarn is donated or purchased with funds raised by various projects and private donations. The group meets on alternate Monday evenings for a social, fun and productive evening. New contributors, as well as donations of yarn and cash, are always welcome. For more information, please contact Arna Cappe at 905-881-8631 or Janice Shachter at 905-731-0700.

Media focused on Mideast as a whole in 2007

If there was any trend that marked the media's coverage of the Middle East in 2007, it was what we may call the opening of the camera's lens onto the region as a whole in a way that was sustained as never before.

According to Reports

By
PAUL MICHAELS

The result was that the near-obsessive focus on Israel in previous years – to the exclusion of arguably more significant or dramatic events elsewhere in the area – did not materialize in the mainstream media.

Leading the way for the Canadian media was Afghanistan, where Canada is deeply involved in both military and peace-building operations; and where several of our soldiers have tragically been killed or wounded. So it is entirely natural that the bulk of foreign affairs reports have come from that country.

For similar reasons, the U.S. media have been heavily focused on both Iraq and Afghanistan where the American military commitment is overwhelming and, frankly, overwhelming.

And because countries such as Iran, Pakistan and Syria are involved in one way or another – especially in being sources of insurgent forces going to Iraq and Afghanistan – the media have also been following developments there.

As well, each of the above-named countries has gone through internal developments that are newsworthy in themselves.

• Iran, led by radical Shiite theocrats, has been hard at work developing enriched uranium fuel, the essential ingredient in making atomic weapons.

• Iran's aggressive designs threaten not only Israel and the oil-rich and Sunni-dominant Arab Gulf states, they also threaten Sunni Arab states such as Egypt and Jordan.

• Syria's close ties to Iran, and its support of terrorist groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah, are perceived to destabilize Lebanon and the Palestinian Authority. Israel's reported bombing last September of a Korean-backed nuclear facility in northern Syria elicited virtual silence in the world. Contrast that with the enormous international condemnation that came crashing down on Israel following its 1981 bombing of the Osirak nuclear reactor in Iraq.

• Pakistan is home to several radical Islamic groups including Al-Qaeda, which is bent on overthrowing the current leadership and is frequently the instigator of horrific suicide bombings. Since Pakistan is reported to have about 30 nuclear bombs, there is considerable worry about what might happen should these fall into the hands of Islamic extremists.

• Turkey is facing its own insurgency brought about by the infiltration of Kurdish PKK radicals sneaking across the border from Iraq. How Turkey responds to that, combined with the re-election of an Islamic government in Ankara, could profoundly affect Turkey's relationship with both NATO and the European Union (to which it is seeking membership).

ing extensively on what is generally called the growing "Shia Crescent" and its conflict with Sunni Islam. One should add to that there are clashes within Sunni Islam itself as well as debates over the emerging conflict between Islamic and western values – especially in Europe.

In short, today, there are many world-historic forces at play that are preoccupying the media more than Israel.

The net effect has been that the old narrative about Israel as the regional Goliath has diminished, although it persists in certain journalistic circles. With the exception of dramatic events such as the war between Israel and Hezbollah in the summer of 2006, the media, by and large, are looking to other venues to feed their need for drama.

Even Israel's recent military operations against Hamas in Gaza, where within a period of two weeks about 20 Hamas and Islamic Jihad members were killed, received little attention.

To top it all off, more interest has been shown, for the first time, in internal Palestinian affairs – and in particular in the fissure between Fatah and Hamas, and its repercussions for Palestinian society.

To be sure, this brief survey is not meant to discount critical stories that the media do continue to report from Israel. Rather, it is meant to put those reports in a broader and changing context.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.



Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and his nuclear plans remain among the main preoccupations for western security analysts. [RNS/Reuters photo]



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tlbc.ca

Greater Toronto Area

Selected one of 150 outstanding volunteers in B'nai Brith

Continued from page 2

His father, Julius Rosenblatt, was a member of B'nai Brith Canada and from the time he was a child, Ronson says, he read all the B'nai Brith material that came to their house. He followed in his father's footsteps and joined B'nai Brith, District 22, Toronto Lodge in 1939.

He served as president of B'nai Brith Canada in 1979-1980 and held several executive positions with B'nai Brith International, including international vice-president from 1988 to 1992.

He served on the national commission of the Anti-Defamation League-League of Human Rights, and in 1994, during the celebration of B'nai Brith's 150th anniversary, he was selected as one of the 150 outstanding volunteers in B'nai Brith throughout the world.

"I was very proud of the many accomplishments of the league in the past and was proud to have been part of that important work," says Ronson.

Over the years, he spearheaded numerous causes including combating the anti-Semitic actions of Reverend A. C. Forrest, editor of the *Observer*, the official periodical of the United Church of Canada, in Forrest's crusade against the Jewish State.

In 1970, Ronson was one of three representatives of the Jewish community who negotiated an agreement with the Granite Club in Toronto when the Anti-Defamation League

mounted an opposition campaign against the club's discrimination policy.

Ronson has received the league's rarely bestowed Special Human Rights award and inaugurated the Lou Ronson Human Rights Scholarship Fund, in conjunction with its annual Media Human Rights Award ceremony.

He also took leadership roles in other causes and organizations, including Mount Sinai Hos-

pital, the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews, Canadian Jewish Congress, the Jewish Community Centre of Toronto, the Canada-Israel Committee, UNESCO and the Israel Chamber of Commerce.

Looking back on his life in a recent interview, he spoke of his children, Jeremy, a professional musician, Rhonda, an entrepreneur, and his devoted wife, Hilda, who recently

passed away "after 60 wonderful years of marriage."

"My life has been very rewarding. There were many challenges and we would meet them. It's helped me to grow and to contribute to the building of a society where there will be no discrimination."

"There have been great improvements," he added, "but we still have a ways to go."



HELPING SPECIAL NEEDS KIDS: Author Linda Frum, third from left, was the MC at this year's Zareinu fashion show. With her, from left, are event co-chairs Stacy Markin, Renée Rosenzweig and Robin Shugar. Almost 500 people attended the event, which benefits Zareinu Educational Centre. [Snap Digital photo]

Health & Lifestyles

Objections to stem cell research are cultural, ethical: expert

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

While stem cell research has the potential to change the face of medicine, it also raises a number of ethical, halachic, legal and cultural questions, said Dr. Avraham Steinberg.

Steinberg, an ordained rabbi, is a pediatric neurologist and an international expert in Jewish biomedical ethics. He is director of the centre for medical ethics at the Hebrew University-Hadassah Medical School and director of the medical ethics unit at Shaare Zedek Medical Centre, both in Jerusalem. He is the 1999 winner of the Israel Prize.

His recent lecture on stem cells was part of a scholar-in-residence program at Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation.

Stem cells are immature, undifferentiated cells that can develop into any cell found in the human body. However, once cells mature, they lose that ability, Steinberg said.

Stem cells currently used for research come from two sources – unused or rejected eggs from in vitro fertilization procedures or from a miscarried or aborted fetus, he said. Occasionally, he added, they may come from amniotic fluid or umbilical-cord blood.

Stem cells from bone marrow have been used for some time, and it is hoped that they will also be useful in treating Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, stroke and diabetes.

If the potential for good is so high, why, then, is there so much controversy?

Steinberg said that the ethical and legal ob-

jections to stem cell research mainly boil down to the question of when life begins and the question of what is life.

"It is not a scientific matter. It is cultural, ethical and social. If society says that life begins at five, then that's when it begins," he stressed.

Life may be considered to begin at different stages of development – conception, implantation, 14 days, 40 days (the Jewish concept), the first fetal movement, when the fetus becomes viable, or the moment of birth.

Is using a fetal cell acceptable when it is for important, life-saving purposes? When it would be thrown out anyway? Most significant are the questions of whether destroying a stem cell is murder; whether it is acceptable to destroy a cell for a greater good; and whether using these stem cells encourages abortion, Steinberg said. All these questions concern both the general population and the scientific community, he added.

Politics, Steinberg said, has entered the equation, too. Germany, Norway, Argentina, Poland and some U.S. states prohibit any use at all. In the United States, only stem cell lines (families of cells derived from a single, original stem cell) created before 9 p.m. on Aug. 9, 2001, are acceptable, and research on them receives federal funding. The problem is that after so long, many of these lines are defective and useless, Steinberg said.

This is not merely a theoretical problem, he said, as research into stem cells requires an enormous amount of money – too much to come from private or even corporate sources.

Religious opinions also differ on stem cell

research, he said. Catholicism "absolutely prohibits it, just as it does contraception and abortion." Protestant denominations are divided: Islam permits it.

In Jewish thought, there is the philosophy that the enhancement of knowledge enhances our belief in the Almighty, Steinberg said. "The more we know, the more we know the incredible thing God did [in creating the world]."

We are partners with God in healing the world. God left the world unfinished, for man to complete, Steinberg said. Those who are able to do something concrete, then, such as doctors and scientists, are not only allowed, but obligated, to do what they can, he noted.

On the other hand, research must not involve an inherent halachic prohibition; it must not lead to a prohibited result, and the benefit must surpass any detriment, he stressed.

Judaism recognizes that there is a difference between an embryo that is still in a test tube (such as for in vitro fertilization) and one that has been implanted into a woman's womb. Inherent human rights are acquired in a progressive way, depending on developmental status.

"Each stage, however, has its own holiness," Steinberg said.

Before implantation, a fertilized egg [in Halachah] has no human status. However, it is respected as a part of humanity and as potential life.

While Halachah allows fertilized eggs to be used for in vitro fertilization, creating fertilized eggs for research is not.

In cases of potential genetic problems, such as the presence of the gene for Tay-Sachs

disease, testing fertilized eggs for the mutated gene and then implanting only the healthy ones, while disposing of the ill ones, is now done routinely, Steinberg said.

For instance, a carrier of the gene for neurofibromatosis (a set of genetic disorders that cause tumours to grow along various types of nerves and can affect non-nevous system tissues) was afraid to have children and so underwent the procedure.

Haredi Torah scholar Rabbi Yoseph Shalom Eliashiv said that in principle such a procedure is permissible, but only on a case by case basis, Steinberg said.

The procedure is done for serious reasons, "not, for example, because you want a blue-eyed child," he added.

Last month, researchers announced that they had succeeded in turning skin cells into stem cells. A team led by Dr. Shinya Yamanaka of Kyoto University and another led by Junying Yu, who was working with stem cell researcher James Thomson of the University of Wisconsin, managed to use skin cells to create stem cells. If successful, this would avoid many ethical and halachic issues.

While the breakthrough has been hailed by scientists and media all over the world, it is important to note that the technology is not close to being used therapeutically. It is also not known if stem cells made this way will themselves be prone to cause disease.

Coast to Coast

Over 5,000 pebbles collected for project

Continued from page 1

"The question 'what is six million?' has often come up with the kids here. After watching the film, we were trying to think of a way to demonstrate that as well," she said.

"We actually thought of the pebbles, and one of the reasons is that it is also a sign of respect to place a pebble on the tombstone of someone who has passed away. We have several students in the school who are Jewish and there are two girls whose grandmother just passed away and they had been talking about putting the stones on her grave, and that is where the idea came from."

Having just started collecting pebbles in September, the staff and students at the Goodwin Learning Centre are still trying to figure out how to display the pebbles.

"We don't have an idea of what the six million are going to look like yet either so at this point... so we've got them neatly in a bin."

Michael said that initially they thought to build a memorial path as an extension of the school's peace garden, but the pebbles each come with a story and have meaning to the students, so they are still contemplating the best way to exhibit them.

"A lot of kids are coming in with stories as well, so we're [marking them and] keeping a journal just to remember everything. They're really taking it to heart... It's not just a project about collecting rocks. It takes on a much bigger meaning for them as well," she said.

"At this point, we have 5,447 rocks. We are trying to get a rock from every single province and territory in Canada, and from as many different countries in the world. For example, I went overseas in the summer. I travelled to England, Italy and France, so I brought pebbles back with me from there," she said, adding that students also bring back pebbles from countries

they've travelled to.

Since the staff began sending out letters to spread word about their campaign and ask people to help them reach their goal, pebbles have been coming in from local members of Parliament, famous authors and Holocaust survivors.

"We got a pebble from [children's author] Robert Munsch, so that was a real highlight. John Koning is another author who is a very good friend of our school, and he sent in a pebble and included some stories."

Marion Blumenthal, a Holocaust survivor and the author of *Four Perfect Pebbles*, also informed the staff via e-mail that a pebble was on the way, Michael said.

"We sent a letter to Elie Wiesel as well. We haven't heard back from him, but after we read *Night*, the children all sent him what they thought were their best responses from our novel study we had done and he sent us an autographed copy of his book, so we're sure that as soon as he receives our letter, he'll send a pebble as well."

Michael said she is excited about the project and isn't discouraged by the fact that 5,447 pebbles is a long way from six million.

"It's going to take a while, but that's OK and we're going to stick with it. It is such an important part of the school and what we do anyway every year. I don't foresee that it will lose steam."



STEPPING BACK IN TIME: The administration of Associated Hebrew Schools' Kamin Education Centre in Thornhill – from left, Eynat Katz, Gail Freeman, Linda Kichler, Mary-Martha Starkman, Sandy Rabinowitz and Kathy Friedman – dressed in clothing circa 1907 for a day to launch the branch's commemoration of Associated's centennial this year. As part of the day, students also dressed up in clothing from 100 years ago and listened to period music, played 100-year-old games, made Chanukah candles, and studied from textbooks dating back to 1907.

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| February 19 | Things About My Folks
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Coast to Coast

YIDDISH CORNER

Edited by: ALEK SILVER

יידיש - ווינקל

רעדאגירט פון: אלעק סילווער

וואס איז אייער מיינונג?

פון אלעק סילווער

ווען איר וועט ליינען די דאזיקע שורות וועט שוין זיין דער אנהייב פונעם יאר 2008. למען השם פארנעמט נישט צו שרייבן אן "8" ווי איר האט ביז איצט געשריבן א "7". דאס אוועקגיין און אנקומען פון א ניי יאר איז שוין נישט קיין „נאווענע" היינטיקע צייטן ספעציעל ביי די מענטשן פון מיין דור. מיר האבן שוין געזען א סך יארן גיין און קומען. מיר האבן שוין אפילו געזען מילעניום גיין און קומען.

(אב), אריב איר זענט אינטערעסירט צו וויסן ווי אלס איך בין, האב איך פאר איך א קליינע רעסענסי: איך בין אין מיין דריטן יאר פונעם דריטן דריטל פון מיינ לעבנס-זאגנע רעמענדיק ווי א יסוד דעם ביבלישן ציפער פון משה רבינוס יארן. גיט א טראכט.

איך ווייס נישט ווי עס איז ביי איך, נאך אין אדער דערוי, צוזאמען מיטן אנאם פון ניינס יאר, דער אלטן מיר א האלבן טון נייע קאלענדארן. זיי זיינען וויכטיק, ווייל זיי ווייזן די נענדע טעגלעכע דאטעס, א טעג פון יום-טובים — יידישע, פון אגדערע דעליקעסעס.

און פון דער רעגירונג. אויף דער צווייטער זייט פון די קאלענדארן זיינען פאראן פארשיידענע שיינע בילדער. איין קאלענדאר ווייזט די הערלעכע נאטור-לאנד-שאפטן איבער דער וועלט, א צווייטער ווייזט קאלי-פולע עקאנאמישע מיטל און חיות, וואס איך קענען נאך

זען ביי א באוורן און א זאגלעכע גארטן. א דריטער זייט מענער און פרויען מאכן אלערליי פארשן ביים ים-אדער אויף די שטריכער. נאך איינער אויסווייזט ווי קינדערלעך פון פארשיידענע ראסן, אנגעזעטקעט, שמיכלענדיקע, שפילן זיך אונטער דער אויפזיכט פון זייערע מאמעס. הענגען מיר אויף די קאלענדארן אין

פארשיידענע צימערן צו באשיינען די וועלט און האבן די נענדע דאטעס פאר די אויגן, און מען גיט א טראכט: און פארשטיקע וועלט, וואס גאט האט באשאפן אן זעקס טעג, א וועדערברעך וועלט, א שיינע!

אבער דאס איז אלץ א ליגן. די וועלט איז נישט פרייעטיק, נישט וועדערבאר אן נישט שייך; פארקערט, עס איז א מיאסער וועלט, א נידערטרעכטיק, א צוויי-פרייעטיק, ווי די שטארקע פארשקלאפן די שוואכע און האלטן זיי אונטער דיקטאטארישע אדער האלבדיק-טאטארישע באדינגונגען. די וועלט ווי די רייכע נוצן

אויס דעם שווייט און דאס בלוט פון די ארעמע דורך צווינגען קינדערלעך, 10 יאר אלט, צו ארבעטן 12 ביז 16 שעה א טאג פאר טעלעכע פעניס; די וועלט ווי ביל-יאנען האלדן ווערן פארטאקלעוועט אויף אומפוג-לעכע געפערלעכע וואפנס און האלטן די איינוווינערס אין א שרעק פאר נייע מלחמות.

אט איז א בישיפל: דער קאלענדאר מיט די בילדער פון די שיינע קינדערלעך הענגט דורך א צומאל איך דעם צימער ווען עס שטייט דאס טעלעוויזיע-קעסטל. קום איך אריין אין דעם צימער, גיב א בלאזן אויפן קאלענדאר און עפן אויף די טעלעוויזיע. דאס ערשטע פאר מיניט אויגן באווייזן זיך די שוידערלעכע בילדער פון דעם

שווערן לעבן אין א צאל אפריקאנער לענדער, די דאריטער קינדערלעך מיט פון הונגער-געשוואלענע בייכעלעך, קרעציקע ליפן און רינגעדיקע טערן קוקן אויף איך. מיר גרויסע אויגן און בעטן שטייטערהייט פאר הייל. דער אבאסירער בעט איך אריינצושיקן 35 סענט מיט וועלכע מען קען אויסהאלטן א פאמיליע אויף א גאנצע וואך. 35 סענט — די דריטל, וואס איך וואלט באצאלט פאר א טעפער קאדע אין א רעסטאראן.

גיב איך נאך אמאל א קוק אויף דעם בילד פון קא-לענדאר און פונעם דריטן אויפן קול: צי לעבן מיר אויף צוויי באווענדערע פלאטעס מיטן נאמען „ערד" און האקן, איך איר וועט פארשטיין מיין פעסמיס!

Day school aids Hamilton's homeless

By HOLLY GINSLER

Special to The C.J.N.

HAMILTON — Kehila Jewish Community Day School collected 36 blankets and sleeping bags for Hamilton's homeless.

Kehila's students, from junior kindergarten to Grade 5, began collecting the sleeping bags and blankets in late September 2007, from members of Hamilton's Jewish community.

Representatives from the McMaster Student Outreach Collective (MacSOC) picked up the donations on Dec. 20.

It's a mitzvah project that fits beautifully with our tikkun olam mission, to save the world one person at a time, says Leia Ger-Rogers, Kehila Day School's principal.

Hamilton's Homeless Project, to which the items have been donated, is run by McMaster Student Outreach Collective (MacSOC), a group of volunteers that includes McMaster University staff, faculty and students. The organization's mandate is to work with the community in the delivery of services to those who are marginally housed, homeless or at risk of homelessness in Hamilton. MacSOC was founded in 1999 by two McMaster nursing students.

MacSOC's volunteers go out on Wednesday nights to provide the homeless with food, clothing, blankets and health information, as well as assistance in connecting to medical services.

MacSOC's volunteers Alyshaah Kaba, Medinat Giwa, Dan Lawlor and Ray Lawlor met with Kehila students when they picked up the donations.

Lawlor told the students that there were some people in



The staff and students of Kehila Jewish Community Day School met with McMaster Student Outreach Collective volunteers.

the city who were cold and living on the street and who weren't able to afford to live nicely. There were gasps of surprise when the students heard that children their age and homeless elderly people needed these gifts to keep warm.

People in need can pick up the blankets and sleeping bags at a drop-in centre in a downtown church operated by the Hamilton's Homeless Project.

"You should be very proud of yourselves," said Kaba as she handed a plaque to Kehila student Ethan Feldman, honouring the school and thanking it for supporting MacSOC.

Ger-Rogers learned about MacSOC in 2002, when she wanted the students at her previous school to get involved in community work. Many programs, such as ones at hospitals and soup kitchens, don't accept volunteers under 15.

She says that Kehila will also donate winter coats to the homeless.

Quoting anthropologist Margaret Mead, Ger-Rogers says her motto is, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world."

Montreal UTT school to stay open

BY JANICE ARNOLD

Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Faced with strong opposition from parents and the St. Laurent Jewish community, the administration of the United Talmud Torahs (UTT) branch in that borough has decided the school won't close next year after all, and probably not for at least three years.

On Dec. 17, the school's executive and board of directors reversed a resolution passed in November to close the Beutel UTT because of increasing financial problems and a declining enrolment, and merge it with the other UTT campus in Snowdon.

The administration has now decided to give a parent group's plan a chance to save the school.

The parents, who said they were surprised at the decision to close and had not been consulted on how to help the school survive, voted 90 per cent against closure. They quickly rallied, with rabbis and other community leaders in the area, as well as alumni, to raise about \$160,000 and launch a campaign to encourage more parents to send their children to the school.

Many in the Jewish community at large especially wanted to see the school stay open because it had made a determined effort to rebuild after a hate-motivated firebombing in 2004.

The parent group submitted a proposal on how to gradually increase enrolment and restore the school to financial health over the coming years.

The decision to stay open for now has the support of FEDERATION CJA, which, over the past year, has been working with UTT to try to get the system on a more solid footing, president Marc Gold said.

He said the federation will honour the commitment it made

when the school was expected to close, to grant an additional \$800,000 to the UTT system over the next four years, with a large portion being allocated immediately to help cover its operating costs.

This amount is above the \$1.3 million already earmarked over the same period to subsidize students who don't pay full tuition.

The UTT system, which also includes the Herzliya High Schools on the Beutel and Snowdon campuses, is running a deficit of more than \$650,000, Gold said.

The recommendation to close the Beutel UTT was made by a task force set up by the federation and its agency the Bronfman Jewish Education Centre that included the UTT administration and outside experts. It thought demographic trends indicate that there are not enough elementary-age children to keep both UTTs open.

Parents other than those who may be part of the administration were not involved in this process, but have since been invited onto a reactivated task force that will guide UTT through the transition period, Gold said.

The plan sets specific targets and deadlines for fundraising and boosting enrolment, which Gold is confident are achievable with enough effort on the part of the school leadership and parent body. The federation has also promised to become a "partner" with the school to "steward" its direction.

The Beutel UTT, which opened in 1962, has 125 students, which is half its capacity, and which is French, has about the same number, which represents 65 per cent of capacity.

The loss of UTT in St. Laurent was seen as a major blow to its Jewish community, whose numbers have been going down.

Foreign Affairs to monitor aid to Palestinians

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Canadian financial support for the Middle East peace process should be followed by careful monitoring.

So said the Canada-Israel Committee – the official representative of the organized Canadian Jewish community on matters pertaining to Canada-Israel relations – following Canada's December pledge of \$300 million in aid to the Palestine Authority over the next five years, as part of a world effort to help continue the renewed Middle East peace process begun in Annapolis last November.



Maxime Bernier

A total of \$7.4 billion worth of aid to the Palestinians was promised by some 90 foreign delegates at the Dec. 17 Paris donors' conference, convened for funding talks with PA President Mahmoud Abbas.

Immediately after Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier pledged Canadian aid at the conference, the CIC urged the government to exercise due diligence before handing over the money.

The committee said it held out "guarded optimism" for a renewed peace with the caveat that Canada ensure its funds don't fall into the wrong hands.

"The announcement... speaks to Canada's enhanced role in the Israel-Palestinian peace process over the past two years. With our increased role... comes the added responsibility of ensuring that Canadian assistance benefits from careful monitoring and measures to ensure accountability and transparency," said Moshe Ronen, national chair of the CIC in a press release.

CRTC raps radio host

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — A Radio-Canada radio host's comments about a Sabbath-observing Jewish hockey player did not meet the Broadcasting Act's "high standard requirement," but they weren't abusive under the regulations of the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), the regulatory body has ruled.

The CRTC was referring to some of Joël Le Bigot's remarks on the talk shows *Pourquoi pas dimanche* and *Samedi et rien d'autre* about the religious identity and practices of then-Quebec Remparts player Benjamin Rubin, which the host made on at least five occasions in September and October 2006.

While the comments were intended to be humorous, the CRTC concluded they were "gratuitous and repetitive, and that the manner in which the radio host chose to comment on the topic, including his choice of words, was inappropriate and uncalled for."

However, it continues, the comments, "when taken in context, did not expose the Jewish community to hatred or contempt" or ridicule the player.

Radio-Canada is the CBC's French-language network.

Correction

In "Aliyah experts converge for immigration fairs" (CJN, Dec. 20), the photo caption should have identified Josie Arbel, left, and Amberlea Centner. The CJN regrets the error.

"True peace between Israelis and the Palestinians can only be achieved on the basis of an economically viable and democratic Palestinian Authority. To that end, the PA must undertake real democratic and institutional reforms, such as building an independent judiciary, developing business and industry, and creating the infrastructure for a successful civil society. The CIC welcomes Canada's increased role in assisting to bring about this reality."

At the Paris conference, Bernier noted that Canada's funding would go towards "institution-building in the Palestinian Authority and [helping to] build a better public service for all Palestinians. We will also work with Canadian and local non-governmental organizations, other actors and the Palestinian Authority to promote tolerance and combat hatred and the incitement of violence," he said. "And to improve prosper-

perity, we will help to stimulate the Palestinian economy through its private sector."

Bernier added that Canada's aid would not be unconditional.

"We will need to see demonstrable progress in negotiations by both sides, as well as progress in Palestinian democratic reforms," he said.

When contacted about what mechanisms Canada will use to hold the PA responsible for proper distribution of the funds, Neil Hrab, director of communications for the Department of Foreign Affairs told *The CJN* that all funding would correspond to Canadian anti-terrorism legislation.

"Canada will ensure that Canadian funds do not directly or indirectly benefit Hamas or other terrorist groups listed under Canadian law," Hrab said.

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Community welcomes Supreme Court get decision

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Rabbis, Jewish community organizations and advocates for agunah rights are hailing the landmark Dec. 14 Supreme Court of Canada decision upholding damages to a Jewish woman whose ex-husband withheld a *get* for 15 years, despite having agreed in writing to immediately issue it once they were civilly divorced.

In a 7-2 decision, the high court said the agreement, despite its religious nature, was part of a contract and therefore within the domain of the courts. It overturned a 2005 Quebec Court of Appeal ruling that secular courts cannot intervene because of that religious nature and that the agreement to provide the Jewish religious divorce was, at most, "a moral obligation."

Alan Stein, lawyer for the victorious Stephanie Bruker, said the judgment has a profound significance for the Canadian Jewish community because it establishes that commitments to give a *get* — whether in a prenuptial agreement or, as in this

case, as a corollary measure in the context of divorce proceedings — are enforceable civilly.

Although it was not a subject of argument, Stein believes that the constitutionality of Section 21.1 of the Divorce Act, which requires that divorcing spouses remove barriers to their exes' religious remarriage, cannot be challenged from here on in. The 1990 amendment was made mainly at the urging of the Jewish community as a way to prevent women from becoming agunot — that is, unable to marry again or have legitimate children within traditional Judaism.

The case was represented before the Supreme Court pro bono by William Brock, David Stelow and Brandon Wiener of Davies Ward Phillips & Vineberg of Montreal, along with Stein, who acted for Bruker in the lower courts. The Canadian Civil Liberties Association was an inter-



Rabbi Reuven Bulka

venor.

In a statement, the firm says the judgment holds that the 1980 agreement between Bruker, now 59 and living in New York, and Jessel (Jason) Marcovitz, 75, of Montreal, to go before the rabbinical authorities "immediately" upon the granting of the *decree nisi*, or provisional divorce, was "a valid and binding contractual obligation under Quebec law and that such an agreement is consistent with public policy, the Canadian approach to marriage and divorce and the commitment to eradicating gender discrimination."

Marcovitz's lawyer had argued that it was not valid under the province's Civil Code — unique in Canada — and that the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms protected him from having to pay damages for his failure to fulfil a promise to perform a religious rite.

He had also tried to prove that he didn't need to give Bruker a *get* because she was not living an Orthodox Jewish life.

"The majority further held that there was no infringement of [Marcovitz's] freedom of religion, since his refusal to provide a *get* was 'based less on religious conviction than on the fact that he was angry with [Bruker].'" the Davies statement continued.

Justice Rosalie Abella wrote: "The public interest in protecting equality rights, the dignity of Jewish women in their independent ability to remarry, as well as the public benefit in enforcing valid and binding contractual obligations, are among the interests and the values that outweigh [Marcovitz's] claim that enforcing [the *get* agreement] would interfere with his religious freedom."

Abella cites the Divorce Act's Section 21.1 in her judgment.

She notes that while the parties agreed not to dispute its constitutionality, they did not agree that it could not be used in analyzing the other issues in this case.

The Supreme Court sided with Quebec Superior Court judge Israel Mass' 2003 decision, made following a trial that lasted more than 30 days, to award Bruker \$47,500, plus interest and indemnity — well below the \$1.35 million she sought. The Supreme Court, however, did not go along with her bid to have that amount increased to \$400,000. She first launched civil proceedings in 1989.

Rabbi Michael Whitman, president of the Montreal Board of Rabbis, said the decision is "a very strong statement in protecting women and against claiming religious freedom in order to hurt other people... This is an appropriate limit on religious freedom. And, from a Jewish point of view, there is no such thing as the right to withhold a *get*. The obligation is to give a *get* and to receive a *get*. Anything else is just a sin."

He emphasized that the court's ordering a man to pay damages for not delivering a promised *get* does not constitute coercion, from a Jewish perspective. "The sources clearly assert that if a man agrees [to give the *get*] of his own free will, it is not considered coercion," he said.

He believes it is essential that couples now draw up prenuptial agreements that include an agreement to go through the *get* process, should the marriage dissolve, something he has insisted upon for more than 25 years. "I would be happy to share with any rabbi in Canada the text that I use which has been reviewed by legal counsel."

Evelyn Brook, president of the Coalition of Jewish Women for the *Get*, who has followed this case closely through the years, called the decision "a relief. Agunot now know they have civil remedy."

"It's a clear statement that men cannot abuse the unilateral power they have," she said, adding that she hopes more women will now come forward to seek redress.

Canadian Jewish Congress co-president Rabbi Reuben Bulka said: "This decision establishes that the religious overtones of a contract will not prevent the courts from enforcing it, provided it corresponds to Canada's public policy and is in keeping with the charters [the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms]."

"In this particular case, the judgment will serve to help level the playing field for Jewish women filing for divorce and will serve notice that those standing in the way of people moving forward with their lives will not do so with impunity."

"We welcome this verdict and will follow closely its application in subsequent cases."

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Rules: To be eligible to win click on contests at www.cjnews.com and email us your name, address and daytime phone number or print and fax us the information.

All contest entries received by 3 p.m. on **Tuesday, February 12, 2008** are eligible. The winning entries will be randomly selected at The CJN offices on **Wednesday, February 13, 2008**, at 10 a.m. The winners will be notified the same day.

Odds of winning depend on the number of entries received. One entry per person!

The CJN will not enter into any correspondence with contestants.

Send your entry to: **"Love Song"** at contest@cjnews.com
The Canadian Jewish News, 1500 Don Mills Road, Suite 205,
North York, Ont. M3B 3K4 or fax to: 416-391-0949.

Employees and family members of The CJN and Leah Posluns Theatre are not eligible to enter

Benaim hopes for seniors' home

Continued from page 3

"All the parents came to this country ignorant of the country — where the country was located, the weather, the language — completely ignorant. I could not believe it. But the majority have been successful. Most Moroccans that came to Canada, they came without money," Benaim said, adding that it is important to acknowledge the help they received from JIAS.

"We have come a long way. We have doctors in the community, we have investors. I would say a majority of the people have achieved what they wanted to achieve. Moroccans are getters," he said.

But the Moroccan community isn't just celebrating where they are today, but also where they came from.

Last month, hundreds gathered at the Sephardic Kehila Centre for an event called A Night in Morocco.

The event featured a screening of a documentary called *Jewish Morocco*, by Meyer Ifrah. Ifrah recently travelled to Morocco to conduct interviews with locals, visit the Jewish ghettos where thousands of Jews used to live and film centuries-old synagogues and cemeteries in which renowned tzaddikim are buried.

Following the screening, Mohamed Tanji, the Moroccan ambassador to Canada, spoke to the audience about the positive impact that the Jewish communities had on the country.

Moroccan Jews contributed to the religious, cultural, political and economic development of Morocco, and the religious leaders of the Jewish community had the respect, not only of their own followers, but also the Muslim community, Tanji said. But Benaim, who has been a dedicated community volunteer for decades, is always looking ahead and is currently working on another ambitious project.

"My goal now... is to build a senior citizens' home for Sephardim, because of the language barrier. There will be a retirement home for these old folks who vegetate eight or nine months out of the year in their apartment alone, with nobody to talk to," he said.

"If we had a senior citizen retirement home, they would be housed there, they would be able to speak to their neighbour who speaks Spanish or French, and have certain activities for them."

Benazar is also looking to the future and said he is optimistic because some of the youth are even more exposed to and involved with Judaism than their parents were at their age.

"I'll give you an example: years ago, when we came to a small Moroccan synagogue on Sukkot, we probably had one lulav for the whole synagogue and today, every congregant is carrying a lulav with his children... We built synagogues, and there are more people attached to religion today than there was before."

Coast to Coast



KUGEL COOKERS: *Bulbes* (potatoes) were a staple food of the shtetl, and the title of a well-loved Yiddish song. Grade 7 students at Bialik Hebrew Day School put their translation skills to work recently as they collaborated to make bulbes kugel from an original recipe in Yiddish. Delicious smells wafted through the halls as students enjoyed the fruits of their labour. Pictured hard at work are, from left, Matthew Turk, Noah Gropper, Ryan Nisker, Aliya Szpindel and Rachel Grossman.



DONATION NATION: Grade 6 students at Leo Baack Day School's southern campus pose with representatives of the three highest placing classes in the school's Donation Nation collection for the North York Harvest Food Bank. The graph behind them shows that the winning class reached almost 500 per cent of its goal, pushing the school to more than double its initial target for food collection. Pictured, back row from left, are Gabe Nisker, Spencer Robins, Jordan Pike, Ellie Godfrey and Nate Daviau; and, front row from left, Samantha Posen, Jordan Posen, Samantha Richmond and Chelsea Rozansky.



A CONCERT TO CELEBRATE: Alexis Raphael, second from left, and Cory Raphael, right, from Associated Hebrew Schools' Kamin Education Centre in Thornhill pose with members of an Israel Defence Forces performing group at a recent concert to launch celebrations for Associated's centennial, which will be celebrated throughout 2008.

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish News

MAZEL TOV

Sheila and Sam Sieradzki are delighted to announce the engagement of their daughter Miriam to Steven, son of Arlene and Manny Leder. Proud grandmothers are Leah Halpern and Berta Sieradzki. Excited are siblings, David and Elise Sieradzki and Stacy and Phillip Swartz. Lovingly remembered at this time are grandparents Saul Halpern, Sosia and Max Leder, Gertrude and Benjamin Gilis and Victor Sieradzki.



Happy sixth birthday on Sept. 23 to Billie Madison, daughter of Maxine & Josh Schulman. Love, Bubbie Henna & Zaidie Irving Pomeranz.



Mazel tov to Ezzie Stavsky on his upsherin and third birthday.



Happy third birthday Joshua Ethan, son of Fara & Michael Forman! Love, your sisters Jordyn & Samantha.



Happy eighth birthday Jordyn Forman, daughter of Michael & Fara. Love, your sister Samantha and brother Joshua Ethan.



Mazel tov Joshua Michael, 2, and Avi Rowen, 1, on your birthdays. Parents, Deborah & Evan Young, Boynton Beach, Fla. Grandma Paula Bernstein; great-grandfather Nathan Gornick.



Mazel tov on the birth of Leah Berger, Aug. 14. First child of Neil & Jennifer Berger. Thrilled grandparents Jean & Eugene Doersam and Diane Berger.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos and keep wording to 25 words or less.

Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return.

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What's New deadlines: Monday, Jan. 7, is the deadline for the Jan. 17 issue and Monday, Jan. 14, is the deadline for the Jan. 24 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Saturday, Jan. 5

SHIR LIBEYNU SERVICE

Join Congregation Shir Libeynu for their monthly Shabbat egalitarian service at 10:30 a.m. in the chapel at the Miles Nadal JCC. Service includes Torah reading, discussion and celebration. Free childcare. Kiddush to follow. 416-465-5488. www.shirlibeynu.ca

Sunday, Jan. 6

BAGELS & A MOVIE

Join Beth Emeth Sisterhood for "Bagels and A Movie," watch the comedy *Keeping Up With the Steins*.

a bar mitzvah celebration Hollywood style. 10:45 a.m. \$3. For information contact Rosemary Cohen, 416-633-3838.

Monday, Jan. 7

RELIGION 101

Ever wonder what Jews should know about Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam? This 3-part-series with Rabbi Wayne Allen will focus on the three religions that have over 3 billion adherents. Tonight, 8 p.m. at Beth Emeth Synagogue. Jan. 21, 8 p.m. at Beth Tikvah Synagogue and Jan. 28, 8 p.m. at Beth Emeth Synagogue.

Tuesday, Jan. 8

LUNCH AND LEARN

Temple Israel of London offers a study and friendship group, 12:15-1:30 p.m. Today, watch a film, Jan. 15, get ready for Tu B'Shvat. Bring a lunch. Coffee, tea and dessert served. 519-858-4400

BLOOD DONOR CLINIC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre will hold a blood donor clinic from 3:30-8 p.m. in the Jerusalem Room. Call 1-888-2DONATE to book an appointment.

TUESDAYS AT THE MOVIES

Beth Tikvah Synagogue presents "Tuesdays with Larry," an 8-week Tuesday afternoon movie series moderated by Larry Ankiewicz, program co-ordinator of The Toronto Jewish Film Festival. Jan.

8-Feb. 26, 2 p.m. Today, *The Forward: From Immigrants to Americans*, the story of the world's most successful Yiddish-language newspaper. \$5. 416-221-3434

JEWISH INFO COURSE

Am Shalom Barrie and the Canadian Council for Reform Judaism are sponsoring an adult oriented course geared to Jews and non-Jews who want to learn more about the Jewish faith and is a requirement for those wishing to convert to Judaism. This 30-week course begins tonight at 767 Huronia Rd. \$650, \$800 per couple. Register. 416-630-0375, ext. 223 or kgoldstein@urj.org.

Wednesday, Jan. 9

CAREGIVER SUPPORT

The Circle of Care offers a Family

Caregiver Spousal Support Group, an 8-week support group which examines issues including the caregiving relationship, the role of the caregiver and its challenges, changes in the care recipient and coping strategies for adapting to the new family reality. Begins today, 10-11:30 a.m. \$25. subsidies available. For info, Joe Durand, 416-635-2860, ext. 472.

Other News

CONCERT: CARMEL TRIO

Enjoy a concert by The Carmel Trio, Eyal Ein Hadar, flautist, Stephan Sylvestre, pianist, and Dudu Carmel, oboist, at the Al Green Theatre, Sat. Jan 12, 8 p.m. \$25. Tickets call Canada-Israeli Cultural Foundation, 416-932-2260, or the First Narayver Congregation, 416-927-0546.

Continued on page 23

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What's New

Continued from page 22

BAT MITZVAH CLUB

Chabad Lubavitch of Markham's bat mitzvah club begins Sunday, Jan. 13. To register call, 905-886-0420, ext. 221.

YIDDISH CLASSES

The Committee for Yiddish offers Yiddish language classes for adults at beginner, intermediate and advanced levels. Conversation, reading and writing at each level. Sundays, 10 a.m. to noon, beginning Jan. 13. \$110 for 12 sessions. Conversational Yiddish, materials provided in transliteration, is offered Wednesdays beginning Jan. 9, 1:30-3:30 p.m. \$90 for 10 sessions. The free Children's Yiddish class with language, culture and the celebration of Jewish holidays, continues on Sundays, 9:30 a.m. to noon. Children ages 4-10 are welcome to join. There is a \$20 supply fee. Classes are held at the BJCC. Registration, 416-635-2883, ext. 389 or ecooper@ujafed.org.

CONCERT: BIG BAND

Enjoy a free concert celebrating Israel at 60 by the Thelma Yellin School of Arts Big Band. Sunday, Jan. 13, 2 p.m. at the Al Green Theatre. Tickets, MNJCC reception or 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

JANUARY COURSES

Mekorot offers 3 new courses in January 2008. "My God, Why Have You Abandoned Me: Innocent Suffering and Religious Agony" with **James Diamond**. Study and discuss the challenge to religious faith of innocent suffering and catastrophe versus an omnipotent, just and all merciful God. Mondays, Jan. 14-Feb. 4, 8 p.m. at Or Chaim Yeshiva. "Between Reverence and Resistance: Reactions to Rashi's Commentary on the Torah" with **Eric Lawee**. Study reactions to the Rashi's biblical commentary, the most authoritative and widely studied Jewish commentary. Wednesdays, Jan. 16-Feb. 6, 8 p.m. at Congregation Bnai Torah. "King David and His Wives" with **Rachel Adelman** draws on classical medieval commentary, Midrash, modern literary readings, art and poetry to study David's relationships with four women in his life: Avigail, Michal, Bathsheba and Avishag. Mondays, Jan. 21-Feb. 11, 9:45-11:00 a.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. All welcome. Each \$50. Register, 416-877-2050 or www.mekorot.ca.

SAR-EL INFO MEETING

Find out about the Sar-El program, civilian volunteers working on Israeli army supply/maintenance bases.

Thursday, Jan. 15, 7:30 p.m. 788 Marlee Ave. 416-781-6089 or www.sarelcana.org.

SISTERHOOD SHABBAT

Beth David Sisterhood invites the community to Sisterhood Shabbat Saturday, Jan. 19 when sisterhood members will lead the *davening* and **Rabbi Elyse Goldstein**, director of Kollel, will give the *d'var torah* and after-lunch learning session. \$20, pre-paid luncheon RSVP and pay before Jan. 8 at sisterhood@bethdavid.com or **Annette**, 416-635-8910, **Myra**, 416-663-2345 or 416-633-5500.

PLAYSCHOOL OPENINGS

Garnet A. Williams Community Centre 2-year-old playschool has spaces available. Children may be in pull-ups or diapers. This is an on-my-own program with music, gym, circle, free play and theme days. Register and information, 905-832-8552 or www.vaughan.ca.

AMPUTEE SUPPORT

Chazak V'Ematz, outreach support for all amputees to help them adjust to life, meets to discuss new products and prosthetic devices. For information and confidential support call **Ruth**, 416-783-3717

EATING DISORDERS

Eating Disorders of York Region provides services, education, support groups for families and friends of individuals who are affected by eating disorders. Thursdays, 7:30-8:30 p.m. at Thornhill Square Mall, 300 John St., suite 271. Info, 416-576-0457 or visit www.edoyr.com.

WOMEN'S SUPPORT GROUP

National Council of Jewish Women hosts a women's support group that meets every second Tuesday to network, share, address concerns and have fun, in an informal environment. 10-11:30 a.m. at 4700 Bathurst St. TTC and wheelchair accessible. Info, **Rachel**, 416-633-5100. Free and open to all women in the community.

JIAS TORONTO

Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, 4600 Bathurst St. #325. www.jias.toronto.org. To register, volunteer, or for more information on these programs call 416-630-6481.

Conversation Cafes: Newcomers to Canada practice speaking English in a casual friendly environment with JIAS volunteers. Interested participants or volunteers should call **Joanna**, ext. 30.

Youth Groups: Programs for newcomer children and teens. Both Canadians and newcomers get community service hours for participation in our teen group. For

more information call **Joanna**, ext. 30.

JUMPStart: If you have a networking or job opportunity in the skilled labour market for a newcomer, connect to our JUMPStart program by calling **Elisa**, ext. 28.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service, 4600 Bathurst St. Information/registration 416-638-7800 or www.jfandcs.com. Call **Shawna** ext. 215 for info and registration.

How to talk to Your 'Ex' So That You Get What You Need. A 2-session workshop to help individuals learn effective communication and listening skills in order to better deal with their ex-spouse and issues around parenting and the children. Begins Tuesday, Jan. 22, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at The Promenade Mall suite #313.

FOR SENIORS

Beth Tzedec Congregation Haverim Program hosts a video presentation by **Gordon Bean**, professor emeritus, Ryerson University, on "The Gershwin Brothers: George and Ira, and their Music." Mon. Jan. 7, 1:30 p.m. 416-781-3512.

The Association of Jewish Seniors' hosts **Susan Jackson**, of UJA Federation, discussing "Jewish Toronto: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow" at their general meeting. Thurs. Jan. 17, 1 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. Members free, guests \$2. For info and reservations call **Tammy**, 416-635-2860, ext. 458.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Casino Rama. Wed. Jan. 9. Mahjong, Tuesdays 10 a.m.-1 p.m.; Bridge, Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m. Info, Tues.-Thurs. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 416-395-7881.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE 1003 Steeles Ave. W. 416-225-2112.

"Festival of Lights" a lecture by **Diane Mingail**. Tuesday, Jan. 8, 10 a.m. Members \$2, non-members \$4.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www.mnjcc.org.

Register now for a full line of Jewish life courses including Hebrew, Aramaic, Jewish Meditation.

Virtual Family Tree Workshop with **Bill Gladstone**. \$50, \$75 per couple. To register, contact the Ontario Jewish Archives, 416-635-2883, ext. 170.

Klezmer Players Workshop, a 10-week ensemble with **Eric Stein**, from Beyond the Pale. Tuesdays, 7:30-9:30 p.m., beginning Jan. 15. Adult pottery, Wednesdays 7-10 p.m. beginning Jan. 16.

Toronto Jewish Film Society subscription membership. 8 film events from January through December. Sunday screenings 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Contact **Joelle Malka**, ext. 606 or joellem@mnjcc.org.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

The Family Place at The Jewish Discovery Museum is adding new classes for young children ages birth to 6 this winter. Call about daytime, evening, and weekend programs. Info, call ext. 390.

New Session of Teva Tots, a program designed for curious preschoolers. Using art, science, music and drama this class will explore nature through a Jewish

lens. For information call ext. 390.

Introduce your baby or toddler to Hebrew through lullabies, nursery rhymes, and Israeli children's music. Native Hebrew speakers and beginners welcome. To register call ext. 235.

Give the Gift of Fitness, 30 percent off adult memberships. Call ext. 291 for more information.

The BJCC Seniors-Online computer lab specializes in computer and Internet classes for those 55+. Each course is four weeks long, two classes per week. \$55, non-members \$70. Register ext. 235.

jVIAnetwork, connecting active vision impaired Jewish adults, to enable recreational and phys-ed program, varied outings and activities to allow for socialization and networking. Info, call **Bess**, 905-508-2892.

Volunteers wanted

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

The centre has community outreach that includes Meals on Wheels, friendly visiting, dial-a-friend and free respite services. If you have 2-3 hours a week consider visiting a senior once a week. No nursing or physical care necessary. Call **Naomi Ziegler**, 416-225-2112, ext. 127.

BATHURST JCC

The BJCC is looking for volunteers and staff for The Family Place at The Jewish Discovery Museum. Applicants must be friendly, dependable and enjoy working with children. For information call **Sarah** at ext. 390.

CORRECTION

The contact person in the Club for the Blind item in the Dec. 13 issue should have read **Bess**, 905-508-2892.



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Blake, Harvey	Dec. 15/07	1101 Leslie St
Orlans, Benjamin Louis	Dec. 15/07	75 Stonedene Blvd
Eskina, Nonna	Dec. 16/07	Private
Chernyak, Kira	Dec. 16/07	Private
Krasnovskaya, Lidia	Dec. 18/07	Private
Rosenthal, Aleksandr	Dec. 18/07	10 Trench St
Kats, Tsiirya	Dec. 20/07	4455 Bathurst St
Morris, Arnold	Dec. 20/07	
Donsky, Irving	Dec. 20/07	
Schiffinger, Abraham	Dec. 20/07	

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

David Dale	Dec 7/07	6200 Bathurst St
Allan Spring	Dec 7/07	250 South Hollybrook Terr
Margaret Lang	Dec 8/07	205 Cummer Ave
Ben Edelberg	Dec 8/07	3560 Bathurst St
Perry Labow	Dec 9/07	7300 Yonge St
Lily Schatz	Dec 9/07	100 Canyon Ave
Lynne Newton	Dec 10/07	3560 Bathurst St
Mannie Perry	Dec 10/07	4100 Bathurst St
Anne Spetter	Dec 11/07	55 Ameer Ave
Fred Turack	Dec 12/07	134 Beverley Glen Blvd
Samuel Rich	Dec 12/07	4001 Bayview Ave
Faygie Winbaum	Dec 12/07	3560 Bathurst St
Cheryl Gelber	Dec 13/07	62 Almeda Cir
Ruth Tozman	Dec 13/07	27 Salonia Rd
Murray Perry	Dec 13/07	3705 Bathurst St
Max Lipovitch	Dec 14/07	680 Roselawn Ave
Rachel Frydberg	Dec 14/07	100 Canyon
Sam Sidney Groll	Dec 14/07	3303 Don Mills Rd



Gizella Landory	Dec 9/07	550 Cummer Ave
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On Campus

New Jewish studies program on its way

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

A husband and wife team, both Harvard University scholars, are hoping that a new adult education Jewish studies program in the Greater Toronto Area will help build bridges between the academy and the Jewish community.

Hindy Najman, a professor of ancient Judaism at the University of Toronto, is the co-dean of the Maimonides Schools for Jewish Learning in the GTA and Hamilton, along with her husband, Paul Franks, also a U of T professor in the Jewish studies program.

Inspired by the success of similar programs in other North American cities, including Boston and Chicago, Najman and Franks thought that the Toronto Jewish community would benefit from a new Jewish studies program.

"The program really focuses on the whole history of Judaism, from Jewish thought to Jewish history to Jewish interpretation, and it is intended to raise the bar of Jewish education throughout the city," Najman said.

The school is hoping to cater to professionals and teachers who are seeking a master's degree that may be useful in Jewish education or communal service, as well as those who simply want to enrol in courses to deepen their Jewish knowledge.

To obtain a master's degree a student must complete 10 courses that consist of 10 weekly sessions. To be accepted into the program, a student must have a bachelor's degree that a school like York University or U of T would recognize, and two letters of recommendation from teachers, rabbis, employers, or colleagues.

"There is a lot of desire and interest. We want teachers to have an opportunity to keep learning and that is exactly what happens at Hebrew College in Boston. It is filled with high school teachers and it's filled with lay people. Many of the teachers are from Brandeis [University], or from Harvard or from Boston University, which is great," Najman said.

"We've had a lot of inquiries from people who just want to get a master's, not because they want to teach, and not because they want to go on to do doctoral work... but because they're goal-oriented. This is Toronto — they are high-powered, they're really interested, they're very intelligent, they're well educated and they'd like to acquire a master's."

The school, which is established and chartered as an institute of higher learning in Ontario, has attracted faculty from some of the best institutions in Canada, including Harry Fox and Robert Gibbs from U of T, Sam Ajzenstat and Alan Mendelson from McMaster University, and Isaac Hollander from York.

"There are courses in Jewish thought, ancient Judaism, in modern Hebrew prose,

in medieval polemics, the conversation between Christianity and Judaism and Islam, as well as courses... on the development of Jewish thought and interpretation," Najman said.

"The idea is to have as broad of a stretch both methodologically and textually, depending on people's interests and background."

Najman added that this brand of Jewish education won't be tied to any denomination or particular community.

"This is not Torah in Motion, and this is not Mekorot (the Institute of Torah Study for Women)... Those are excellent programs for the community, [but] we're not in competition with them," she said.

"It is not focused on the Orthodox community, it is not focused on the Conservative community. The faculty is deliberately variegated. They are from different parts of the Jewish community, so we are open to have students of all different levels and all different interests and to help locate them in the program."

Najman said the administrators plan to poll students about what interests them so they can mould the program into what the students want.

"We're going to offer a wide variety of courses. There isn't going to be repetition, unless there is a demand for it."

She added that she hopes the professors will teach the same course on several levels — introductory, intermediate and advanced — depending on the students' expectations.

"What we want to do right now is figure out what the needs are of the Toronto Jewish community. That is our goal. And to try to address those needs and co-ordinate the demand with our product, what we're able to give students," she said.

Najman expects that most of her clientele will be Hebrew day school parents, so as their children grow in a Jewish learning environment, so will they.

"It's a way of enhancing family life, not just personal development. The entire family unit will grow through these courses," she said.

"This is about a relationship with the community... What we'd like to see is a growing relationship between the academy and the community... It's about a regular and natural relationship with the university."

Classes begin Jan. 21 and will be held at four different locations: The Wolfond Centre for Jewish Campus Life, the B'nai Brith Building on Hove Street, the Yeshiva of Hamilton, and Associated Hebrew School on Atkinson Avenue.

For a master's degree, each course will cost \$375. For non-degree students, each course costs \$175.

The registrar of the school, Norman Smith, will be accepting applications until mid-January.

For more information visit www.maimonidesschools.ca or contact Smith at registrar@maimonidesschools.ca.

Program focuses on whole history of Judaism

Food, Scrumptious Food

Brunch made easy

By NORENE GILLETZ

In January, when the days are cold, dark and dreary, why not invite guests to join you for brunch? Sharing food with friends and family around the table is always a wonderful way to warm the heart. And if you are lucky enough to be a snowbird in a warm, sunny location, these simple, delicious dishes will also please those lucky enough to be seated at your table.

Most brunch dishes are loaded with fat and calories – but not the ones below. Here are two favourites that are sure to bring rave reviews. Best of all, they can be made in advance with ingredients you can buy at the local supermarket – little work, no guilt! To your health!

CRUSTLESS SPINACH & MUSHROOM QUICHE

Source: *Healthy Helpings* (originally published as *Meal, Leani Yumm!*)

The processor makes quick work of this healthy, flavour-packed quiche!

10 oz. (300 g) package frozen spinach
1 large onion
1/2 cup red pepper
2 tsp. canola oil
1 lb. (250 g) mushrooms
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 slices whole-wheat bread
1 egg plus 2 egg whites
1/4 cup skim milk
1/2 cup grated low-fat Swiss or cheddar cheese
1 cup low-fat ricotta or cottage cheese
2 tbsp. grated Parmesan cheese
salt and pepper, to taste
1 tbsp. minced fresh dill

Preheat oven to 350. Spray a 10-inch ceramic quiche dish with nonstick spray (or spray miniature muffin tins very well). Pierce package of spinach with a sharp knife in several places. Place on a microsafe plate and microwave on HIGH for 3 to 4 minutes, until defrosted. When cool, remove from package and squeeze dry.

In the processor, chop onion and red pepper with quick on/off. In a large nonstick skillet, heat oil on medium-high. Sauté onion and pepper until soft, about 5 minutes. Chop mushrooms with quick on/off. Add to skillet along with garlic. Sauté 5 minutes longer. Remove from heat; cool slightly.

Process bread to make soft crumbs. Add spinach and process until fine. Add egg, egg whites, milk and cheeses; mix well. Add sautéed vegetables and mix with quick on/off. Add seasonings and dill. Spoon mixture into prepared pan(s) and bake at 350 F until golden. Bake minis 18 to 20 minutes or a large quiche for 40 to 45 minutes. Yield: 10 wedges or 3 dozen miniatures. Reheats and/or freezes well.

Garden Vegetable Quiche: Omit spinach and mushrooms. Substitute a 10-oz. (300 g) package frozen mixed vegetables (broccoli, cauliflower, carrots). Cook frozen vegetables as per package directions. Add to quiche mixture along with sautéed vegetables.

For a Crowd: Double the recipe and bake in a sprayed 10 x 15-inch jelly roll pan. (Sometimes I sprinkle the bottom of the pan lightly with seasoned bread crumbs before adding quiche mixture.) Cut in large squares as a main dish or small squares as hors d'oeuvres.

CRAZY BLINTZ SOUFFLE

Source: *The Food Processor Bible*

Linda Warner of Farmington Hills, Mich., sent me her recipe for this brunch dish. You can prepare the batter and filling a day in advance and assemble it just before baking. The original recipe called for 1 cup of butter. My version has a fraction of the fat! Serve this with sour cream or yogurt and top with sliced almonds or jam.

Batter:

1 cup flour
1 tbsp. baking powder
dash salt
1/2 cup margarine or butter, melted and cooled
1/2 cup sugar
2 eggs (or 1/2 cup egg substitute)
1/2 cup milk (skim or 1%)
1 tsp. vanilla or 1/2 tsp. almond extract

Filling:

3 cups (1 1/2 lb.) ricotta cheese (low-fat is fine)
2 cups (1 lb./500 g) light cream cheese
2 eggs (or 1/2 cup egg substitute)
1/4 cup sugar
juice of a large lemon (3 1/2 tbsp.)
1 tsp. each grated lemon and orange peel
dash salt

Spray a 9 x 13-inch glass baking dish with nonstick spray. (You can also use two 9-inch pie plates.) Use the Steel Blade to process all ingredients.

For batter: Combine all ingredients and blend until smooth, about 30 seconds, scraping down sides of bowl once or twice. Transfer batter to a 4 cup measuring cup or bowl. (Don't bother washing processor bowl. Just scrape it out well with a

spatula.)

For filling: Process ricotta cheese and cream cheese until smooth, about 30 seconds. Add remaining filling ingredients and process 30 seconds longer.

Assembly: Pour half the batter into prepared dish. Spoon filling over, gently spreading without mixing it into the batter. Pour remaining batter over filling.

Bake in preheated oven at 300 about 1 1/2 hours, until set and nicely browned. (If baked in two pie plates, baking time is about 1 1/2 hours.) Yield: 12 servings. Reheats and/or freezes well.

Note: Cottage cheese can be used instead of ricotta cheese. I've also made this using 4 cups ricotta cheese and 1 cup cottage cheese, with excellent results.

Norene Gilletz is a cookbook author, cooking teacher and food consultant. Her latest book is *Norene's Healthy Kitchen (Whitecap)*. For information about her cookbooks, classes and services, call 416-226-2466 or visit her website at <http://www.gourmania.com>.

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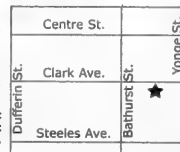
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Norene Gilletz

And now for something completely different:

HEEBONICS

From hippie roots to standup hoots

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Mo Mandel was born to scared, hippie parents who fled New York to settle in the backwoods of Boonville, Calif.

They'd heard that if a nuclear bombardment occurred in the United States, something about Boonville's geographic location would miraculously shield its residents from any radioactive fallout.

With a quirky life setup like that, it's no wonder the man became a standup comedian.

Speaking to *CJN/Heebonics* from California late last year, Mandel, 26, - who is rapidly making a name for himself in comedic circles on the West Coast - was game to discuss anything and everything, from his drugged-out parents to his desire to someday come to Canada and perform "in the Canadian super... bowl, dome, thing. Whatever you've got going on up there."

OK, so he's not too up on Canadian landmarks.

Still, the winner of the 2007 Open Mic Fight - ComedyCentral's yearly amateur standup contest, decided upon via Internet fan voting - is rapidly increasing the scope of his travels after his big win.

After winning the Open Mic Fight last October, Mandel was picked up by the Gersh Agency, a powerhouse talent agency representing many comic superstars, including Dave Chappelle, Drew Carey and Andy Samberg.

"[Standup comedy] is all about getting your name around. It's a pretty small world, so once everyone starts talking... all it takes is one person to mention you to one club owner and [your reputation] spreads like wildfire," Mandel said.

Surprisingly, he credits his contest win to the influence of the people behind the birthright Israel experience - which he participated in last summer - who sent out mass e-mail alerts, urging birthrighters to vote for him online.

"They're an awesome organization. They shot out e-mail to 180,000 people... basically the entire alumni of birthright, telling them to vote," he said, adding that he's sure someone at the organization regrets the decision because some of his humour pokes fun at Jewish stereotypes.

"I do a joke about Jewish women being unattractive. I bet they didn't see that," he said with a laugh.

For most comedians, himself included, the journey from obscurity to fame is a hard one, Mandel admitted.

"I don't know if I wanna be that guy who's always on the road. I may want a more normal life," Mandel said.

When it's mentioned to him that a standup career and "normal life" may not be compatible goals, Mandel agreed.

"Yeah, I'm starting to see that now. My girlfriend is always telling me how she never gets to see me in the daylight hours. She works [all day], and then I come home at 1 a.m. It's hard," he said.

But he's far from throwing in the towel. Instead, Mandel hopes to secure more acting, writing and comedy gigs after making the move to Los Angeles.

Mandel's always loved writing - his website states he pursued a degree in creative writing at the University of California at Santa Barbara "while taking extra curricular courses in social rejection" - but to hear Mandel tell it, he knew early on it wasn't the career for him.

"I was always interested in writing a novel, which I did," he said. "But the problem is that no one reads it. So I said, 'I wanna get some more feedback and feel it.' The thing about standup is that you can write something on the way to the club and share it with people right away."

And with his Jewish, albeit unconventional, family and personal history, it took him no time to translate life into art.

"I was exposed to guys like Jackie Mason and Woody Allen from an early age... which probably wouldn't have happened if I was Puerto Rican," he quipped.

"And I was a really small kid growing up. I was like, 103 pounds in high school. Our family was only one of four Jewish ones in our town. So a lot of times we were at the mercy of the redneck kids [and] the Mexican kids... and I had these Jewish intellectual parents from New York who had moved out into the middle of nowhere, because they wanted their kid to grow up oppressed."

Along the way, Mandel said he experienced Jewish rites of passage and traditions unlike those of other Jews.

"My bar mitzvah was in the woods in a eucalyptus grove, which was very cool," he recalled. "My parents set up some chairs and my mom invited a native American shaman friend of hers. He was there playing drums and singing songs. So it definitely wasn't your classic East Coast bar mitzvah by any stretch."

Even his first name was arrived at by divine, hippie providence, he said.



Comedian Mo Mandel promotes his Open Mic Fight performance last October

"My real name is Mohahn. My dad went to a used bookstore... and was looking up names in a New Age baby-name book," Mandel said. "He didn't feel it was necessary to buy the book. He just sat in the store, writing down names."

"He was [being] rushed, so he wrote down the name 'Mohahn,' which he thought was in the Hebrew section. It wasn't until my bris that the rabbi pointed out that it wasn't a Hebrew name at all. Turns out it's a Hindu name."

Dad had been to the Hindu section. But my parents were like, 'Screw it. It's too late.' So I have a Hindu first name."

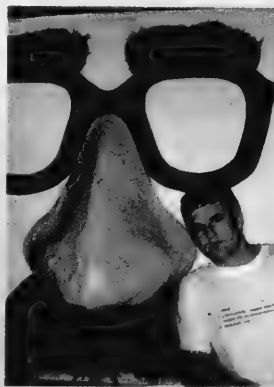
It's perhaps partly for these reasons that Mandel's standup comedy act is rife with undertones of anger and frustration. "Yeah, I like to push the envelope," he said.

"The whole fun is challenging the audience... daring you to hate me while at the same time keeping you on my side, kinda thing. To me, it's not really worth it unless [the joke] is in your face and it's a boxing match with the audience."

Mandel, who has already shared stage time with Craig Ferguson, Dana Carvey and Dave Attell, among others, is scheduled to continue touring across America in 2008 and to perform in another Comedy Central special this March.

"I've been lucky that people have thought I was funny enough to put me on their shows. But comedy is a funny thing. A lot of the time it comes down to one guy [who will book you] for a show. It's so subjective. It's a bizarre little world."

For more information, visit www.momandel.com.



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PM to Abbas:

Israel won't undermine final status talks

By BARAK RAVID

Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd

JERUSALEM — Israel will not undermine negotiations toward a final-status agreement, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert promised Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas during their meeting in Jerusalem last Thursday.

"Israel will take no steps that would undermine the ability to reach a final-status agreement or that would delay the negotiations," Olmert told Abbas during their first meeting since the Annapolis conference a month ago.

The prime minister made the statement in response to Palestinian complaints about the announced tender for the construction of 307 new homes in the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Har Choma. However, he did not promise that the tender would be halted.

According to one government source, "the sides resolved the differences that had been weighing on the talks and agreed to proceed with negotiations on the core issues." That is the term used to describe the thorniest disputes between Israel and the Palestinians, namely Jerusalem, refugees and borders.

"Both sides wanted to resolve the crisis and recognized that there is no point in stalling the entire process over such an issue," explained another senior government source.

According to that source, Olmert and Abbas agreed that the matter of construction in the territories, as well as in Jerusalem, will be discussed during the negotiations on the core issues.

The two also agreed to resume their bi-

weekly meetings, and to have their negotiating teams meet again next week. At that meeting, the teams will seek to reach an agreement on a framework for talks on the core issues.

The Palestinians also raised the issue of a prisoner release, and Olmert told Abbas that Israel intended to "loosen" its definition of "blood on their hands," the euphemism used in Israel to describe Palestinians who were involved in murdering Israelis.

"We are considering the release of veteran prisoners who we are sure will not go back to terrorism, but there is still no decision on this matter," the senior government source said.

At the start of the meeting, Abbas expressed the Palestinians' opposition to further construction at Har Choma and protested the issuance of the tender. In response, Olmert said that "Israel will not construct new settlements, will not confiscate land and will evacuate the illegal outposts."

"Israel wishes to conduct the negotiations with goodwill," the prime minister added.

Two earlier meetings of the negotiating teams, headed respectively by Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni and former Palestinian prime minister Ahmed Qureia, had gone nowhere, as the talks stalled over the issue of settlement construction.

Last week, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice telephoned both Olmert and Abbas and asked them to use their meeting to resolve the impasse. "It is important to me that you progress," Rice told the two leaders, adding that they must not allow the differences between them to widen.



From left, Israel's Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, chief Palestinian negotiator and former prime minister Ahmed Qureia, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert stand together during their meeting in Jerusalem late last month, in this picture released by the Israeli Government Press Office (GPO). Olmert and Abbas met to try to end an impasse over Jewish settlement building that has paralyzed month-long peace talks. [RNS photo]

Olmert praises Bhutto

JTA

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert mourned the assassination last Thursday of Pakistani opposition leader Benazir Bhutto, saying she was open to ties with the Jewish state.

"I saw her as someone who could have served as a bridgehead to relations with that part of the Muslim world with whom our ties are naturally limited," Olmert told the *Jerusalem Post*.

According to Olmert, upon her return to Pakistan two months ago, Bhutto relayed a message through a mutual acquaintance that she would "in the future like to strengthen the ties between Israel and Pakistan."

Israel and Pakistan, the only Muslim country in the world with nuclear weapons, do not currently have diplomatic relations.

Other Israeli leaders, including President Shimon Peres, expressed similar sentiments. "I had the chance to meet her on several occasions, in which she expressed interest in Israel and said that she hoped to visit upon returning to power," Peres said in a statement. "Benazir was a charismatic leader and a fighter for peace in her country and across the world."

The Canadian Jewish Congress issued its own statement condemning the assassina-

tion.

"Ms. Bhutto had returned to her beloved country as a champion of democracy but now she has had her name added to the list of world leaders struck down by terrorist violence for that very commitment," said congress co-president Sylvain Abitbol.

"All nations must strive to eliminate the scourge of terrorism and to work toward a stabilized Pakistan in the interests of regional and international stability and peace," he added.

Congress's other co-president, Rabbi Reuven Bulka, echoed Abitbol's sentiment.

"We join with the mourning community in condemning this atrocity, and pray for the souls of the victims, the apprehension of those responsible, and that Pakistan and its people will have the strength and resilience to heal from this terrible blow," Bulka stated.

Congress' immediate past president, Ed Morgan, expressed his organization's condolences to those affected in Canada.

"CJC supports the members of the Pakistani community in Canada who mourn the passing of Benazir Bhutto and the dozens of other innocent victims of recent suicide attacks in Pakistan."

With files from Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf of The CJN.



NEVER TOO OLD TO MAKE ALIYAH: Berta Lovinger, 96, is seen here outside the old terminal building at Ben-Gurion Airport with some of her family, after her arrival in Israel from Outremont, Quebec last week. Lovinger, who was met by her five grandchildren, will for the time being stay with her daughter and son-in-law, Miriam & Itamar Pollack, in Petach Tikvah. The Pollacks came on aliyah themselves just four months ago from Connecticut. Lovinger was one of 191 new immigrants arrived from Canada and the United States aboard a specially chartered El Al flight organized by Nefesh B'Nefesh, an organization that encourages aliyah mainly from North America and Britain. [Isranet photo]

Israel & the Jewish World

Israel, Egypt spar over smuggling into Gaza

By ROY EITAN

JTA

SHARM EL-SHEIKH, Egypt — Old warriors-turned-statesmen from Israel and Egypt met last week to head off a diplomatic dispute over the smuggling of weapons into the Hamas-led Gaza Strip.

Two days after Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni told a Knesset panel that Cairo was doing a "dismal" job of preventing weapons and cash from reaching Gaza via the Egyptian Sinai, Israeli Defence Minister Ehud Barak flew to Egypt to mend fences.

In the languorous Red Sea resort town of Sharm al Sheikh, Barak and a senior Israeli security entourage held intensive talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Mubarak's intelligence chief Omar Suleiman, and his defence minister Hussein Tantawi.

The Israelis were at pains to play down Livni's remarks and reaffirm the almost 30-year-old peace accord with Egypt, the key Arab power broker on the Palestinian front. Despite ongoing tensions with Egypt, Israeli officials say the Jewish state can ill afford a crisis in relations with its most powerful Arab diplomatic partner.

Barak, who traded tales with Tantawi about their experiences fighting one another as regimental infantry commanders during the 1973 Yom Kippur War, said after the talks, "I come away persuaded that both sides consider the peace a strategic asset."

"The matter surrounding Tzipi's remarks is behind us," Barak said, though he declined to get into details on what, if any, agreements had been reached with the Egyptians on the arms smuggling. Israel believes Gazan gunrunners have brought tons of weapons and explosives into the Gaza Strip from Egypt since Israel quit Gaza in 2005. The arms smuggling has intensified since Hamas took control of the strip last June.

"On Dec. 26, Israel presented Egypt with surveillance footage that Jerusalem said showed Egyptian border policemen actively abetting smugglers. The Egyptians, who have long complained that the 1978 Camp David accord unfairly limits the number of police it can station on the Gaza frontier, were, at least publicly, unmoved."

"Egypt is tackling all the violations which some people might try to carry out on the Egyptian-Palestinian border," Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit said.

Israel has refused Egypt's suggestions that the Camp David accord be reviewed to allow expansion of the Egyptian garrison along the Gaza border.

"Fighting terror is a matter of pinpoint operations against this or that agent or smuggler," a senior Barak aide said. "Egypt has superlative security forces which have ensured that in this country of 72 million people there is no terror."

We want the same in Gaza."

Meanwhile, Gheit accused "the Israeli lobby" in Washington of pushing Congress to trim some of the \$2 billion in annual U.S. aid to Egypt.

Barak denied there was an Israeli government initiative to target Cairo's coffers, but the exchange with Gheit coincided with a visit to Israel this week by U.S. Sen. Arlen Specter (R-Pa.) and U.S. Rep. Patrick Kennedy (D-R.I.), who voiced support for withholding U.S. aid to Cairo as leverage to get the Egyptians to take concrete actions against the smuggling.



Israeli Minister of Defence Ehud Barak, met with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Sharm El-Sheikh in late December. [RNS photo]

"We do not push anything in the Congress, but of course our relationship is very close and we answer when we are asked questions," Barak told Egyptian reporters.

On Dec. 25, an unnamed Egyptian official told the *Jerusalem Post* that Cairo recently bought a multimillion-dollar advanced technological system that will allow it to find tunnels used to smuggle arms under the Egypt-Gaza border.

"It is in our interest to stop the smuggling," the Egyptian official told the *Post*. "We have no interest in seeing a radical Muslim group, with ties with the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, rise up along our border."

Israel's accusatory tack, the official said, "harms relations between Israel and Egypt and it does the opposite of what we would like to do, which is to strengthen relations."

Israeli experts say Mubarak is not doing all he can to scuttle Hamas in Gaza because Mubarak wants to avoid angering his most potent rivals in Egypt, the Muslim Brother-

hood, which spawned the radical Palestinian Islamist movement.

Some experts say Cairo has a vested interest in perpetuating the low-intensity war between Hamas and Israel in Gaza, because it draws public attention in Egypt away from domestic problems like the dearth of civil rights in the country. This is the charge analysts long have levelled at Arab regimes, saying they use the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to distract their populations from problems at home.

In an apparent bid to deflect Israel's criticism, Egypt suggested the government of Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert was using the smuggling issue to obfuscate Israel's crisis of confidence with the Palestinians over Israeli residential construction in the disputed Har Choma neighbourhood of Jerusalem.

Israel's smuggling charges are "a smoke-screen to shift attention from settlement construction and the follow-up on Annapolis," Mubarak spokesman Suleiman Awad said.

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas has called the Har Choma project a violation of the 2003 "road map" peace plan and a breach of the joint Israeli-Palestinian statement reached last month at Annapolis, Md., where the two sides pledged to revive bilateral negotiations.

Olmert, who says Jerusalem's neighbourhoods should not be considered part of West Bank land where the Palestinians want a state, is due to meet Abbas on Thursday to sort out the impasse.

Barak shrugged off Awad's charge and, in his public comments, made sure to maintain a cordial tone toward his Egyptian hosts. Besides sharing a border with Gaza, Egypt is seen as an important intermediary for efforts to retrieve Cpl. Gilad Shalit, the Israeli soldier abducted by Palestinian gunmen in June 2006.

Hamas is demanding Israel release hundreds of jailed Palestinian terrorists as ransom for Shalit — something Olmert long has ruled out. But the Israeli prime minister signalled some flexibility this week by appointing a Cabinet committee to review the criteria for which Palestinian inmates might be set free in swap.

After the talks in Egypt, a senior Barak aide said there might be a breakthrough on the Shalit issue, though not imminently.

"My sense is that we will have to relax our position, as will Hamas, until we come to some sort of arrangement," the aide said.

Israel welcomes large contingent of Iranian olim

Continued from page 1

The immigrants who arrived on Dec. 25 flew to Israel through a third country, although which country cannot be published at this time.

There are an estimated 25,000 to 28,000 Jews currently living in Iran. The Islamic government does grant them relative freedom of religion, although they are prevented from learning Hebrew and face certain emigration restrictions.

The operation was sponsored by the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, a charity that funnels millions of dollars from evangelical donors each year.

Yehiel Eckstein, a rabbi who founded the Jewish-evangelical International Fellowship

of Christians and Jews, warned in a telephone interview from Chicago that the situation facing Iranian Jews is critical, because of the attitude of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who has repeatedly called for Israel to be wiped off the map.

"Our feeling is that this is very similar to the situation of Jews in Germany in the 1930s," Eckstein said of the threat facing Jews in Iran. "By the time they realize it's not going to blow over, it'll be too late. All it needs is a U.S. or Israeli strike against Iran's nuclear program for them to come down strong on the local Jewish population."

Benjamin Yakobi, 16, has lived in Israel seven years. Waiting for his cousin, he said Israel is safer than Iran. "Here we are all Jewish, and we are not worried that someone

will do something," he said.

In 2000, Iranian authorities arrested 10 Jews, convicted them of spying for Israel and sentenced them to prison terms ranging from four to 13 years. An appeals court later reduced their sentences under international pressure and eventually freed them.

No comment was available from the Iranian government or the country's Jewish lawmaker.

According to the New York-based Jewish Agency for Israel — the world organization dedicated to helping Jews immigrate to Israel — the 40 Iranian olim consisted of 10 families and three singles and were being housed in an agency absorption centre in the south of Israel.

"This is a very emotional day for the

Jewish people, the State of Israel and for the Jewish Agency that... has stood by Jewish communities in distress throughout the world," said Zeev Bielsky, the agency's executive chairman in a Dec. 27 letter on the JIA website.

"At a time that Iranian Jews languish under conditions of intensified anti-Semitic phenomena, harassment by government institutions, the closure of schools and a prohibition on studying the Hebrew language, I take satisfaction that [we] are leading this historic measure of immigration... and the reunification of the immigrants with their families in Israel."

With files from Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf of The CJN

Israel & the Jewish World

Russia offers Iran missiles

Russia will provide Iran with an advanced air missile defence system. The agreement for Russia to deliver at an unspecified time the sophisticated S-300 surface air missile defence system was announced last week by Iranian Defence Minister Mostafa Mohammad Najjar. The S-300 is similar to the United States' Patriot missile defence system, which can stop incoming missiles and warplanes. Russia's Foreign Minister

Israel Briefs

Sergei Lavrov told the Russian daily *Vremya Novosti* newspaper that Iran has no economic need to continue its program of uranium enrichment since taking delivery from Russia of nuclear fuel for its Bushehr nuclear reactor. Iran's production of fissile material at its Natanz plant has caused an uproar in the international community, which is looking at placing additional sanctions on the republic. Lavrov said Russia is working to encourage Iran to halt its production.

Palestinian prisoner release

Two-thirds of Israelis do not want to release jailed Palestinians "with blood on their hands" in a swap for captive soldier Gilad Shalit. *Ma'ariv* last week published a survey showing that 67 per cent of the public would oppose the release of Palestinians imprisoned for killing Israelis, even if this were a condition for the return of Shalit from Gaza, where he was abducted by Hamas gunmen exactly 18 months ago. Thirty-three per cent of Israelis would agree to an amnesty for those Palestinians "with blood on their hands," a category that has so far been excluded from any discussions of a possible prisoner swap. Hamas demands the release of hundreds of prisoners, including top terrorists, as ransom for Shalit. Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert last week appointed a top cabinet committee to review the government's criteria for which inmates may or may not be granted early release. Asked whether the Olmert government should accept Hamas' recent offer of a truce in the Gaza Strip, 59 per cent of those polled by *Ma'ariv* said no and 36 per cent said yes. The survey had a 4.9 per cent margin of error.

Olmert rules out truce

Ehud Olmert ruled out any truce between Israel and Hamas

in the Gaza Strip. The Israeli prime minister last week quashed talks of a possible ceasefire with the ruling Palestinian Islamist faction in Gaza, reaffirming international demands that Hamas first unilaterally forswear terrorism and accept the Jewish state.

"The State of Israel has no interest in negotiating with those that refuse to accept the basic principles of the Quartet [United States, European Union, Russia and the United Nations]," Olmert told his cabinet. "This applies to Hamas, Islamic Jihad and anyone else. He who accepts the Quartet principles is a negotiating partner, but he who is not ready to accept them is no partner and our policy will not change." Israel stepped up airstrikes against Hamas and Islamic Jihad terrorists last week following a surge of rocket and mortar attacks from Gaza. That prompted Ismail Haniyeh, Hamas' top leader in Gaza, to offer truce talks with the Olmert government. Some members of Olmert's cabinet said the overture should be considered, while others said a truce would only allow Hamas to rearm and regroup. "This war will continue," Olmert told his cabinet, referring to the Gaza offensive.

Scientists create nano-Bible

Technion researchers have put a full version of the Hebrew Bible on an area the size of a grain of sugar. According to a statement from the Technion-Israeli Institute of Technology, located in Haifa, the nano-Bible, written in Hebrew with vowel points and placed in an area of 0.5 square millimetres, was part of an educational program developed by the Russell Berrie Nanotechnology Institute to increase young people's interest in nanoscience and nanotechnology. The idea to write the Bible on an area smaller than a pinhead was conceived by Uri Sivan, head of the Nanotechnology Institute. The 300,000 Hebrew words were written on a silicon surface using a focused ion beam.

Two Israelis killed

Two Israelis were killed Friday in a drive-by shooting in the south Hebron Hills. The two men were hiking in the area of the Talam and Adura settlements with a female resident of Kiryat Arba, when a group of terrorists opened fire on them from a Jeep.

—JTA

Joint Israeli-Palestinian project cleaning up the Alexander River

By SHELDON KIRSHNER

Staff Reporter

KIBBUTZ YAD HANNA, Israel—Yohanan Oron, a 65-year-old conservationist, was talking about the Alexander River, which flows from the West Bank city of Nablus to the Mediterranean Sea.

"When I was a youngster, I used to swim in the Alexander," he said wistfully. "But if I jumped into the river today, I would not feel so good."

Oron's friend, a woman sporting a sardonic smile, laughed. "It would make you sick," she exclaimed.

Thirty-two kilometres long, and once one of Israel's most beautiful rivers, the Alexander River is a pale imitation of its former self today, having been polluted by industrial and agricultural wastes and effluents and now buckling under the weight of development pressures.

The Alexander is one of several rivers in Israel threatened by environmental degradation. Among the others are the Kishon and the Yarkon, which empty into the sea in Haifa and Tel Aviv respectively.

Keenly aware that the condition of the river can only be ignored at their peril, Israel and the Palestinian Authority have taken concrete steps to solve the problem.

In a collaborative effort transcending the bitter politics of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the mayor of the Hefer Valley Regional Council and the governor of the adjoining Tulkarem district signed agreements in 1996 and 1998 to save it.

The cross-border project, financed by Germany and managed in part by the Jewish National Fund, was inaugurated in 2003, when the second Palestinian uprising burned brightly.

As the intifadah raged and the casualties mounted, Israel severed formal relations with the Palestinian Authority. Yet the Alexander River project remained untouched by the troubles, and continues to function under the name of the Alexander River Restoration Administration.

Its mandate is to remove pollutants, preserve the aquifer tapped into by both Israelis and Palestinians, restore landscapes and ecosystems and develop the river for recreational purposes.

According to Amos Brandeis, the chief planner, the project is more than about the physical environment. "It's about creating an atmosphere of peace and co-operation."

His Palestinian counterpart, Hussein El Aarage, agrees. "Peace will evolve through co-operative endeavours such as this."

At the heart of the project is a complex of sewage treatment pools and pipes that connect Tulkarem to a wastewater treatment centre in Kibbutz Yad Hanna, a left-wing settlement that absorbed families removed from West Bank settlements in the summer of 2005 under Ariel Sharon's unilateral disengagement plan.

Considered the leading river restoration project in Israel today, its broad objectives are nothing if not ambitious.



The Alexander River, near Kibbutz Haogen

[Sheldon Kirshner photos]

In concert with the ministry of the environment, the Jewish National Fund has worked to rehabilitate the banks of the river, prevent erosion and create picnic areas and hiking trails.

As a result, fish, water fowl and the near-extinct Nile soft-shelled turtle have begun to return to their natural habitat.

Since these turtles have virtually disappeared from Israel's coastline, due to deteriorating water quality, the Alexander River now has the distinction of being their primary preserve.

That these turtles appear to be thriving attests to the fact that the quality of the water in the river has improved.

Oron, a resident of a nearby moshav settled by

German Jews, agrees that there has been progress. "It was much worse only a few years ago," he said, noting that the river has a long way to go before it can be considered pristine.

Foam, a tell-tale sign of pollution, still mars its purity.

During the autumn, when olive presses in the West Bank are working full tilt, the colour of water turns black and green, Oron said.

And during summer months, when limestone plants in the area discharge waste materials, the water trends to turn a shade of white and gray, he added.

Oron, who has lived in the Hefer Valley all his life, wants to ensure that its agricultural economy is not tarnished, never mind ruined, by the scourge of pollution.

Farmers in the valley tend to citrus and avocados, groves, fruit orchards, vegetables, flowers, dairy herds and poultry.

The renewal of Jewish settlement in the valley was made possible when the Jewish National Fund purchased land there starting in 1929. The funds were provided by the Jewish community in Canada.

A year later, the first Jewish settlers founded Kfar Vitkin, a co-operative farming village, or moshav.

The first building in which they lived stands on a bluff in the Biran Aharon Nature Reserve, an exquisite piece of real estate of which few visitors are aware.



Yohanan Oron

Arts & Travel

Son publishes his father's letters from the Gulag

By CYNTHIA GASNER
Special to The CJN

Some of the letters written from a Siberian prison by Ferenc Roth, who was incarcerated in the Gulag for 12 years and perished without a trace, were recently published in Russian and translated into Hungarian and English.

Father's Letters from Siberian Prison was written and compiled by Roth's son Vladimir Roth, 72. In 1936, the family lost its right to spell their name "Roth" and had to change it to "Rott."

The book contains an introduction by the son that vividly describes historical events in Hungary and the Soviet Union from the 1920s until after his father's death in 1950. The book also includes photos and copies of some of his father's letters.

"I am not a writer," Vladimir told *The CJN*, "however, I must tell about the people, most of whom are no longer among us. I wanted to preserve the memories of the past events, the lessons of courage and determination and challenges that anyone could face in life. I wanted to tell about the great life."

Roth and his mother left the Soviet Union in 1974 on the pretense that they were going to Toronto to visit family. They defected, leaving behind his wife and children, his brother and other family members.

An engineer, Roth says that over the years family members and friends have asked him to tell them about his experiences and the traumatic events he

witnessed in Hungary during the years he lived there.

It was on a holiday with family that he decided to document his memories for his children and grandchildren. He says that he kept diaries from the time he was a child.

His father's letters, hidden in a green canvas briefcase, were smuggled out of the Soviet Union in 1983 by friends.

In the introduction of *Father's Letters from Siberian Prison*, Roth tells the love story of his father and mother who met during the World War I. His father was an 18-year-old soldier in the Hungarian army, and he met 16-year-old Regina Spielberger at a border checkpoint. Because of their responsibilities to their families, they were not able to marry until 1926, nine years after they met.

Their first son, Joseph, was born in Miskolc. The family moved to Boborok, where Vladimir was born in 1935.

In 1936, they immigrated to Belarus, and Ferenc, who was an expert in lumber-mill production, got a job in the lumber business.

When Vladimir was three years old, on July 4, 1938, his father was abducted by two NKVD (secret police) men and thrown into a truck without any explanation.

The family later found out from a man who was released from a camp located in the Gorki region of the Gulag (because he had tuberculosis) that Ferenc had been beaten daily for weeks, and after weeks of being tortured, he signed an admission that he was "an enemy and destroyer of the state."



A wedding photo of Regina Spielberger and Ferenc Roth (1926).

His family heard nothing else from him for almost a year after his capture. He was banished to Kolyma, a labour camp in Siberia, from which he never returned.

Vladimir's memories of his mother's courage and intelligence and her ability to survive under Nazi occupation with her two sons is moving.

Ferenc's letters, published in Vladimir's book, are dated from Oct. 31, 1945, to Nov. 5, 1950. They tell of 12 years of suffering, anguish and the deprivation that he and the other prisoners in the Gulag underwent. His father was never heard from again after the letter in 1950.

Vladimir says that he is determined to continue to expose this period in history, and he wants future generations to have access to information about his experiences for educational purposes.

He is currently working on an 18-chapter book, *Joy from Sadness* (Chapter 10 is titled *Father's Letters from Siberian Prison*). That book is to be followed by another one, *Joy of Discovery*.

Vladimir and his wife, Iya, a retired professor who taught in the civil engineering department of the University of Toronto, have three children and five grandchildren.

The Russian edition of *Father's Letters from Siberian Prison* is available at the Erudit Russian Bookstore, 616 Sheppard Ave. West. The English edition is available at Negev Importing, 3509 Bathurst St. The Hungarian edition is available by calling Vladimir Roth at 416-782-3175.

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Mehadrin Glatt
Badatz Rabbinate
Jerusalem

Architect's installation will go backwards in time

By SHERRY SMITHER
Special to The CJN

Toronto architect Alexander Josephson was walking through Rome about two years ago, when he spotted a man facing east and lying almost level with the ground, praying.

This was the inspiration for his art installation, *Islam Part 3*, the first of a planned three-part work called *Trinity*. It began with *Islam* and will move backwards through time with *Christianity Part 2* and *Judaism Part 1*, which he expects to complete the within the next year or two.

"I came up with the project based on that man," Josephson, 26, said recently at a Yorkville café. "I haven't seen a Muslim pray in public since [then]. It's not the norm to see people praying in the street."

For *Islam Part 3*, the architect installed 75 polystyrene sculptural impressions or moulds totalling 60 metres long, spread out on the lawn of Queen's Park last July 16.

The impressions are shaped so that a person can lie in them, so that they are essentially negative impressions of the human form in prayer.

"I became interested in the negative impressions humans make in space," Josephson said. "While making impressions, I started thinking about what mattered in the world."

"Through discussions with friends, Sept. 11 and the mystery around it evolved. People take for granted that Muslims dislike Americans and that's why the [World Trade Center] buildings were bombed. That led me to *Trinity's* Part 3 — the mysterious phys-



Islam Part 3

ical force and prayer, a symbol of Islam with no crucifix or image of god."

In explaining what he is trying to convey, Josephson referred to the word "resistance," breaking it down to "resist" and "stance."

"There's resistance to ignorance and resistance to powers. That's my position in politics. What gives anyone the right to say that one way is better than another?" he said.

Choosing a public space like Queen's Park for his protest was part of the statement he wanted to make. "When you're young, you don't have the ability to show in galleries, as they're more concerned with commodities. Historically, galleries of Paris were revolutionary; they were about harvesting genius. That's not their role today."

"Some galleries will exhibit but modify work, but only some do installations and build a project — a political manifestation that I'm attracted to. I'm not trying to put something on a wall and ask someone to appreciate it. I'm trying to react against authority."

He felt the impact of using the public space when he met a Muslim family who

drove from Oakville to Queen's Park to see the installation.

"They were typical people. I liked that nothing dictated to a certain demographic. The father had six children of various ages. It's rare that a father goes to the Art Gallery of Ontario to see a specific sculpture, but they came to see me. That was empowering. In a free society like Toronto, Queen's Park is a powerful venue. It may not be good for showing paintings, but for what I do, it's perfect. I'm interested in being a kind of political probe."

The planned two-day installation was cut short, however. Rumours spread that there were threats, although nothing could be further from the truth. Still, Josephson packed it in when Queen's Park demanded that two Ontario Provincial Police officers be hired to protect the grounds if *Islam Part 3* remained on the grounds overnight.

What can we expect from parts 2 and 1?

"*Christianity Part 2* will not have a central location. It'll appear in multiple places throughout the city, as the religion is open to anyone. *Trinity's* *Judaism Part 1* stems from the Wailing Wall, the abstract ruin people identify Judaism and Jerusalem with. It's based on the idea of a mythic structure and davening — the harmonic movement."

As for *Islam Part 3*: "I'll install it again once I get permission from Ottawa's Parliament Buildings, Washington's White House and Hyde Park in London. It's an uphill battle, but it just doesn't die."

Visit Alexander Josephson's website www.xjosephson.com.

Arts & Travel



Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

FRESH PRODUCE FROM THE LITERARY VINEYARDS

Each month, a variety of new literary works are sent to *CJN* reviewers, many originating within our very talented Toronto Jewish community. There are usually more titles than we have space to review; often, we can do little more than mention them in passing. Here are descriptions of two such books that came to us recently over the proverbial transom.

Second Novel from John Miller: *A Sharp Intake of Breath* (Simon and Pierre Fiction). Toronto author John Miller's second novel, tells the story of Herman (Toshy) Wolfman, who grows up in a left-wing Jewish family in Toronto during the 1930s.

Miller utilizes the Somerset Maugham-ian device of a physical deformity – in Toshy's case, a split lip and cleft palate – to indicate that his protagonist faces uphill odds in life. Ridiculed as dim-witted and ugly, he ends up imprisoned after stealing a famous diamond in an episode reminiscent of Svend Robinson.

Toshy's sisters, Lil and Bessie, provide additional colour: the former is a devotee of anarchist Emma Goldman. *The Featherbed*, Miller's earlier novel (2002), offered a credible depiction of tenement life in New York's Lower East Side of a century ago, with a number of jarring twists and more than a pinch of radical gender politics.

Holocaust Memoir: Torontonian Joseph Peretz has written *The Collaborator*, a work of historical fiction that chronicles multiple generations caught in the grip of two world wars.

Peretz, who was born in Belgium in 1921, uses his personal experiences as a Belgian Holocaust survivor to paint a detailed portrait of Antwerp in the first half of the 20th century. *The Collaborator* was published by iuniverse (www.iuniverse.com).

Names in the News: Born in southern Ontario in 1928, retired Toronto businessman Hy Burstein is carving a niche for himself in the literary industry.

Burstein first set pen to paper several years ago to write *Ride 'Em Jewish*

Cowboy, an entertaining memoir of his experiences riding horses around the world. A novel, *Unforgiven Anger*, quickly followed; the story is set in both Canada and Israel. Then came *Rage Against Religion*, a non-fiction treatise on the shortcomings of world religions such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Last year, Burstein felt the call again. After reading of the brutal torture and murder of Ilan Halimi, a young Jewish cellphone salesman in Paris, he felt compelled to go to Paris to research the facts behind the newspaper headlines. His first stop was the local police station. For several days, a pair of French detectives showed him around

Schwartzberg continues its examination of how Jewish filmmakers have depicted the Jewish image in the movies over the years. The topic of Schwartzberg's next lecture is "Drastic Changes: The '60s & '70s"; film clips, bagels and coffee included. \$9 per lecture. Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, Sunday, Dec. 16, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 606; esthera@mnjcc.org

• Join Juno-award-winning Cuban jazz sensation Hilario Durán and David Buchbinder's *Odessa/Havana!* for Musica Cuba, including the launch of the photography exhibition, "Let There Be Light: Jewish Life in Cuba" by Tatiana Santos Mendez. Proceeds to support the Cuban Jewish Community. \$50 patron, \$30 general admission. Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre. Sunday, Dec. 16, 7 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 0

• The Miles Nadal JCC's third annual Chinese and a Movie, on Monday, Dec. 24, includes a kosher Chinese dinner at 7:30 p.m. and the film *Across the Universe* at 8:30. \$36-\$20. Al Green



One of the photos on display at the Miles Nadal JCC in the exhibition *Let There Be Light: Jewish Life in Cuba* by Tatiana Santos Mendez.

the crime scene in a rundown neighbourhood in the Paris suburbs and introduced him to those associated with the case. He saw the dank basement where Halimi was tortured, spoke with the paramedic who was with him when he died, met the victim's grieving brother-in-law and learned more about the anti-Semitic gang, known as the Barbarians, that was responsible for this outrage.

After months of research, Burstein has produced a book about the crime and its perpetrators. The book is tentatively titled *The Paris Barbarians and the Murder that Horrified France*, and is reportedly slated for publication soon. For more about Burstein and his books, visit the website www.ridemhy.com

Arts in Brief

• Film Sundays with Shlomo

Theatre. RSVP by Dec. 20. 416-924-6211, ext. 0. randis@mnjcc.org

• Husband-and-wife musicians Amy Sky and Marc Jordan perform together next month in Mississauga, in a show that combines her popular light-rock sound with his jazz-infused music. Dinner and music packages for two begin at \$180. Living Arts Centre, Ham-merson Hall. Saturday, Jan. 26, 2008, 8 p.m. www.livingartscentre.ca

• *Slingshot Hip Hop*, a feature-length documentary on Palestinian hip hop, has been selected for screening at the 2008 Sundance Film Festival. The film chronicles the lives of rappers living in the West Bank, Gaza and Israel, who use hip-hop music as a platform to make their voices heard. Much better to use film, rather than stones, bullets or bombs, to get your point across. The film premieres in January.

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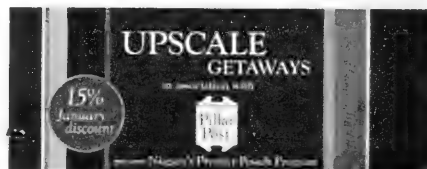
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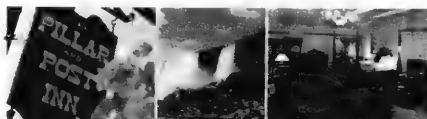
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Message to C/JN Snowbirds

If you are spending all or part of the winter outside of Canada, there are three options available to you regarding delivery of your *Canadian Jewish News*.

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2) Advise our Circulation Department to suspend delivery until you return to Canada with no weeks lost in your subscription period.

3) Arrange for our Circulation Department to redirect *The C/JN* to your winter address at a cost of \$10.00 per month for U.S. and for foreign addresses.

This charge – payable by cheque, Visa, Mastercard or American Express before departure – covers the cost of additional postage incurred for out of country mailings.

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Arts & Travel

TRAVEL TALK

BY BILL GLADSTONE

"TWO HISTORIC CIVILIZATIONS"

Toronto Rabbi Gary Zweig is hosting his fourth trip to Israel, this time with two days in Greece. The theme is "Two Historic Civilizations" and the tour guide will focus on both, particularly the influence of Greek culture on the ancient Hebrews.

The itinerary includes visits to Sefat, the Golan Heights, Jerusalem, Ma'ale Adumim, the Dead Sea, and a moshav where participants may learn about the laws of shmittah. "The trip will be great for first timers," said Zweig, adding that Israel's 60th anniversary celebrations will be a special bonus. "The 60th year is really a great time to visit – it's going to be a banner year," he said.

Travel dates are June 16 to 26. Kosher arrangements in Greece provided by Chabad of Athens. For more details, please phone 905-886-6305.

Rabbi Zweig, by the way, has just published *Living Kaddish*, a guidebook on saying Kaddish (available on Amazon.com).

Kol Israel Summer Soul: Kol announces a new educational tour led by Rabbi Elyse Goldstein. Set for Aug. 17 to 26, the tour hits all the summer highlights of sites, restaurants, outdoor beauty, and experiences in Israel, and is geared for couples, singles or families ages 16 and up. For a full itinerary and price, please call 416-636-1880, ext. 472 or e-

mail michelle@peerlesstravel.com. Spaces are limited.

Ancient Mansion Uncovered: A mansion being excavated near the Dung Gate to Jerusalem's Old City may have been a palace belonging to **Queen Helene of Adiabene**, the Israel Antiquities Authority has announced.

The excavation has uncovered massive foundations, a basement with an arched ceiling, halls two stories high, walls as high as five meters, and remnants of colored frescoes and ritual baths. Dig director **Dr. Doron Ben-Ami** said the structure was of unusual proportions for the Second Temple period and may have belonged to the royal family of Adiabene, a kingdom on the upper Tigris River of which Queen Helene was the best-known member.

Known in Jewish sources as a righteous woman, Helene converted to Judaism some 2,000 years ago and moved to Jerusalem, where she built grand residences in the area of the City of David. She is mentioned in the Babylonian (tractate Yoma) and Jerusalem Talmuds, and in Roman-era Jewish historian **Josephus's** book, *The Antiquities of the Jews*. Two streets in the heart of the capital's downtown are named for her and her son.

Fine Art at Ticho House: Women's portraits by **Picasso, Modigliani and Matisse**, went on view recently at the Anna Ticho House, a satellite campus of

the Israel Museum.

The paintings are part of a series titled "A Room of Her Own: Portraits of Women from the Israel Museum Collection", that addresses the subject of women in portraiture from the 19th century to today.

Ticho House, situated in Jerusalem's downtown area, was one of the first houses built outside the Old City walls. Filled with art, the house is named for **Dr. Avraham Ticho** and his wife **Anna Ticho**, the latter of whom bequeathed the house, its collections and library to the people of the city. It is also home to the popular Little Jerusalem Restaurant and Café. The current exhibit remains on view until Feb. 20.

Travel Briefs

• Chocolate lovers may be interested in Chocolate at Heart, the first chocolate tour of Israel, run by chocoholics **Enid Moskowitz** of New York and **Adina Mishkoff** of Jerusalem. Participants of the nine-day tour, operated by Modi'in Tours, will visit boutique chocolate companies, engage in chocolate sculpting and production, and indulge in some of Israel's finest chocolate delicacies. Several charity activities are included "to balance the indulgence factor." Travel dates are Feb. 3 to 11. www.modiintours.com chocolate

• Cunard's newest ocean liner, **Queen Victoria**, is open for virtual (internet) tours of the grand lobby, Royal Court Theatre, library and its other magnificent spaces. "We are harnessing the power of multimedia technology to introduce Queen Victoria in an entirely new way," said **Carol Marlow**, president of Cunard Line. The website link, at www.cunard.com, uses embedded video images to provide 360-degree views of the ship's public rooms and accommodations.

New Mike Nichols film focuses on Cold War politics

By **SHELDON KIRSHNER**
Staff Reporter

An all-star cast does not necessarily guarantee success in a film. Nor does a reputable director always live up to expectations.

But in Mike Nichols' latest movie, *Charlie Wilson's War*, starring Tom Hanks, Philip Seymour Hoffman and Julia Roberts, the stars are in alignment.

The beauty of *Charlie Wilson's War*, set shortly after the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, lies in its ability to fuse Cold War politics with bedroom antics and the savagery of war with high idealism.

That all these disparate elements connect in seamless fashion is in no small part due to Nichols, his accomplished actors and Aaron Sorkin, the screenwriter.

Hanks plays Charlie Wilson, a morally flawed but likeable Texas congressman-cum-womanizer who wants to help

Muslim fighters oust the Soviet army from Afghanistan. Roberts, portraying a rich socialite who sleeps her way around Capitol Hill, encourages him. Hoffman, a dishevelled and smart Central Intelligence Agency spook whose views coincide with Wilson's, masterminds the covert scheme to defeat the Soviets.

At the heart of this entertaining film is Wilson's effort to enlist pro-American allies in the general region – Pakistan, Israel and Egypt – to assist the mujahedeen.

Israel and Egypt will provide the Soviet-made weaponry the Islamic freedom fighters desperately need to turn the tide of battle.

Pakistan will allow the Afghans the use of its territory to funnel the military equipment to their bases. Keenly alert to Muslim sensitivities, Pakistan's president, played by Indian actor Om Puri, archly insists that Israel's shipments should not be marked with a Star of David.

Charlie Wilson's War unfolds in Washington, Pakistan, Egypt and Israel. The single Israeli scene takes place in an outdoor café in Jerusalem. There, within sight of the golden dome of the Temple Mount, Wilson – a legislator with a pro-Israel record in Congress despite the virtual absence of Jews in his district – convinces a senior Mossad operative to funnel the weapons to the Afghans.

Whether Israel ever donated or sold weapons to the mujahedeen – who morphed into the Taliban – is irrelevant. What counts here is that Israel, Egypt and Pakistan have a common interest in striking a blow for liberty and weakening the Soviet Union.

Unfortunately, once the Red Army withdrew from Afghanistan, Islamic radicals filled the vacuum, the United States having had no interest in assisting the Afghan to rebuild their country. This is the message that rings loud and clear in *Charlie Wilson's War*.

Books & Authors

A primer on Israel's settlements in the territories

Lords of the Land by Idith Zertal and Akiva Eldar, Nation Books.

By SHELTON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Israel and the Palestinian Authority officially resumed final status negotiations last month for the first time in seven years, hoping to reach a global agreement by the end of 2008, as set out by last November's Arab-Israeli peace conference in Annapolis, Md.

The talks, the first of many more to come, will deal with such core issues as Israeli settlements in the West Bank.

By any measure, this is a devilishly thorny issue, complicated by the fact that the West Bank – excluding territory in eastern Jerusalem annexed by Israel after the Six Day War – is home to about 270,000 Israeli Jews, most of whom would fiercely resist repatriation back to Israel.

In *Lords of the Land*, Idith Zertal and Akiva Eldar delve into this highly charged topic from a left-of-centre perspective.

Zertal is an Israeli historian who has written two books about the Holocaust and currently teaches at the Institute of Jewish Studies at the University of Basel. Eldar is the chief political columnist and editorial writer for the Israeli daily *Ha'aretz*.

Proceeding from the assumption that the settlements have prolonged Israel's military occupation of the West Bank, they argue that the occupation contravenes international law (which prohibits an occupying power from transferring its citizens into an occupied territory). The Israeli government, heaving to the belief that the West Bank is disputed territory, claims it is not in violation of the Geneva Convention.

Not buying this argument, Zertal and Eldar say that the occupation – a guarantor of the settlements' continued existence – has sullied Israel's image, rendered a rapprochement with the Palestinians all the harder to achieve, corroded Israeli morality and now threatens Israel's status as a democratic Jewish state.

Their view of the security barrier – which in part is being built to ensure that the major settlements remain in Israel's hands, even if a deal with the Palestinians is actually signed – is similarly jaundiced. Taken together with the web of roadblocks Israel has set up, the security fence thwarts the free movement of Palestinians and separates them from their lands, institutions and relatives.

All this is true, but Zertal and Eldar do not pay sufficient attention to the problem that originally prompted Israel to build the security fence – the prevalence of Palestinian terrorism.

In this respect, their ideological proclivities occasionally cloud their judgment, but on the whole, *Lords of the Land* remains one of the most comprehensive works on the subject.

The authors maintain that the Israeli government, even when it was ambivalent, sanctioned the construction of the settlements through a piecemeal process of deception, concealment and denial. In short, Israel adopted "a policy of ambiguity and vagueness" while refraining from annexing the West Bank.

From the outset, they observe, it was clear that Israeli settlements in the new territories would have far-reaching implications. Some believed that they could be used as a lever to extract Arab recognition of Israel, while others saw them as a way to block future talks with the Arabs. The official government line was that they could be an asset in Arab-Israeli negotiations.

The Mossad, Israel's foreign intelligence service, recommended shortly after the Six Day War that a Palestinian state, based on the 1949 truce lines, with minor adjustments, should be established under the auspices of the Israeli army and in agreement with the Palestinian leadership. If the Mossad's suggestion had been taken seriously, not a single Israeli settlement would have gone up.

Moshe Dayan, Israel's defence minister, was at odds with the Mossad and insisted that Israel should build settlements along the hilltops that overlook Israel's heavily populated coastal plain. Yigal Allon, a War of Independence commander who would be Israel's foreign minister, took a tougher approach, warning against the return of a single inch of the West Bank and claiming that a peace treaty with the Arabs was "the weakest guarantee of the future."

As these debates raged, they write, Hannan Porat, a Zionist from the national religious camp whom the authors describe as "the first

settler," urged the prime minister, Levi Eshkol, to "restore the former glory of the Etzion bloc," a string of Jewish settlements that had been overrun by the Arab Legion in the 1948 war.

Eshkol, a moderate, regarded the idea as a one-time gesture to the descendants of settlers who had been killed in Gush Etzion. "Yet this modest move proved to be but the first step in a long march and a huge project," write Zertal and Eldar.

Once Gush Etzion was in the pipeline, there was no stopping dedicated and driven people who shared Porat's zeal. By stealth, Rabbi Moshe Levinger brought Jews back to Hebron. Gush Emonim, formed in the wake of the Yom Kippur War, created a model settlement in Ofra.

Yitzhak Rabin, the prime minister after the 1973 war, regarded the settlement movement as "a very grave phenomenon, a cancer in the body of Israeli democracy." Yet in the Sebastia affair, which the writers call a turning point in the history of the settlements, he approved the establishment of the pivotal Kedumim outpost.

Menachem Begin, the first Likud prime minister, had no such qualms. "These are liberated territories, which belong to the Jewish people," he declared. "The new government will call upon young people to come and settle the land."

True to his word, Begin appointed his agricultural minister, Ariel Sharon, to reshape the map of the territories. Pledging to settle two million Jews there by the end of the 20th century, he oversaw the construction of numerous new settlements, all of which were designed to thwart the emergence of a viable Palestinian state with territorial contiguity. Sharon's successor, Yuval

Ne'man, was just as committed to these objectives, Zertal and Eldar say.

By the end of 1983, the Likud government had approved the construction of 103 settlements, compared to 22 built in the

first decade of the occupation. Begin's hard-as-nails successor, Yitzhak Shamir, considered the settlements "a domestic Israeli matter."

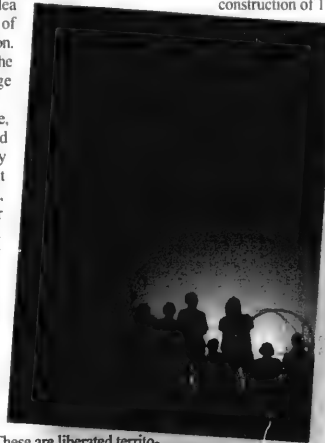
Rabin, in his second term of office, imposed restrictions on the expansion of settlements, but his freeze did not apply to the greater Jerusalem area or the Jordan Valley. Peres, who succeeded Rabin, poured yet more funds into the territories, while the next two prime ministers, Benjamin Netanyahu and Ehud Barak, stepped up the pace of construction.

Zertal and Eldar contend that the settlements, more than any other factor, determined Israel's position during the ill-fated Camp David summit in July 2000. Barak, for example, insisted on keeping settlement blocs where 80 per cent of settlers live.

And judging by his most recent statements, the current prime minister, Ehud Olmert, has a similar policy.

It's clear that the settlements will have an enormous impact on the outcome of negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. Only two weeks ago, following a donors conference in Paris to aid the Palestinians attain statehood, Mahmoud Abbas, the president of the Palestinian Authority, called on Israel to halt all settlement activity.

In *Lords of the Land*, Zertal and Eldar place the topic in context and explain precisely why this crucial issue must be resolved now and for all.



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Sarah Fulford takes over *Toronto Life* magazine

By SHELTON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

The new year is ushering in a fresh chapter in Sarah Fulford's career. Fulford, whose appointment as editor of *Toronto Life* was announced last September, officially succeeded her predecessor and mentor, John Macfarlane, on Jan. 1.

"I'm thrilled," said Fulford, who at 33 is one of Canada's youngest major magazine editors. "It's a huge challenge, but I've been training for it for a long time."

The daughter of one of Toronto's most prominent media couples, Robert Fulford and Geraldine Sherman, she joined *Toronto Life* in 1999.

"I truly believe I'm walking into a situation where all the conditions are right," said Fulford in an interview in a Little Italy café. "The staff is fantastic. The publishers are enthusiastic and committed to improving the magazine. The city is more vibrant than ever and interested in *Toronto Life*'s success. I feel lucky due to all these conditions."

With a paid circulation of 92,000 and a readership of 765,000, it is fat and profitable. Under Macfarlane's 15-year tutelage, it won 53 National Magazine Awards.

"Sometimes, you take a new job to fix a catastrophe," said Fulford, who is its first female and Jewish editor. "But *Toronto Life* is healthy. I won't have to spend all my time solving problems. It's not a magazine that needs a radical overhaul."

Yet she plans to revitalize it by hiring new staffers and a new art director, who, she feels, will change its flavour.

In addition, Fulford intends to upgrade its website so that it will appeal to a wider audience, preferably younger readers who were not necessarily born in Toronto, as well as new immigrants.

And she will be flexible in reacting to events. "Things might evolve in unexpected ways," she said, declining to elaborate. But she added that changes will be introduced incrementally.

Fulford was offered the job last summer after a fairly intensive search process. But she and Macfarlane had been discussing her future for several years.

Macfarlane said that Fulford was chosen because she understands the city and is ex-

ceedingly able.

"Toronto is a big, complex and diverse city, and she grasps its complexity completely. She also has a grasp of *Toronto Life*'s role in the city. She's a visionary, ambitious in the best sense of the word and very talented editorially. So that made her the best candidate."

Toronto Life, published by St. Joseph Media, has been a presence in Fulford's life since her childhood.

Her parents were avid readers, and one of their favourite publications was *Toronto Life*, which Fulford considered fun, fearless and stimulating.

Along with her brother and sisters, she was raised in what she describes as "a secular and pluralistic post-Enlightenment environment" where ideas and cultural and intellectual pursuits were valued and encouraged.

Her father, the former editor of *Saturday Night*, a columnist at the *National Post*, a contributor to *Toronto Life* and an Officer of the Order of Canada, never tried to steer her toward journalism.

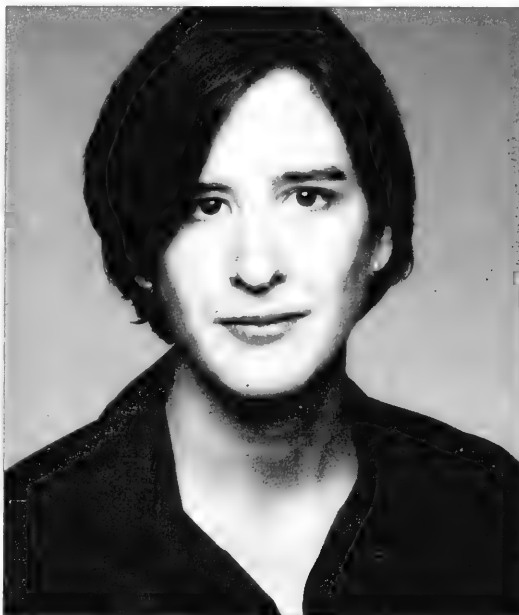
But he was so engaged by journalism that his dedication rubbed off on her.

"If he had been miserable as a journalist, I might have become a doctor," mused Fulford.

Her mother, a writer and a former radio producer at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, was also influential.

When Fulford was a child, she would critique tapes her mother edited for a popular program. Fulford's comments were so telling and true that her mom would congratulate her on her natural editing abilities.

But as Fulford tells it, she did not seriously consider journalism as a calling until she went to Israel for a year in the summer of 1996 and began writing book reviews for the *Jerusalem Report*. Since then, she has also written reviews for the *National Post* and fea-



Sarah Fulford takes over *Toronto Life* magazine

tures for the *Globe and Mail*.

A graduate of King's College in Halifax, with a BA degree in classics and contemporary studies, Fulford spent an academic year studying classical Jewish texts at the Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies, an independent modern Orthodox institution in Jerusalem that welcomes male and female students of all Jewish backgrounds and beliefs.

"I wanted to explore my Jewish identity and learn the tradition," explained Fulford, whose family celebrates major Jewish holidays and enjoys Friday night Sabbath dinners.

She also studied at a Hebrew University ulpan, where she learned the rudiments of Hebrew.

"Like every Jew, I felt at home in Israel, though I had never been there before."

The occasional suicide bombing did not faze her. "I was young and felt invincible, and there was a spirit of hope in Israel during that period."

She pondered aliyah, but decided against it because of her attachment to Canada's pluralistic society. Yet after returning to Toronto, she took Hebrew classes at the Jewish Community Centre.

Fulford believes very strongly in Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state. "But my peers don't always agree with me," she noted.

In a reference to the prospect of peace in the Middle East, she said, "Israel has a right to make its own arrangements with the Palestinians and shouldn't be pressured."

After Israel, Fulford worked for *Elm Street*, a now-defunct magazine where she honed her talents as an editor. Hired by *Toronto Life* as an assistant editor, she was promoted to the position of senior editor six years later.

Her duties ranged from editing stories to "packaging" special features. She was always pleased when one of

her cover story concepts struck a chord with readers, but was happiest when she took risks on inexperienced writers and discovered that they exceeded expectations.

From time to time, she contributed stories to the magazine. A serious cello player in her leisure hours, she wrote pieces on her high school music teacher, who was exposed as a pedophile, and on car theft in Toronto.

Fulford is married to Stephen Marche, a novelist and academic from Edmonton with whom she has an infant son, Elijah.

Marche's first novel, *Raymond and Hannah*, turns on sexual desire. Hannah, one of the main characters, runs off to Israel to become more Jewish. Hannah sounds a lot like Fulford, but Fulford laughed off the similarity as purely coincidental.

Sonny Goldstein, CFP
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Survey data spark debate over intermarriage picture

By SUE FISHKOFF
JTA

SAN FRANCISCO — Intermarriage: disaster for the Jews, not great for the Jews, or simply a fact of Jewish life?

Ever since the 1990 *National Jewish Population Study* showed more than half of new Jewish marriages involve a non-Jewish partner, many Jewish communal leaders have latched onto the issue with pit bull tenacity — and they haven't let go, even after the 2000-2001 NJPS showed intermarriage had leveled off.

Now a new round of studies is prompting more questions: Does intermarriage necessarily mean the end of that family's connection to Judaism? Or is the Jewish community focusing on intermarriage to the exclusion of other, perhaps more telling, factors?

Most studies report the data in simple comparative fashion, which shows that intermarried families are much less Jewishly involved than unmarried families, from their beliefs to their practices.

But a provocative new study out of Brandeis University questions that research method and its conclusions.

The study — "It's Not Just Who Stands Under the Chupah: Jewish Identity and Intermarriage," by Leonard Saxe, Fern Chertok and Benjamin Phillips of the Cohen Center for Jewish Studies and Steinhardt Social Research Institute — found that when one considers the Jewish background of the Jewish partner in an intermarriage, the difference in the Jewish beliefs and practices of intermarried and intermarried families becomes much less glaring.

And in some measures, like attachment to Israel, the gap almost disappears.

A second study casts further doubt on the deterministic effect of intermarriage. Set for release this month, the study by the Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston will show that the children being raised Jewishly in the city's intermarried families look pretty much like any other non-Orthodox Jewish children.

The study's... conclusions have profound policy implications: instead of writing off intermarried families or pressing the non-Jewish partner to convert, the Jewish community would do better to invest in quality Jewish education — formal and informal — to give the Jewish partner in an intermarriage the background and desire to create a Jewish home and raise Jewish children.

"The objective doesn't have to be conversion but the creation of positive, rich Jewish experiences," Saxe explains. "Jewish education, Jewish home experiences, Jewish camp, Israeli experiences — that's what leads to engagement in Jewish life whether one is intermarried or not."

Saxe presented the study's findings with Chertok on Dec. 14 at the Union for Reform Judaism biennial in San Diego.

"The usual model says you get intermarried and you lose your Jewish identity. That's not true," Chertok says. "A far more powerful predictor of what you're going to do in your home are such things as did you have a Jewish education growing up? Were you raised with Jewish rituals in the home? What was your high school social network like?"

Chertok and Saxe drew the strongest audience reaction when they displayed two charts, one showing the Jewish involvement of intermarried vs. in-married families without any controls, and one showing the results after they were controlled for the Jewish partner's religious background.

Without controls, the in-married family blew the intermarried family out of the mikvah: 78 per cent of in-married couples said they were raising their children Jewishly vs. 39 per cent of intermarried couples. Those are the figures used by most Jewish researchers, Chertok and Saxe noted.

But when controlling the other factors, including the Jewish partner's religious upbringing, the gap closed, with 71 per cent of in-married couples and 51 per cent of couples saying they are raising Jewish children.

Similarly, the 53 per cent of in-married vs. 12 per cent of intermarried families who reported being members of Jewish organizations became 45 per cent and 32 per cent when the controls were applied.

The differences become even more striking when controls are applied to the data on the Jewish identity of the adult children of intermarriage.

A simple comparison, one used in most studies, states that 89 per cent of adults who grew up with two Jewish parents identify as Jewish vs. 24 per cent of adults who grew up in an interfaith home.

When the background of those individuals was taken into account, the gap shrank to 94 per cent of the adults with two Jewish parents vs. 76 per cent from intermarried homes.

"Intermarriage is not deterministic," Saxe concluded. "If someone grows up with positive Jewish identity and Jewish educational experiences such as religious school, summer camp, Israel trips, one wants to raise Jewish children regardless of who one falls in love with."

Among those who is not convinced by the Saxe-Chertok line of argument is Steven Cohen, a professor of Jewish social policy at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York. Cohen has conducted several studies that all show the determinative effect of intermarriage.

Cohen's first question is how the researchers defined "being raised Jewish." But he also says

they need to look at the second generation: According to the 2000-2001 NJPS study, just 13 per cent of the grandchildren of an intermarriage — that is, people whose grandparents were intermarried — now identify as Jews.

On those grounds alone, Cohen declared, the Jewish community should "not grow complacent" about intermarriage but should continue to combat it as a real threat to Jewish continuity.

"In fact, intermarriage over two generations is more powerful than any other factor in predicting ritual observance, and certainly in predicting whether the grandchildren will be Jewish," he said.

Cohen's conclusion is supported in part by a new report on the U.S. Jewish population prepared for the 2007 *American Jewish Yearbook* by professors Ira Sheskin of the University of Miami and Arnold Dashevsky of the University of Connecticut.

Comparing data from 49 U.S. Jewish communities, Sheskin and Dashevsky note that while some cities "have been more successful than others in convincing intermarried families to raise their children Jewish," it is nevertheless "clear that intermarriage has a negative effect on measures of Jewishness, and therefore on Jewish continuity."

Intermarriage has a snowball effect, the Sheskin-Dashevsky study concludes, but the ball can roll either way, with much depending on the larger Jewish community.

That's where the Combined Jewish Philanthropies study comes into play.

Gil Preuss, vice-president for strategy and planning, says the organization is less interested in debating research methods than in examining the real effect of community investment in outreach and Jewish education in Boston.

The CJP caused a stir in November 2006 when it released a study by the Steinhardt Institute showing that in the Boston area, 60 per cent of children from intermarried homes were being raised as Jews. Preuss admits that he and his colleagues were initially suspicious of those figures.

So he and his team investigated the data, looking closely at the responses to specific questions about Jewish beliefs and behaviors. Preuss says they found that intermarried families who have decided to raise their kids Jewishly look pretty much like other, non-Orthodox Jewish families.

"They belong to congregations, they celebrate Jewish holidays, they participate in the community," he said. "That is the key decision — whether you decide to raise the kids Jewish. All else follows from that."

Intermarriage itself, the study suggests, is not the determining factor.

"This provides a basis for the notion that we need to create a community that welcomes them in, that says, look, there's something good here — Jewish values, Jewish learning," he said.



Fern Chertok



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Alex Shnaider buys Maccabi Tel Aviv

By **DAVID MAROUANI**
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A three-way meeting on Dec. 18 between Loni Herzikovic, Ronni Maneh and David Federman paved the way for Herzikovic to sell his controlling stake in the Maccabi Tel Aviv soccer club to Canadian Jewish businessman Alex Shnaider.

The deal had been held up over Maneh's insistence on receiving the 19.4 million

shekels or \$5 million (Cdn) he claims to have invested in the club. At the meeting, Federman, a co-owner of the club with Herzikovic, suggested a compromise formula under which Maneh would receive his money back, with most of it – 15.4 million shekels or \$3.4 million – coming from Herzikovic, who has been looking to sell the club for some time.

Maccabi Tel Aviv is one of Israel's oldest, most decorated soccer teams.

Under the deal, Shnaider will hold 80 per cent of Maccabi, while the other 20 per cent will be purchased by the Maccabi Tel Aviv Association, which is headed by Eldad Buchsen. Buchsen says he already has raised the money he needs, adding, "the demand was greater than expected."

The total cost of the deal is reported to be around \$17.3 million.

"I am extremely excited about what the future holds for the team and its fans, and look forward to entering into a successful new era of ownership with our partners the Maccabi Tel Aviv Sporting Club," he said in a statement last month.

In 2005 Shnaider purchased the Jordan Formula One racing team for \$50 million (US) and rebranded it as Midland F1 Racing. It has since been resold.

Shnaider, who studied economics at York University and is president of Toronto's Jewish Russian Community Centre, is a co-founder of the Midland Group, an international trading and investment holding company, and has a reported personal worth of nearly \$1 billion.

In August 2007 he was listed as No. 577 on the list of the world's billionaires in *Forbes* magazine.

With files from Andy Levy-Aizenkopf.



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Don't lose YOURSELF

Trampolinist wins silver at world championships

By **ELI SHUPAK**
Special to *The CJN*

Samantha Sendel chose an opportune time to deliver a personal best performance when she soared to a silver medal finish at the recent World Age Group Gymnastics championships in Quebec City.

The 16-year-old trampolinist, competing in the province of her birth in front of her mother and grandmother, came through with a score of 35.5, while facing the highest degree of difficulty at 13.6 of any female competitor under 19. A native of Dollard-des-Ormeaux, Sendel's second-place finish came in the individual trampoline under-17 event, entering the final round as the last Canadian hope for a medal.

"I just wanted to do my routines as well as I could," she said of her performance, reminiscent of a silver medal-winning effort at the World Age Group Championships four years ago in Germany. "I felt a bit more pressure [being at home], but everyone was really supportive so that takes a bit of the pressure off as well."

She pulled off a triple front flip, known as a Triffus, in posting a score that would have also resulted in a second-place finish in the under 19 category.

At the last competition two years ago,

nobody from Canada finished in the top six.

"Once you get to a certain level of difficulty, she is much more brave than most kids and that has helped her learn advanced skills," said coach Dave Ross, who trains Sendel, as well as the Canadian national team at Skyriders in Richmond Hill. "She's got confidence in her ability and her scores are already number four in Canada."

The Aurora resident credits her success to a lot of hard work. She does her routines every day, practicing all the skills five to six times a week, while exercising at the gym up to 10 hours weekly.

For good luck, Sendel takes her giant gorilla slippers and a gold medal from the 2002 Ontario Winter Games on the road to competitions. The slippers were a gift from Dad four years ago, while the medal came in a team trampoline event.

While still too young to compete at the senior level internationally, Sendel is targeting the 2012 Olympic Games in London, England as a long-term goal. She expects to begin training as a member of the senior Canadian team sometime in the new year, but is not eligible to participate at next summer's Olympics in Beijing.

"It's a dream of mine to go to the Olympics," she said. "Hopefully, all goes well."

A common obsession

By MICHAEL GORDON

I am sure that many people seeing the headline of this column will think it is referring to a mental disorder. For those who have faced the challenges of constipation, it sometimes can seem like a mental disorder – a fixation and obsessions with one's "movements."

Bowel movements often come into play, either as a primary or at least a secondary issue in a geriatric medical assessment. There is a tendency to ignore the problem of constipation, trivialize it or accept it as "normal with age."

People try a whole range of medications and "natural" products to achieve the goal of an easy-to-expel, well-formed bowel movement.

The food industry has recognized the size of the market for such products and created the "regularity" industry. Thus products are sold by happy-faced models who pick up boxes of cereals with looks of satisfaction on their faces.

When I was a medical student in Dundee, Scotland, I sat through a masterful presentation by the famous physician Denis Burkett, who spent many years in Africa studying, among other subjects, the dietary habits and their effects on the bowel movements of indigenous peoples.

Burkett showed us a photograph of a white missionary standing next to a native, each behind his most recent bowel movement. That of the missionary was a few pellet-sized droppings and that of the native was a mound that went above his ankles. Burkett said, "The missionary produced this after an hour of pushing and squeezing: the local tribesman, in two minutes with no effort at all." The class howled in laughter, but the message was not lost on any of us.

Most people have at some time experienced difficulty with regularity, perhaps following a

prolonged trip, a change in diet or the use of certain medications that have constipating side effects.

Some people have, all their lives, been excessively concerned about their bowel movements. Some may have had a parent or grandparent who was fixated on regularity as a physiological necessity and who plied them with laxatives, sometimes in the form of daily castor oil – a potent bowel stimulant. Parents may have added milk of magnesia or senna products to their children's diet on a daily basis.

As adults, these people often suffer from the unfulfilled quest for the satisfying bowel movement and go from one doctor to another, being tested and treated with multiple products, including herbal supplements and "natural" products. Patients have shown me the "magical natural tea" from Europe, which contains the potent laxative senna.

Some people are unaware that certain medications may cause constipation. They include medications used for urinary symptoms and mood disorders, some over-the-counter medications for respiratory symptoms, and codeine products.

An inadequate amount of fibre (also called roughage) in our diets may also cause constipation. The main sources of fibre for Canadians are whole grain products, such as breads and cereals, and fruits and vegetables.

One of my favourite "tricks," which I learned years ago and recommend to my patients with regularity problems, is to eat oatmeal (not the instant type) in the mornings. Add a few tablespoons of Red River cereal to it before cooking (it can be prepared in a microwave). Red River cereal contains flax, among other grains.

Oatmeal promotes regularity, and it tastes good, too, when fruit and/or yogurt are added to it. With some luck, it will work for you.



The Senior Side of Life

Dr. Michael Gordon is medical program director of palliative care at Baycrest and co-author with Bart Mindszenty of *Parenting Your Parents* (Dundurn Press).

EGGPLANT CANNELLONI

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 4 lg shallots, sliced
- cooking spray
- 4 cloves garlic
- 2 jars (12 oz. each) roasted red peppers
- Juice of 1 orange (about 1/2 cup)
- 2 medium eggplants, cut lengthwise into 1/2" slices
- 4 oz. goat cheese
- 1 tsp capers, chopped (optional)
- 2 tbs chopped fresh parsley

Directions

Heat oil in skillet over medium heat. Cook shallots and garlic about 1 min. Reduce heat. Cook until golden, 3-5 min. Add peppers and juice; bring to a boil. Lower heat; simmer until peppers are soft, about 5 min. Cool. Puree mixture in blender. Pour into 9" x 13" baking dish; set aside. Coat eggplant slices with cooking spray; broil on baking sheet until golden on both sides, about 15 min. Heat oven to 400°F. Mash cheese, capers, 1 tbsp. parsley in a bowl. Place 1 tbsp. filling at end of each eggplant slice; roll up. Lay seam side down in baking dish. Bake 10-15 min. Top with remaining 1 tablespoon parsley.

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Assimilation and tradition: a fine line

Epi on Education

In my last article, influenced as it was by the Chanukah season, I dealt with the significance of our advertising the miracle throughout the ages and around the world. That aspect of the celebration, which is directed outward to the larger population, is an announcement of our love of freedom.

The high value we place on our own specific heritage, and our desire to live at peace with our majority culture neighbours.

There is, however, another educational message in both the origins of Chanukah and its ongoing celebration over the generations that illumines just how we managed (and still manage) to live and thrive (not merely survive) as a minority

among overwhelming cultural, social, and religious majorities, Christian or Islamic. The Hasmonian revolt was the beginning of our learning how to find the delicate balance between integration and assimilation.

The metaphor I have always used with my students has been that of eating an apple. We recite a blessing and start eating a fruit in full knowledge that our taste buds will be satisfied with the crisp and tangy taste of a fresh McIntosh, but also that part of the apple will stay with us to nourish our system for maintenance and growth, while another will be expelled as waste.

The lesson is clear. Transforming Jerusalem into a Greek polis was out of the question for the traditionalists who cared

deeply about the Temple rituals and the values behind them. And yet, we came to live within Hellenistic society and adopt much of their culture and language. Did we not have two perfectly good words for a court in Hebrew (bet din and bet mishpat) when we named our court the Sanhedrin from the Greek *sunedrion*? Why did we label a heretic an "apikoros," from the Greek Epicurus, if the Greek language was not "tasty in our mouths?"

Across the centuries and wherever we have lived as Jews, we have managed to interact in such a fashion that language, music, literature, cuisine, and all the components of a culture flowed freely back and forth between us and our neighbours while we carefully drew the line between integration and total assimilation, rejecting that which could harm us and embracing that which appealed and allowed us to flourish.



Seymour Epstein

Epi (Seymour Epstein) is the vice-president of Jewish Education at UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

"Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

– Book of Ruth (Judaism's first convert)

Why would a person choose Judaism?

What does a person converting from Christianity do with his or her belief in Jesus? Are Jews from birth really accepting of converts? The following is from an interview I conducted with Torontonian Bruce Cowley, who was born a Baptist and five years into his marriage, having already had children, decided to study Judaism, go to the mikvah, undergo a brit milah and stand before a bet din. Why? Because he wanted to be a Jew.



URBAN WRITER

riage. I did it for the right reasons.

I didn't want to be a passive parent who says to my children, about Judaism, "Go talk to your mom." I wanted to engage with my children. I wanted to learn, to be informed so I could talk to them. Rabbi Reuven Bulka, from Ottawa, said, "Take a conversion course." I did.

Prior to my conversion, Linda's parents weren't pleased that we were a couple. Her father encouraged us to live together, hoping we would break up. We didn't. They really are wonderful people though – her father is very smart, supportive and a great guy. Once they got to know me, they realized I was a good person.

My parents – who live in Calgary – they were a little quieter. My marrying a Jewish woman was not their fantasy, but they had been prepared because my oldest sister

married a French Canadian Catholic and my other sister married an Irish Catholic. It was a bigger deal to them when my sister married the Irish Catholic than when I married a Jew. Linda and I were married on Oct. 29, 1988.

I was raised in a relatively conservative Baptist home. It was not evangelical. I draw parallels between my parents and a good Jewish home, because they lived their beliefs. My parents were always taking people in – you know, troubled people. They stressed tolerance. My father never said anything negative about anyone based on their religion, language or anything. Being a Baptist provided me with respect.

The fact that I was brought up in a good Christian home allowed my eyes to be opened to the positive stuff. When I was first exposed to Judaism, I think it was that kind of tolerance that allowed me to embrace Judaism.

When I finally converted it wasn't like I was struck by lightning – you know, like all of a sudden, I went to the mikvah, had a circumcision and stood before the bet din, and I was a Jew. It was gradual.

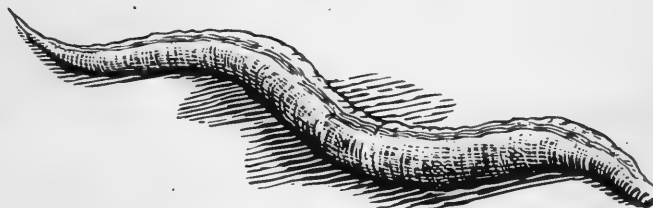
Circumcision? There was a urologist and some serious guys in the room davening. I was already Jewish in my mind, so I was happy to do it. I wanted to do it. It's a mitzvah. A while later, I called in to a CBC show and assured the (circumcision) naysayers that it does not affect your sensitivity in the slightest.

I think Judaism is a model for living. It provides a set of moral guidelines for me and my family. It's a model of goodness, one that human beings can live by and feel comfortable with. When I'm faced with a decision I try to find a reference point. I ask what is a good Jew supposed to do. You have to find your reference point and for me it's Judaism. I bounce everything off it.

"How do other Jews treat me?" Read part 2 next week for Bruce's response.)

My conversion on May 13, 1995, was very natural and it all felt right for me. I always said I wouldn't convert for mar-

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Like Dr. Mei Zhen, who was able to show that, despite the vast differences in complexity, humans and this little worm are likely to use similar sets of genes to connect nerve cells.

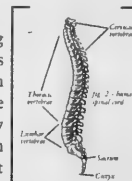
Her accomplishment provided an important tool for researchers worldwide to study the human brain and how it develops. This promises new hope for the understanding and treatment of a vast range of psychiatric diseases from schizophrenia, depression and bi-polar disorder to neurodegenerative diseases like ALS and Alzheimer's.

Another scientist at Mount Sinai Hospital, Dr. Joseph Culotti,

is using *C. elegans* in hopes of finding new ways to repair an injured spinal cord.

For his contribution to the advancement of world-leading spinal cord research, he was named the 2005 recipient of the Barbara Turnbull Award for Spinal Cord Research.

Dr. Culotti discovered startling similarities between the growth of this worm's neurons and those in the human spinal cord. By understanding the development of the spinal cord we may ultimately be able to replicate it – even enabling severed neurons to reconnect and repair the injured cord.



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Feature

By RENA GODFREY

Zaide and the Boys

Guest Voice

In Israel, it's certainly common to see young men travelling around the country in groups, on their own or with their girlfriends, but how often do you come across two gorgeous single guys travelling with their grandfather?

Amidst the vast array of mid-lifers and senior citizens on Beit Halochem Canada's recent mission to Israel, cousins Jared Green, 29, and Dan Baum, 23, and their grandfather, Sidney Wolbrom, 91, inspired the rest of us with their genuine affection and mutual love for one another.

Wolbrom looks like any typical zaide you've seen hanging out at Bagel World or exercising at the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre; balding, warm eyes, thick eyeglasses, a hearing aid in each ear and a physique as strong as an ox. So strong in fact, that he claims the one and only time he had a massage, the masseuse couldn't finish massaging him, for fear that he would "break her fingers."

Wolbrom is sharper than most of us and has

an affinity for dates, events and exact prices of items he purchased more than 60 years ago. He sneezes at least three to four times after every meal, which he believes aids with his digestion, and does not smoke or drink. Wolbrom is a non-sense man who eats almost everything, doesn't wear suntan lotion and uses Aqua Velva (a brand of aftershave) to cure any ailment.

Whether walking side by side with their arms draped over their zaide's shoulders or beaming at him while listening to stories about the old days, Jared and Dan savoured each moment with their beloved grandfather. From morning till night Wolbrom, Jared and Dan moved as one unit. Every morning he woke his grandsons by tickling their feet, and every night Jared and Dan were sure to tuck their zaide into bed. Zaide

and the Boys (as we coined them) were an unbeatable team ready for whatever the day would hold. Lunch or dinner, Jared and Dan enjoyed teasing their zaide, hoping to squeeze out another laugh or story from him. He would pretend to be annoyed, but within seconds, he would smile and dominate the conversation.

During these precious spontaneous moments, I had the pleasure and privilege of learning more about Sidney Wolbrom, the man who managed to sneak out twice from the concentra-

tion camp lineups.

Born on March 10, 1916, in Busko-Zdroj, Poland, Shea Wolbromski (Wolbrom) was the second youngest of 11 children. At 23, he escaped from Poland to Russia with his younger brother, where he survived by selling odds and ends on the black market. Tragically, his mother, Esther, and seven of his siblings perished at Treblinka. In Russia, he met the love of his life, Blima (Blanche), who had typhus at the time. He married her one month after they met.

After the war, Wolbrom went to Germany, where his three daughters, Rose and the twins Molline and Estelle, were born. With only \$300 in his pocket, he and his wife and their three daughters moved to New York, where he worked in his brother's store for a while and then later opened a wholesale egg business. In 1966, he moved his family to Toronto, where he worked as a residential developer. He still drives himself in his beige Cadillac to his Brampton, Ont., office, four days a week.

I admit that by the end of the mission, I was completely smitten by Wolbrom and for good reason. Never have I seen such love openly showered on a grandparent before. It was Zaide's idea to go to Israel on the Beit Halochem mission. He and his friends donate their weekly poker profits to Beit Halochem Canada, and when Wolbrom received the mission notice, he just couldn't say no.

In fact, his connection to Israel is an enduring one. He and Blanche took each of their six grandchildren to Israel in honour of their bar or bat mitzvahs.

Continued on page 22



Sidney Wolbrom

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Community in desperate need of foster families

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Jewish Family & Child is desperately seeking Jewish families to take in foster children, says Sheryl Ederman, a supervisor in child-care services.

"We have a crisis in terms of Jewish kids needing homes," she said.

The agency currently has 35 foster families in the Greater Toronto Area, but that is not enough to provide temporary shelter to all the Jewish children coming to care, she said.

They are looking for families "of all kinds. We need families who are great with toddlers or teenagers, and families who are great with special needs kids."

"We need weekend families, holiday families, families who will open their homes on Shabbat, and general respite families. This means if a family can give only two weekends a month, then we may have a need for a child who requires respite from another foster home on a regular basis."

"We need people — they can be single or

single parents, and stay-at-home or working — who have an open heart and the ability to care for kids. They have to be kind and caring, but they do not have to have previous training; we provide families with a training program."

Kids come from all parts of the community, Ederman said, so they are looking for prospective parents from a variety of backgrounds.

She said that their families struggle with, among other things, stress, poverty, addiction or mental health problems, and when children come into the agency's care, there are serious concerns about their safety and protection. "Once [they are] in our care, every effort is made to return children to their own families."

The agency once received a call from a hospital, Ederman said, because a mother was admitted with depression, and there was no one at home for her 11-year-old daughter. "We placed the girl in a foster home until the mother

Seeking prospective parents from a variety of backgrounds

was discharged and we made plans for the girl's safety. The girl still has contact with her foster family for occasional ongoing support."

A nine-year-old boy who had been in their care had been left home alone day after day while his parents worked.

"They left food on the table, and the child was responsible for getting himself up, eating and going to school. There was no emergency number available, and the child was minimally able to manage in an emergency situation. He was placed in a foster home until an assessment was made, and safety plans were developed to protect the child."

An emergency situation arose recently, Ederman said, when a child in foster care left the home because she was unhappy there. "We need to keep her in the Jewish community, but we don't have another home for her. If we had more resources, we could service the child better."

Her biological mother brought the girl in, she said, and they made arrangements to put temporary extra support in the foster home while the girl is awake. "We're not sure what the next step is. We can't leave the child with her mother and we have no more resources. We'd love to have a list of foster families, but we don't have one."

Howard Hurwitz, director of children's services, said kids come into care because, for all kinds of reasons, they can't live at home. "We have kids with a range of needs, and we try to pair children with more needs with a family who can handle them."

"Our goal is to have foster homes in every area of the city. We try hard to keep kids in their own community so they can continue in their local school, synagogue or community centre."

As a result of the crisis, he said, they have kids living in group homes outside of their own communities. "I hate to see that happen because it uproots a Jewish child from the Jewish community. They live with non-Jewish caregivers and have non-Jewish friends."

Continued on page 17

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Truth, we were always taught and have grown up to believe, will always bear directly and positively upon consequences. Honesty will always be its own reward.

But not, alas, with respect to Israel. In its conflict with the Palestinians, the Jewish state has been painted in massively dark strokes as colonizer and as oppressor.

The truth has had very little bearing upon Israel's image around the world. One of the most egregious recent examples of this occurred in 2004 when Palestinians falsely accused Israel of perpetrating a massacre in Jenin. Media outlets parroted the Palestinian calumny and despite the truth which proved incontrovertibly that no massacre had taken place, it stuck.

A group of researchers at Hebrew University last week released a report that Israel's image actually worsened in the international media after its unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and four communities in the West Bank in the summer of 2005.

According to the *Jerusalem Post* the researchers found that Israel was cast in a more negative light in both the United States and England after the Gaza withdrawal, compared to the period that preceded it, and that the improvement in Israel's image occurred fleetingly only during the actual disengagement itself.

"Israel continues to be viewed by the world as a conquering state," said Hebrew University political scientist Tamir Sheafer, who carried out the study. "We also found that the demands from Israel for territorial concessions in the territories not only were not lessened following the disengagement, but actually became stronger."

According to the *Post*, the study was based on thousands of online articles that appeared in British and American media, as well as on statements on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by American and British leaders.

These findings are counter-intuitive, to say the least. And, it must be added, they are deeply disappointing. For if

the wholesale pullout and painful uprooting of some 9,000 Jews from their communities in Gaza did not inspire decisively positive feelings towards the Jewish state, what, one worries to ask, would?

Canadians will recall that the coverage of the Second Lebanon War became obsessively, almost exclusively, focused on images of Lebanese families fleeing their homes and seeking refuge. The media virtually ignored the daily, deadly havoc wrought by the Katyusha rockets deliberately launched at civilian populations in northern Israel. They were only Katyushas, after all, and not crusades.

In the conflict with Israel, the Palestinians have perfected the image of victims. It is their permanent neon-glowing persona. It flashes their victimization throughout the world, a kind of directional beacon in a blind man's bluff. The image has been skillfully cultivated over the years and impressed upon most of the world untainted by any actions and behaviours of Palestinian leaders.

For example, the IDF recently found in a truck crossing from the West Bank and headed to Gaza, some 6.5 tons of potassium nitrate, a chemical used in the manufacture of explosives, hidden in a number of sacks marked as sugar, humanitarian aid from the European Union to the Palestinians. (See the photo inset.) The EU dutifully condemned what it called an "abuse of humanitarian aid."

The discovery of the potassium nitrate, along with discoveries of pipe bombs in baby carriages, weapons in

Greater Toronto Area

An image undeserved

ambulances, suicide belts wrapped around children and bomb parts in the undergarments of pregnant women, prove the need if not always the efficacy of checkpoint searches by the IDF. The searches mightily inconvenienced the individuals being searched; but they happen also to save lives.

Should the harsh image fall upon the state that tries to save the lives of its people, or upon the Palestinian leaders who, cynically and cruelly, steadily and stealthily, send forth the weapons of destruction and death?

Last Thursday, Palestinians fired 25 mortar shells, six Qassam rockets and one Grad Katyusha rocket into Israel from Gaza. Israel of course retaliated.

In one of the incidents armed Palestinian gunmen entrenched them-

selves in a house in the southern Gaza Strip. From inside the house, using anti-tank missiles and small-arms, they fired upon Israeli soldiers. The soldiers responded with tank fire. They killed two armed gunmen and also, unfortunately, two Palestinian women who were in the house at the time.

The deaths of the two women were deeply regretted by the IDF.

The army published a statement to that effect but also emphatically stated that "the responsibility for the death of the Palestinian women lies with the gunmen, who operated intentionally from a civilian environment."

Should the harsh image fall upon the state that, in defence of the lives of its citizens unintentionally harms Palestinian civilians or upon the Palestinian leaders who, cynically and cruelly, steadily and stealthily, put their own people in deadly harm's way?

We all know that the question would not be asked were it in relation to any other country other than Israel.

MBD

From the editor's desk



See JN

WELCOMING THE NEW YEAR AND CHRISTIAN LEADERS:

Israel's President Shimon Peres last week hosted a reception at his official residence in Jerusalem for the leaders of the Israeli Christian community in honor of the secular New Year. From left, Latin Patriarch Michel Sabbah, Interior Minister Meir Shtrit, President Shimon Peres, Greek Patriarch Theofilos and Archbishop Elias Shakor, head of the Greek Catholic Church.

The camera did not appear to capture President Peres at a happy moment.



[Isranet photo]



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Greater Toronto Area

Shul helps bring fresh produce to congregants

By SHAYLA
GUNTER-GOLDSTEIN
Special to The C/JN

Ivan Simon does not seem like your average "crunchy granola" type. A 40-something computer software architect living in Toronto with his wife and two children, he seems more like a supermarket kind of guy than a local organic consumer.

But Simon is one example of the growing trend to people changing the way they think about their food choices and where their food comes from. A passion for a healthier and more ecologically responsible lifestyle has motivated him to spearhead a Community Supported Agriculture organic farming program at Toronto's Beth Radom Congregation.

The Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program

links local Ontario organic farms directly with consumers through the availability of fresh vegetable and fruit boxes. Beth Radom's program will see households purchase, in early spring, subscription "shares" of the year's harvest from a local organic farm. Participants pay for their produce at the beginning of the season to help provide the necessary start-up capital for farmers to purchase seeds and supplies.

Working in conjunction with Torat HaTeva, the Jewish Nature Centre of Canada, Simon says his goal in introducing the CSA program to Beth Radom is to make local, organic produce accessible, affordable and convenient for the Jewish community.

Michael Schechter of Torat HaTeva says his organization "recognizes there is a disconnect in the community between the environment and Judaism, and is working to repair it. So much of kashrut and Judaism is about healthy living and eating.



Ivan Simon, left, and Michael Schechter

Zionism started with our attachment to the land. It was [David] Ben-Gurion's vision. Eating organic and making ecologically responsible choices helps us, as Jews, rekindle that."

Simon says his interest in rekindling this relationship was piqued when the shul's Cantor David Rosen delivered a Shabbat sermon about the environment. Simon was familiar with the CSA program through friends at the First Narayever Congregation in downtown Toronto, which hosts the only other Jewish CSA depot in Toronto. He approached Rosen with the idea of starting a program at Beth Radom.

Both men feel that the membership of Beth Radom, which is increasingly becoming a younger, family-oriented group, would react favourably to an environmental initiative such as CSA.

Simon also believes that one of a synagogue's roles is to be proactive. "I want this for Beth Radom and for our members. I hope that this program will motivate current members to become more active in the shul and within the Jewish community, and perhaps even attract new members."

Beth Radom and Torat HaTeva will work with the Plan B Organic Farm, a certified organic CSA farm in Southern Ontario, to provide the program. From June through the end of October, fruits and vegetables will be available to those who sign up as shareholders. In addition to the produce, kosher organic fish and chicken will be available this year.

Plan B is aware of kashrut concerns. For example, none of the vegetables or fruits supplied will be from farms that raise pork to avoid contamination through soil. While vegetables won't be checked for insects, observant clients may ask that their boxes exclude certain types of vegetables.

"People are realizing that the food we eat today is not the same — in taste, appearance, or in nutrients — as the food we grew up with," Simon says. "Organic produce tastes like farm food should taste."

Schechter adds that "when you think of the chemicals and pesticides used on crops, and the often inhumane treatment of animals used in mass-production farming, you have to ask yourself if that is following the spirit of kashrut."

Food boxes come in a variety of sizes. A half-share box, suitable for a household of two or three adults for example, contains eight to 10 assorted in-season items. Fresh herbs and a newsletter containing recipes and tips are also included. Boxes will be available for pickup once a week at the Beth Radom depot in the Bathurst Street and Sheppard Avenue area. The congregation is currently investigating a depot location in Thornhill.

Beth Radom will also practise tikkun olam by donating any unclaimed boxes each week to shelters and food recovery programs such as Second Harvest. Shareholders may also choose to donate a portion of their box to these causes directly.

Schechter will explain the principles and philosophy behind Community Supported Agriculture at a pre-Tu b'Shvat shiur at Beth Radom on Jan. 19 during morning services. Members of the community are welcome to attend and to participate in the CSA program. For more information, call the synagogue office at 416-636-3451, extension 24.

Torat HaTeva will hold a CSA Tu b'Shvat seder, also on Jan. 19, at the Anshei Minsk Synagogue. For information, visit <http://www.torathateva.org>.

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Editorials & Letters

Condemn incitement

Two off-duty soldiers of the Israel Defence Forces, Cpl. Ahikam Amihai (20) and Sgt. David Ruben (21), both from Kiryat Arba, were killed two weeks ago as they and a friend were hiking in the rugged, scenic hills near their home. Four Palestinians burst upon them and opened fire.

Islamic Jihad immediately claimed credit for the attack. But when the attackers were apprehended, it became known that one of them was employed by the security services of Mahmoud Abbas' Palestinian Authority (PA). This latter fact merely added to the anguish of the murder of the two young men. For, in an effort to help Abbas thwart Hamas' designs in the West Bank, and at the considerable urging of the American administration, Israel has been attempting to bolster the fighting capability of the PA police.

So deep was the bitterness and the resentment that the Kiryat Arba Local Council effectively accused the Israeli government of being a party to the murders: "Whoever sets terrorists free and gives them arms does not have to pull the trigger to be an accomplice," the council said in a release after the killings.

Some days later, at a conference in Tel Aviv comprised mainly of rabbis opposed to territorial compromise, the sentiments of the Kiryat Arba council were reiterated but in more ominous and more frightening terms. "The terrible traitor, (Prime Minister) Ehud Olmert, who gives these Nazis weapons, who gives money, who frees their murderous terrorists...collaborates with the Nazis," Rabbi Shalom Dov Wolpe told the audience. He then added: "[Olmert's punishment], and the punishment of [Vice Premier] Haim Ramon, and the punishment of [Foreign Minister] Tzipi Livni, and all these people, like [Defence Minister] Ehud Barak, should be to hang from the gallows."

Such language is outrageous. We abhor it. It must be rejected at every turn. However deep his differences with the decision-makers in the government of Israel, Rabbi Wolpe's language has no place in the discourse that surrounds the difficult decisions that lie ahead.

We therefore commend with high praise the statement last week by President Stephen J. Savitsky and Executive Vice President Rabbi Tzvi Hersh Weinreb of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, in response to Wolpe's remarks.

"We unequivocally condemn Rabbi Wolpe's statements. They are beyond the pale of legitimate democratic protest and have no basis in Jewish law or *hashkafa* (philosophy). While we - and many other supporters of the State of Israel - often find ourselves in disagreement with the Government of Israel on certain policy matters, it is unconscionable to cross the line into hate, violence and threats. Debate and dissent must be conducted civilly and respectfully in accordance with our Torah, whose 'ways are the ways of pleasantness, and all of whose pathways are of peace.' We call upon all God-fearing Jews to act in a manner that brings praise to God, his People, Land and Torah."

We have all been to the dark, nation-rendering, soul-destroying, harmful place where Rabbi Wolpe's words inevitably lead. We must never, ever go there again. Woe to us if we do.

25 years ago in The CJN

The Canada-Israel Committee called a two-part CBC Journal segment on the situation of Palestinians in the Middle East "unfair, unbalanced and inaccurate." Journal executive producer Mark Starowicz denied the charge, saying that CBC tried to provide unbiased coverage of the region.

Dry Bones

IN 2008 WE FACE GLOBAL WARMING, THE IRANIAN THREAT, RECESSION, TERRORISM, CHAOS IN PAKISTAN AND POISON IN PRODUCTS MADE IN CHINA.



BUT SOMEHOW ALL THE THREATS SEEM TO HAVE BLURRED!



THIS YEAR I'M NOT AS DEPRESSED ABOUT THE FUTURE AS I THINK I SHOULD BE!



THAT'S DEPRESSING!



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Response to Hart

I would like to comment on the column written by Lawrence Hart, "Time to reclaim our campuses," (CJN, Dec. 20). As a Jewish professional who works on the university campuses in Toronto, I feel I should speak out against those who wish to turn the campus environment into a battleground, playing out the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. And this goes for both sides of the debate.

Hart comments that those who advocate for dialogue on campus do so wrongly because dialogue with anti-Israel activists is a "futile exercise." I would agree wholeheartedly; however, Hille's dialogue building has never targeted this group. Instead we look to the large majority of students who are uninformed or undecided, those who believe that both sides are to blame, and the moderates.

Anti-Israel activists make arguments about lack of rights; we engage students with a table displaying information about the many rights that exist for Arab Israelis, for women, for gays and lesbians. Anti-Israel activists espouse divestment campaigns; we ensure that the broader student body knows about the many things Israel has to offer the world in various areas such as the many medical and technological advances. These are but a few examples of dialogue building.

And if you still don't believe me, then sit with me when we are at a table in Van Hall at York University with the video game Peacemaker and witness the hundreds of students who come up to us and thank us for the very type of programming that Hart criticizes, while condemning those programs that incite hatred.

Rebecca Woods Baum
Director of Israel Affairs
Hillel of Greater Toronto

Supreme Court's decision on get case

The Supreme Court of Canada recently decided that a husband would be liable for damages for breaking his agreement to the court that he would give his wife a *get* as part of his civil divorce ("Damages upheld for denied *get*," CJN, Dec. 20). This decision holds three important lessons for our community.

- 1) Religious freedom is a basic right in our society - but it is not an unlimited right. It is not acceptable (civilly or Jewishly) to hurt another person or to renege on a promise and claim religious freedom to rationalize your behaviour. Those who protest the reasonable accommodation of minorities, claiming that basic human rights may be trampled, should rest easy knowing that the Supreme Court will not allow outrageous and offensive behaviour under the guise of religious freedom.
- 2) A *get* is not a weapon. Once a Jewish couple decides their marriage



must end, it is required by Jewish law that the husband agree to give and the wife agree to accept a *get*. It is never acceptable to use the *get* to extort the other spouse for money, for custody, or for vindictive anger. All legitimate pressure must be used to dissuade an angry, stubborn spouse from abusing others by refusing a *get*.

3) The best way to prevent the terrible situation of *agunah* is with a prenuptial agreement that creates a valid, binding contract to follow the advice of a *beit din* in case the marriage irreparably fails. In the case of a couple already married, a post-nuptial agreement can be executed.

I call upon my colleagues throughout Canada to require this document before they will officiate at any wedding ceremony. I also urge every Jewish person considering marriage to require of their officiating rabbi the execution of such a document.

Rabbi Michael Whitman
Montreal

Survivor memoirs

In "Azrieli Foundation launches survivor memoir series," (CJN, Dec. 6), it was stated that in the past the memoirs of survivors had usually been recorded in the form of interviews that "remain in archives or libraries and are only seen, read or heard by students and scholars, not the general public."

In 2001, the Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation, began publishing memoirs of survivors. To date, we have published 12 books that we have distributed to 50 libraries and Holocaust centres worldwide. Eight of the memoirs are in Polish, three in English, and one in both languages. We welcome the contribution of additional memoirs. Not being a foundation of great financial means, we are unable to widely publicize the work we are doing.

Iлона Gruda
President
Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation
Montreal

Thanks Rabbi Morrison

We would like to acknowledge Rabbi Howard Morrison for the time and effort in helping our son Zachary succeed at his bar mitzvah ("Autistic teen uses sign language for bar mitzvah," CJN, Dec. 6). His words and his actions the day of the event were profound, touching and special. He deserves a lot of credit for making this day happen and allowing us to celebrate as so many other families do.

The Sone Family
Evan, Maria, Ariella, Joshua and Zachary
Toronto

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Obama has sought Jewish support throughout career

By RON KAMPEAS
JTA

Ask about Barack Obama's natural constituencies and you might hear that he's the first black with a viable shot at the White House; or about his Kenyan father and his childhood in Indonesia; or the youthfulness of his followers; or the millions of Oprah junkies swooning over his candidacy.

What you might not hear is that the Illinois senator, who made history last Thursday by winning the Democratic caucus in Iowa, has made Jewish leaders an early stop at every stage in his political career.

In his first run for the Illinois Senate in 1996, he sought the backing of Alan Solow, a top Chicago lawyer. Eight years later, running for the U.S. Senate – long before he became the shoo-in, when he was running in a Democratic field packed with a dozen candidates, including some Jews – one of his first meetings was with Robert Schrayner, a top Jewish philanthropist in Chicago.

When he launched his campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination in late 2006, he named as his fund-raising chief Alan Solomon, the Boston Jewish philanthropist who helped shepherd Senator John Kerry to the Democratic candidacy in 2004.

And he chose a gathering of the pro-Israel lobby, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), last March to deliver his presidential candidacy's first foreign policy speech.

"Some of my earliest and most ardent supporters came from the Jewish community in Chicago," Obama told JTA in 2004, after his keynote speech galvanized the Democratic convention in Boston.

Three years later, addressing the National Jewish Democratic Council's candidate's forum, he made the same point when he was asked about his ties with Arab Americans and Muslim Americans in Chicago.

"My support within the Jewish community has been much more significant than my support within the Muslim community," Obama said at the April forum, adding: "I welcome and seek the support of the Muslim and Arab communities."

His Jewish followers are fervent, distributing "Obama '08" yarmulkes early in his campaign.

His rock-star status as well as the relationships Obama has built in the community have helped avoid murmurings of his otherwise notable divergences from pro-Israel orthodoxies.

In his AIPAC speech, for example, Obama favoured diplomacy as a means of confronting Iran's suspected nuclear weapons program. "While we should take no option, including military action, off the table, sustained and aggressive diplomacy combined with tough sanctions should be our primary means to prevent Iran from building nuclear weapons," he said.



Barack Obama

[Carrie Devorah photo]

AIPAC does not oppose diplomacy in engaging Iran, but dislikes it as an emphasis, believing that talks could buy the Iranian regime bomb-making time. But his words did not stop the Chicago hotel ballroom packed with 800 AIPAC members from cheering Obama on.

A few weeks later, Obama drew more rubberneckers than any other candidate attending AIPAC's policy forum in Washington – drawing away onlookers from Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, although she outpolls Obama among Jewish voters. No one

to take risks with respect to its security. But it can ask Israel to say that it is still possible for us to allow more than just this status quo of fear, terror, division. That can't be our long-term aspiration."

Early in his campaign, he handily killed an Israel-related controversy in its early stages. At a chat he had said that "no one has suffered more than the Palestinians."

Blame the leadership was what he meant, he later explained: "What I said was, nobody has suffered more than the Palestinian people from the failure of the Palestinian leadership to recognize Israel, to renounce violence and to get serious about negotiating peace and security for the region," Obama said during an MSNBC debate.

Obama tempers his deviations from pro-Israel orthodoxy by going an extra mile in areas where he agrees with groups such as AIPAC.

He has led the effort in the Senate to pass legislation that would assist U.S. states that choose to divest from Israel. His top Middle East adviser is Dennis Ross, who had the job during the Clinton administration and who has since principally blamed the Palestinian leadership for the failure of the Oslo peace process.

And in recent speeches, Obama tweaked his pro-Israel rhetoric to echo the recent drive by the Israeli government and pro-Israel groups to insist on recognition of Israel as a Jewish state.

"I think everyone knows what the basic

outlines of an agreement would look like," he said in a speech redistributed by his campaign. "It would mean that the Palestinians would have to reinterpret the notion of right of return in a way that would preserve Israel as a Jewish state. It might involve compensation and other concessions from the Israelis, but ultimately Israel is not going to give up its state."

On domestic issues, Obama is savvy about Jewish social justice commitments, and is on a first-name basis with two of the top Jewish religious lobbyists in Washington – Rabbi David Saperstein of the Reform movement and Nathan Diament, who represents the Orthodox Union.

But that connection is not enough to supplant Clinton among Jewish voters. In a recent American Jewish Committee poll, his favourable rating was 38 per cent, while hers was 53 per cent.

Clinton also has most of the Jewish congressional delegation backing her. Her years as first lady and as senator have made her a more familiar presence among Jews. Public policy groups are likelier to favour her uncompromising approach to pushing universal health care, as opposed to Obama's appeal to build consensus on the issue.

Obama's appeal is in his broader vision, according to Solomon.

"This election will be about change – a change in government and the way politics is conducted," he told JTA last May. "There is a connection between gridlock and the smallness of our politics."

Obama tweaked his pro-Israel rhetoric to echo the recent drive by the Israeli government and pro-Israel groups

winned when he said that Palestinian needs must be considered in working out a peace deal, although that's hardly standard AIPAC pep talk.

He made the same point at the National Jewish Democratic Council event.

"It is in the interests of Israel to establish peace in the Middle East," he said. "It cannot be done at the price of compromising Israel's security, and the United States government and an Obama presidency cannot ask Israel

Opinions

Beware of 'para-Judaism'

A Jewish community in Europe I know well has, in place of a rabbi, a local neurologist as its "spiritual leader." His formal Jewish training is non-existent. His knowledge of Hebrew and Judaism seems to be very limited.



Rabbi Dov
Marmur
in Toronto

When I told the president of his congregation that I've always wanted to be a neurologist so that I could come and practise in his city, at least part time, the president was not amused. He was less tolerant of medical than of religious quacks.

Like many others, he assumed that you don't need rabbinic training as long as you show a measure of competence and confidence on the bimah. How often have I been told – "in jest," of course – by proud relatives of a bar or bat mitzvah who performed adequately that now my job was on the line and the child would soon take over.

It's the fact that the rabbinate is held in such low esteem that has made "spiritual leaders" a not uncommon phenomenon. Several congregations in Canada are served by them. These women and men may have been employed, as in the case of the aforementioned neurologist, because it's difficult to find properly trained rabbis. I surmise, however, that this is not the only reason. Congregations may also want them because it's easier to control them.

Trained rabbis tend to claim external authority both from tradition and from their professional bodies, which have standards that congregants are expected to respect. And because they have trained for at least five years – as much or more than other accredited professionals – their remuneration should be commensurate. By contrast, "spiritual leaders" ("para-rabbis" often addressed as "Rabbi") are frequently employed part time. They are both more pliable and less payable.

Sadly, learning and competence have ceased to be priorities in many congregations in favour of "spirituality" and "charisma." After all, gurus don't need to go to rabbinic school, and it's gurus that many congregations seem to want.

I'm all in favour of do-it-yourself Judaism. I know successful groups that function very well without "the benefit of clergy," because many of their members are sufficiently knowledgeable to conduct services and teach. They don't need to employ people to do it for them. I suspect, however, that this isn't the case in the communities that have "spiritual leaders." Though there is no way of assessing their knowledge, it's reasonable to assume that they know only a little more than those to whom they minister, and that's deemed to be sufficient.

The lack of competent religious leadership in a growing number of congregations all over the world is yet another manifestation of the dangers Diaspora Jewry is facing. The prevalence of "para-rabbis" may lead to "para-Judaism" in place of the real thing.

Being on a campus is like being in a constant search for an identity. We are all trying to figure out who we are and where we fit in the world.

This is even more the case for Jewish students. There is a sense on campus that there is no true Jewish community identity, something that unites us. Our lives are complicated by religion, tradition and Israel. We want to maintain some semblance of identity and at the same time, fit into larger campus life.

As a result, we spend an inordinate amount of time questioning ourselves and our own philosophies.

In the hyper-politicized campus world, it is easy to lose perspective and become bogged down in petty issues and emotionally charged hand-wringing that seem to define student life. After all, we are young and still maturing. It's impossible to have a complete world view when one is just entering the real world.

It almost feels as though we've engaged ourselves in a cyclical guessing game trying to determine our own identity, and, in the process, we've forgotten that we have one, an identity forged through thousands of years.

The act of not turning away a stranger at your door on Shabbat – that's what makes our community great and that's what makes our community strong. That is our identity. We are a great people who not only survive, but thrive



Mark Masters
in Ottawa

and make our society great.

You walk around the campus of Carleton University. You pass the Minto Building and the Azrieli Theatre, two structures built thanks too the donations of Jewish community leaders. You walk and you wonder where the spirit is on campus.

The Jewish fraternity in Ottawa – my fraternity – has had a philanthropy chair each semester I have been involved with it, and every semester it has been an afterthought, a nuisance. It's rarely discussed at meetings and I cannot think of one truly successful philanthropy event we have run in my five years on campus.

The Canadian Federation of Jewish Students has a nearly impossible task of trying to unite a community with no shortage of opinions, spread across the country.

The best way to do that would be to have a nationwide Jewish philanthropy event. I'm not talking about money; instead imagine a joint effort coast to coast – not a single conference, but a charity push with an ambitious goal to strive for, not in terms of money, but rather of hours.

The greatest gift people can give is their time and their effort. In our community, we think it's about becoming stronger internally but there is a disagreement on how to achieve this. Do we build a big tent or focus on inspir-

ing the small number of already mobilized students? The answer is to focus on things that unify people.

Consider this a call to action for Jewish student leaders to make philanthropy a key value this semester. Whether it be raising awareness of the genocide in Darfur, supporting cancer research or working to fight poverty, it's time to think big and reach out.

My fraternity is planning a Skate for the Cure event in support of breast cancer research, to take place on the Rideau Canal. Meanwhile, the Jewish Students' Association in Ottawa is planning a campaign to get the Carleton cafeteria to donate its excess food to those in need.

And while the association has no philanthropy position on its executive, the issue is usually discussed at meetings and it appears that it will have a more prominent position on the agenda next semester.

The foundation has already been laid.

The more I live, the more I realize that life is about so much more than the issues we drone on about day after day. Life is about being able to change someone else's life for the better. This should be our identity.

Sure, we have a political agenda – every community does – but we should be defined by what our core principle is, and that core principle is helping our society become stronger. If our community on campus embraces this, we will be stronger than ever internally and externally.

All we have to do is be true to our identity.

A call to action

It's harder to be proactive

Part of being an individual is the inherent need for self-definition. Likewise, for groups of people, there is the need to delineate boundaries and exact a definition to distinguish one group from another.

In this process, though, many people and groups fall victim to the pitfalls of negative definitions. It is far easier to assert what we are not than to avow what we are. It requires far less moral resolve to declare what we oppose than to affirm what we stand for. And it takes far less courage to decry others than to stand as ourselves. Following this logic, many people and groups remain reactionary, identifying themselves negatively rather than proactively undertaking a process of self-definition.

While much of society engages in such practices, they endanger the possibility of finding any independent identity. We are Canadian, meaning not American, and we are Jewish, meaning not gentile. However, if our individuality is dependent on an opposition to others, what happens when we are suddenly deprived of such an opposition? To put it more vividly, what happens when we become acculturated entirely into society and the separation between Jewish values and societal values shrinks? Do we, as Jews, lose our identity because it is dependent solely on such a differentiation? The Halifax Zionist student population has been put to such a test this year.

This is my third year at Dalhousie University. In my previous two years, there existed

on campus a dedicated Palestinian student advocacy group. The group, known as the Palestinian Students Society (PSS), held events dealing with Middle East politics, human rights on the international stage and Palestinian culture. On several occasions, particularly contentious political issues – such as the separation wall and accusations of apartheid – have flared up. These issues, though, have been quickly resolved by the University.



Jesse Mintz
in Halifax

Despite this constant presence, Dalhousie has never been similar to Concordia in terms of animosity concerning the Middle East. Still, notwithstanding the relative harmony on Dalhousie campus, the regular PSS presence has typically provided an easy binary equation for the pro-Israel advocacy groups, both Jewish and non-Jewish in orientation.

The PSS would erect a wall as a demonstration – pro-Israel groups would educate about the safety benefits of the wall and the threats of suicide bombing; the PSS would bring in a speaker to repudiate the initial establishment of the State of Israel – pro-Israel students would attend the speech and refute the assertions; the PSS would organize a march to raise awareness of the supposed apartheid – pro-Israel students would concurrently educate students about the shared democratic values of Canada and Israel. The activity of the PSS provided a simple equation of us and them in which it was easy, and largely sufficient, to remain principally reactive.

This year, the PSS has almost entirely faded

from the Dalhousie scene. The absence of a disparate student advocacy group has spoiled the previous binary interaction and has forced the pro-Israel groups on campus to become proactive. If before it was enough to merely stand opposed to the actions of the PSS, it has now become crucial for pro-Israel students and groups to spread their message proactively and independent of opposition.

This year has therefore witnessed an amplification of pro-Israel measures and events on campus, despite the lack of an organized opposition to play off. Without an antagonizing opposition, pro-Israel groups have been able to identify what specifically relates to the Dalhousie student population. Political issues have thus been largely relegated to the back burner while cultural topics have been stressed. Matters such as "shared values" have been brought to the fore – best exemplified by a very successful fundraiser recently held for the Israeli charity, Save a Child's Heart.

The truth is that many of us don't care to be proactive. Pro-Israel student groups could have faded from the Dalhousie scene this year. Used to being reactionary and without an organized political antagonist to oppose, it would have been very simple for them to allow the issue of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict to ebb from the student mind. It's easy to react to accusations of apartheid, an anti-Israel protest and a massive wall erected on campus; it's far harder to reinvent oneself to stand alone, without the crutch of an opposite, and advocate for oneself.

Halifax Zionist groups should be commended.

The Kirshner File

A cornucopia of books...

This eclectic selection of books, ushering in a new year, proves yet again that publishers are eager to please a diverse and demanding readership.

Israel rates Iran as its most deadly adversary and rival, but this was not the case before the 1979 Islamic revolution. In *Treacherous Alliance: The Secret Dealings of Israel, Iran and the U.S.* (Yale University Press), Iranian scholar Trita Parsi, having interviewed 130 decision-makers in Iran, Israel and the United States, carefully examines Israel's complicated relationship with Iran against the backdrop of Washington's convoluted ties with Tehran. Among his conclusions: Iran fears that an Israeli peace agreement with the Palestinians will leave it isolated, while Israel fears that an American rapprochement with Iran will hurt its interests.

Israel in History: The Jewish State in Comparative Perspective (Routledge), by University of Toronto scholar Derek Penslar, is a probing analysis of Israel's historical development. He asks tough, provocative questions in a bid to better understand the dualities and contradictions of Israeli society.

Victoria Clark's *Allies for Armageddon: The Rise of Christian Zionism* (Yale University Press) holds that this phenomenon, rooted in biblical prophecy, poses a real threat to Israel. Clark, a British journalist, argues that Christian fundamentalist support of Israel is predicated on a Second Coming of Christ philosophy in which two-thirds of Jews will perish and the rest will be converted.

Meron Benvenisti, a deputy mayor of Jerusalem from 1971 to 1978 and now a columnist for the Israeli daily *Haaretz*, offers personal ruminations of pre-state Jerusalem and Israel's early years in *Son of the Cypress: Memories, Reflections, and Regrets from a Political Life* (University of California Press).

Charles Glass, in *The Tribes Triumphant* (HarperCollins), offers an impressionistic survey of the region since the 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States.

Joe Sacco pumps up the Palestinian cause in an intense graphic novel, *Palestine: The Special Edition* (Fantagraphics Books), paying only lip service to Israel's case.

Aaron Aaronsohn, an intriguing figure in pre-state Israel, was a scientist, political oper-

ator and spy. Patricia Goldstone's book, *Aaronsohn's Maps: The Untold Story of the Man Who Might Have Created Peace in the Middle East* (Harcourt), unfolds like a novel.



Sheldon Kirshner
in Toronto

Alfred Kazin, the son of barely literate Jewish immigrants, burst upon the U.S. literary scene in 1942 with *On Native Grounds*. Richard Cook's trenchant biography, *Alfred Kazin* (Yale University Press), will probably be the definitive work on this difficult and combative man.

Entertainer Ethel Merman, the queen of the Broadway musical in its golden age, is the subject of Caryl Flinn's fascinating biography, *Brass Diva: The Life and Legends of Ethel Merman* (University of California Press). *A Dangerous Woman: The*

Graphic Biography of Emma Goldman (The New Press), by Sharon Rudahl, recaps the career of a fiery anarchist through the medium of vigorous illustrations. The relationship between Gertrude Stein, the so-called high priestess of modernism, and her enigmatic companion and lover, Alice G. Toklas, is glist for Janet Malcolm's mill. In *Two Lives: Gertrude and Alice* (Yale University Press), she presents a portrait of the pair.

Studs Terkel, the flamboyant Chicago-based author and commentator, recounts his life in *Touch and Go* (The New Press). Leo Lerman was a legendary New York writer, critic and editor. *The Grand Surprise: The Journals of Leo Lerman* (Alfred A. Knopf), edited by Stephen Pascal, is by turns revealing, witty and sardonic.

Jewish Communities on the Ohio River (University of Kentucky Press), by Amy Hill Shevitz, demonstrates how the westward movement of Jews in the United States from 1820 to 1920 influenced American culture and history.

Jonathan Elukin's study of Jewish-Christian relations during the Middle Ages, *Living Together, Living Apart* (Princeton University Press), challenges conventional wisdom. Rather than being an era of endless anti-Jewish persecution, he states, it was a pluralistic epoch in which Jews were allowed to feel part of their local communities, notwithstanding outbursts of overt anti-Semitism.

The Moscow Yiddish Theater (Yale University Press), by Benjamin Harshav, focuses on

its role as a revolutionary vehicle of artistic expression in the Soviet Union from 1919 until its closure in 1948. In *Waiting for America: A Story of Jewish Emigration* (Syracuse University Press), Maxim Shrayar recounts his immigration from the Soviet Union to the United States, via Austria, Italy and Israel, with humour and poignancy.

Omer Bartov, in *Erased: Vanishing Traces of Jewish Galicia in Present-Day Ukraine* (Princeton University Press), recreates the histories of thriving Jewish communities that were not only wiped out in massacres, but whose existence is now suppressed. Yehiel Trunk, a well known Polish Jewish writer, painted a nuanced portrait of Polish Jewry in *Poyln*, which appeared in seven volumes from 1944 to 1953. The first English edition of *Poyln* (University of Toronto Press) has been translated from the Yiddish by Anna Clarke and edited by Piotr Wrobel and Robert Shapiro.

Weimar Germany: Promise and Tragedy (Princeton University Press), by Eric Weitz, is an important book that examines the vibrant

by Anita Grossmann, is a rigorous account of Jewish refugees in Allied-occupied Germany in the wake of World War II.

There is no shortage of memoirs of Holocaust survivors. *Sala's Gift: My Mother's Holocaust Story* (Free Press), by Ann Kirshner, chronicles the trials and tribulations of Sala Garmar through her letters and diary. Buchenwald inmates Henia and Ilona Karmel, in *A Wall of Two* (University of California Press), convey the terror of the times in poetry. Kopel Kolpanitzky, whose family was murdered in a Lithuanian ghetto, fought in a partisan unit and the Red Army before immigrating to Israel. His memoir, *Sentenced to Life* (Valentine Mitchell), is chilling yet hopeful. *Two Flags: Return to the Warsaw Ghetto* (Gefen), by Miriam Apfelbaum, is an analysis of one of the two organizations that planned the 1943 uprising, the Jewish Military Union, known as the ŻZW.

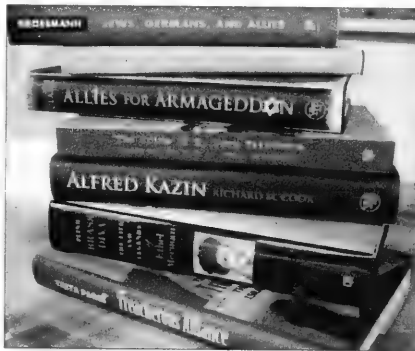
Cooking Jewish (Thomas Allen), by Judy Bart Kancigor, a primer of infinite charm, contains 532 mouth-watering recipes and some great advice for budding and seasoned chefs.

In general: Frank O. Gehry: *Selected Works, 1969 to Today* (Firefly), by Casey Mathewson, is a lavishly illustrated retrospective of his stellar contributions to architecture.

Lonely Planet guidebooks, distributed by Raincoast Books, are concise and informative, highlighting the usual and the unusual. Among the latest: *Australia, Central America on a Shoestring, Libya, Algeria, Afghanistan, India, Northeast India, China's Southwest, Japan, Vietnam, and Blue List: The Best in Travel*.

Unforgettable Canada: 100 Destinations (The Boston Mills Press), by George Fischer and Noel Hudson, is beautifully photographed and, in essence, an ode to Canada's natural wonders. Read it in conjunction with Lonely Planet's *Toronto*, a guide to a great city.

And one last thing: Sophie Milman's latest CD, *Sophie Milman, Make Someone Happy*, showcases this Russian immigrant's lovely, soothing voice.



Sheldon Kirshner photo

culture and turbulent politics of this short-lived republic and the role Jews played in it. Saul Friedlander's *Nazi Germany and the Jews: The Years of Persecution, 1933-1939* (HarperCollins) is a first-rate work. Michael Bekowicz's *The Crime of My Very Existence: Nazism and the Myth of Jewish Criminality* (University of California Press) traces the origins of a malicious lie from 18th century Europe through to Adolf Hitler's Germany. *Jews, Germans and Allies* (Princeton University Press),

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Greater Toronto Area

Jews for Judaism celebrates *chai* anniversary

By DAVE GORDON
Special to The CJN

It has been 18 years since counter-missionary group Jews for Judaism first opened its doors in Toronto, in response to the ever-growing problem of "Hebrew Christian" groups aggressively campaigning to convert Jews.

The *chai* anniversary is fitting, given Jews for Judaism's endeavours to bring people back to a Jewish life.

The office opened when Julius Ciss, the executive director, noticed the dearth of response to counter the missionary presence in Toronto. In 1982, he produced simple pamphlets and put ads in Jewish newspapers across Canada, as well as lecturing in synagogues.

Ciss, who was in the "Jews for Jesus" movement for a short time, had returned to Judaism and wanted to help others do so.

In 1989, the main branch of Jews for Judaism in Baltimore heard what Ciss was doing and asked him to join the organization. Eventually, Rabbi Michael Skobac, who is now the educational director, began working with Ciss.

The only Canadian office is in Toronto, but Ciss and Skobac also do speaking tours across Canada. They make themselves available for counselling sessions, relying on the Internet and long-distance calls to connect with out-of-city requests.

"We wish we could go out of business due to lack of business, but business is bigger than ever," says Ciss. Last year alone, he cites some 1,700 counselling sessions with Jewish victims of cults and missionaries. They fulfilled 2,600 requests for information, and more than 7,000 people attended their lectures. Jews for Judaism also distributed 90,000 free educational books and materials in 2007. They have the endorsement of Canadian Jewish Congress, United Jewish Appeal and other Jewish organizations across

Canada.

Ciss says there are 120 groups specifically targeting Jews for conversion in Canada. Seven years ago, Toronto had 100 messianic churches, according to Ciss. Now there are 130 who campaign regularly and widely to convince Jews that Jesus is compatible with Judaism.

But it's not the only anniversary for the counter-missionary group. Ten years ago, around Chanukah, Jews for Judaism opened their Thornhill, Ont., office, next to a just-opened "Jews for Jesus"-type church. The house of worship uses Jewish symbols and iconography, and even some blessings in Hebrew, but its congregants believe in Jesus.

Jews for Judaism moved in as community members were outraged that the church had opened at the corner of Bathurst Street and Steeles Avenue, a location where there was much Jewish activity – such as a Jewish youth organization, Jewish-Russian immigrant life and a kosher ice cream parlour – leaving many to believe the young and vulnerable were at risk.

As the Toronto office celebrates a milestone, a new office in Jerusalem run by a former "messianic Jew" has opened.

"A lot of Israelis believe in Christianity, and the 'Jews for Jesus' types blanket the country," says Ciss. A few years ago, he and Rabbi Skobac were on a speaking tour of Israel, and asked how many in one audience knew someone who is Jewish, but believes in Jesus. About a third of them raised their hands. "A shocking testament to the missionary problem," says Ciss.

This is compared to his empirical surveys in Canada and the United States, where he sees one-tenth, and a quarter, respectively, of the audience raise their hands to his question. One report says that about three-quarters of the new converts are Israeli or Russian.

"There is a spiritual weakness in that respect. They are susceptible," says Rabbi Skobac. "Outreach is needed not to protest the missionary's existence. But we want to try, lovingly, to help them realize that while we are in vehement opposition to what they're [the missionaries are] preaching, we desire dialogue to help them [Jews who have converted to Christianity] see the reality of the path they've chosen, and re-evaluate their Jewish commitment and bring their soul back to Judaism."

Continued on page 25

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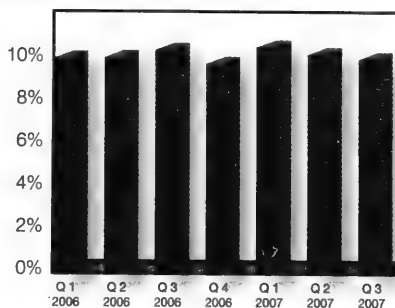
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Greater Toronto Area

Muslim world ignorant of Holocaust: Israeli scholar

By SHELTON KIRSHNER

Staff Reporter

Knowledge of the Holocaust is virtually non-existent in the Muslim world, says an Israeli scholar specializing in anti-Semitism. "The ignorance is rampant," declared Dina Porat, head of the Stephen Roth Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism and Racism at Tel Aviv University. "There is close to no knowledge about it."

As a result, she said in an interview, the president of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, can deny the Holocaust with impunity, while television stations in Syria, Egypt and Lebanon can broadcast anti-Semitic historical dramas without so much as a local protest.

Yet the situation is not completely hopeless, noted Porat, who was in Toronto last month to attend an international conference of the Association of Jewish Studies.

Iranian reformist politicians recently lambasted Ahmadinejad's Holocaust denial as "political adventurism" detrimental to Iran's image.

And in Egypt, Osama El Baz, one of the late president Anwar Sadat's closest advisers, has attacked Holocaust denial, saying it puts all Arabs to shame.

Porat, a historian, acknowledged that the Arab-Israeli conflict exacerbates anti-Semitic feeling in Muslim nations.

"But this is not the basic reason for anti-Semitism," she noted, saying that anti-Americanism and opposition to globalization are the primary causes.

Porat, who has headed the Stephen Roth Institute for the past 15 years, claimed that anti-Semitism is more deeply entrenched among the estimated 20 million Muslims of Europe than in Muslim countries.

Many European Muslims are resentful at being relegated to the margins of society, she said.

"Not being able to integrate into European societies, they take out their frustration on Jews," she said an allusion to the phenomenon of Muslim attacks on Jews in France since the eruption of the second Palestinian uprising in 2000. "They perceive Jews as a privileged minority with a high standard of living."

When Islamophobia is on the ascendancy, anti-Semitism also rises. "We've begun studying this," she said.

These different kinds of hatred feed into each other by virtue of the belief, shared by some Europeans, that Jews were instrumental in liberalizing immigration laws and thus bringing greater number of Muslim immigrants to Europe.

Porat said that young Israeli Arabs are generally acquainted with the Holocaust, which is a mandatory part of their school curriculum. But even in Israel, the degree to which it is taught is left to teachers' discretion.

Turning to a related topic, she expressed surprise that a survey, commissioned recently by the Organization of European Security and Co-operation, concluded that Holocaust education does not necessarily diminish anti-

Semitism.

"It's difficult to explain the Holocaust to students because there was no factual basis for it. There was no dispute between Germans and Jews. Since it was not logical to kill millions of Jews, it is hard to explain the Holocaust. So students ask: 'Why were Jews singled out? What's wrong with the Jews?'"

It is even possible that Holocaust education may cause resentment and a competition for victimhood, Porat added.

Yet Holocaust education remains an important tool for combating anti-Semitism and relaying basic information concerning Jewish history and culture and Judaism, she said.

Familiarity with the Holocaust, however, does not prevent criticism of Israel's policies, she observed.

In her judgment, Holocaust denial peaked in the period from the mid-1980s to the late 1990s.

It has since declined due to three factors: the Pope's visit to Yad Vashem – the Holocaust memorial/museum in Jerusalem – in 2000; the declaration by the United Nations classifying the liberation of Auschwitz in 1945 as an international memorial day, and the unsuccessful lawsuit brought by British Holocaust denier David Irving against American historian Deborah Lipstadt.

According to Porat, the centre of Holocaust denial today is the Institute for Historical Review, in Torrence, Calif.

Anti-Jewish conspiracy theories, generated by the destruction of the World Trade Towers on Sept. 11, 2001, by Arab terrorists, resonate more than seven years later, she said.

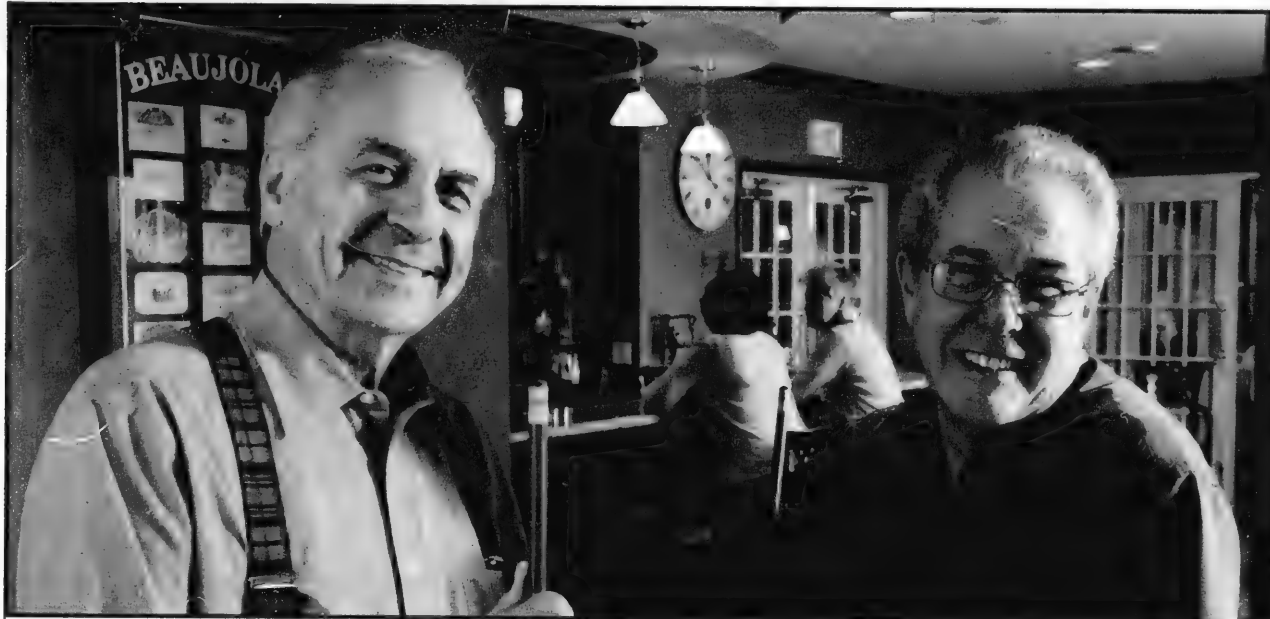
The theory that the Mossad – Israel's external security service – was behind the bombing of the twin towers is a cornerstone of anti-Semitic dogma, as is the claim that the Mossad warned Jews not to report to work there.

She does not believe that the recent spate of swastika daubings in Israel by Russian immigrants, some of whom are Christians, is a classic expression of anti-Semitism. "It's really a protest against a society that hasn't absorbed these immigrants."

Porat, who was born in Argentina and immigrated to Israel with her family in 1950 at the age of seven, said that anti-Semitism will always exist in one form or another. "Anti-Semitism is a problem for every generation." As a child in Buenos Aires, she had firsthand experiences with anti-Semitism. And while anti-Semitism has made her a cynic, she said she is not cynical in her relations with people.

A member of Yad Vashem's scientific committee, Porat has taught Jewish history at Tel Aviv University for the past 20 years. She has published several books, including *The Blue and the Yellow Stars of David: The Zionist Leadership and the Holocaust, 1939-1945*.

The Stephen Roth Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism and Racism, founded in 1991, sponsors multidisciplinary research projects and conferences and publishes studies and an annual survey of anti-Semitic incidents.



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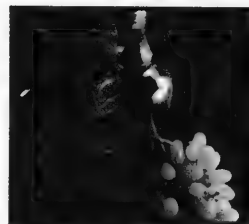
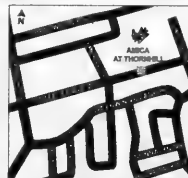
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Former club members hold 50th anniversary reunion

By CYNTHIA GASNER

Special to The CJN

Friendship and keeping in touch with old friends are very important, says Ken Heller.

"Looking back, those years were a wonderful time of life with less stress and a place to go every week to have fun."

Several months ago, Heller, 66, began planning a 50th anniversary reunion with the former members of Club Desmond, a club for teenage boys that met at the Bloor YM-YWHA some 50 years ago.

He and his longtime friend Ron Morris began to search.

"We couldn't locate several of them, but 19 former members and our adviser, Bill Laber, met recently for dinner to celebrate at our 50th reunion. One member, Michael Adler, even flew in from Florida."

Heller, who is in the printing business, describes the event as "phenomenal." He says that as the former members arrived, many of them who had not seen each other over the years "hugged and kissed each other and the mood was very happy. It was a time for schmoozing, reminiscing, viewing a collage of photos and passing around pictures which the former members brought with them."

In the 1950s, the Club Desmond met Thursday and Sunday evenings at the Y at Bloor Street and Spadina Avenue, now the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre.

Heller recalls that the dues were 25 cents a week. Their program included floor hockey, basketball, swimming, social dances and fundraising for the United Appeal.

"We were so proud to raise \$125 at a dance," says Heller. "At the reunion, former members laughed, and one said that today, we go out for lunch for that amount."

The club was formed in 1954, when several friends were sitting around at the Palmerston Avenue home of brothers Abie and Sheldon Lovat and decided to form a new group.

"Sheldon and a couple of guys approached a bunch of guys who went to King Edward Public School and other schools in the area, and hence the new Club Desmond was born."

Heller has a signed contract with the Seaway Hotel dated in the mid-1950s for a dinner for 40 members and guests of Club Desmond. The price for a five-course meal was \$3.75, which included recorded dance music and a



At the 50th reunion of Club Desmond are, from left: back row, Harvey Posner, Henry Seidel, Gerald Lipperman, Stan Wagman, Marvin Scharf, Ken Heller, Ron Morris, Allan Kazdan, Mike Adler and Shelly Meslin, who is wearing an original Club Desmond jacket; middle row, Hal Kershen, Harry Fiedler, Marty Gould, Sy Browne, Willie Schnoll and Sam Rutman; front row, Mel Horowitz, club adviser Bill Laber, Alvin Steingold and Marvin Gries. [Ken Heller photo]

coke and ginger ale bar.

In the 1960s, things began to change as some members moved north and others left after they became engaged and married. The club disbanded.

Following their 50th anniversary reunion, Heller received numerous e-mails from those who attended, expressing their appreciation, happiness and thanks for the "wonderful event."

"It rekindled my youth for a brief moment, bringing back some of my fondest memories," Stan Wagman wrote, a sentiment echoed by all who attended.

Heller says they are now planning another reunion in Las Vegas in two years.

"We hope that we will be able to hear from the few who we were unable to locate. And we hope that we will continue meeting in the future."

To contact Heller, call 416-223-1889.

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Greater Toronto Area

Lebovic campus will be home to organic garden

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

In addition to the Jewish schools, Jewish community centre and other buildings that were in the original plans for the Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in Vaughan, plans are now in the works to create an organic garden that



Risa Alyson Strauss

is expected to serve as an environmental learning centre.

The project came about after members of Torat HaTeva, a Jewish environmental organization, approached UJA Federation of Greater Toronto about establishing the garden on the Vaughan site.

"There's an area that is part of the Don River system," Shai Spetgang, an environmental consultant who serves as chair of Torat HaTeva's board of directors, told *The CJN*. "No

one's allowed to develop there, but everywhere around it will be buildings and homes."

The garden will be at least 20 by 30 metres in area, as part of at least five acres of conservation land, said Spetgang. He added that, in addition to serving an educational function, the garden will produce fruits and vegetables for the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) project at the Narayever Congregation and for a similar project to be based in the Thornhill area. CSA projects provide organic produce to their members on a weekly basis.

Risa Alyson Strauss, the organic garden project co-ordinator, said the goal is to break ground and put the garden on site for spring 2008.

To begin, she said, volunteers and program participants will "build" the soil, in part by planting low-maintenance crops that will add nutrients and vitamins.

A naturalized area will include plantings of species that already exist on site or that would grow there on their own, like red osier dogwood, a hardy shrub that thrives in wet conditions.

Recently, Torat HaTeva received two grants to make the garden a reality, one from Evergreen in partnership with Wal-Mart Canada for \$4,500, and the other for \$5,000 from Shell Canada's Shell Environmental Fund.

Organizers are still fundraising and writing grant proposals, said Strauss.

"The combined funding they have received so far will pay for "getting a basic garden in the ground" and creating raised garden beds, as well as a composting demonstration site and a couple of rainbarrels to collect rainwater, she said.

Additional funding would enable them to build a small greenhouse and hire an educator, said Strauss.

Income from selling the garden's produce and from fees paid by user groups would go toward running the garden on an annual basis, she added.

Strauss, who works for the City of Toronto as the program specialist for children's garden programs, said she believes that "Judaism is so rich in ecological and agricultural wisdom, and that an organic garden will give children and community members a chance to access these teachings through experiential programs and projects."

In addition, said Spetgang, it will "help connect the disconnect when we go to the supermarket. There's a great gap. We don't really know where our food comes from."

Bryan Keshen, executive director of the

Schwartz/Reisman Centre – the Jewish community centre that will be built on the Lebovic campus – said that having access to a resource like the organic garden is "a wonderful opportunity."

"There's a general desire to see both environmental education and environmentally sensitive design going into everything we do," he said.

Foster families needed

Continued from page 3

"We do what we can to help them live Jewishly, but these kids still feel isolated. Living in a Jewish foster home is the ideal situation."

He is "troubled" that the community is not responding to the agency's needs, he said. "We are looking for 10 families who can step up to the challenge of opening up their home, and working with us to support a child in our community."

The community is "fabulous in supporting a variety of causes, but we're struggling to get people to give their time. We need people to care about these kids."

"Our foster families have told us that fostering has positively changed their lives, the lives of their family and the lives of the foster children."

Hurwitz said they are willing to come out and talk to prospective foster parents about fostering, and will also speak at Jewish organizations and service clubs.

"We provide financial support and support in working with the kids. These are kids of our Jewish community, and we all have a responsibility to help out. We want them to grow up and take care of themselves."

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New organization supports Jewish education

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Michael Ettedgui has founded an organization to support formal and informal Jewish education in a variety of countries, beginning with Bolivia, Colombia and Uruguay. He is also investigating needs in other Latin American countries, the Caribbean and sub-Saharan Africa.



Michael Ettedgui and Susana Soloducho, director of Montevideo's Escuela Integral Hebreo Uruguaya, on Ettedgui's recent trip to South America.

Inspired in part by the memory of his late grandfather — Marcos Soberano, a strong proponent of Jewish and secular education — Ettedgui named the organization Yaldeinu: The Marcos Soberano Society for Jewish Education and Camping.

Soberano died in 2005, 41 years after emigrating from Tangiers with his wife and 10 children (an 11th would be born in Canada).

Ettedgui, a 26-year-old resident of Thornhill who attended Or Haemet Sephardic School until Grade 3, has always wanted to work in the Jewish community, he said in a recent interview.

After receiving his BA in political science from York University, Ettedgui worked as an education associate for the Toronto-based Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Centre for Holocaust Studies. He continues to consult for them on a freelance basis, but his main focus now is Yaldeinu. The name is Hebrew for "Our Children."

Yaldeinu is a registered non-profit corporation, and Ettedgui is working on attaining charitable status for it. For now, he runs it single-handedly out of a donated office at the business premises of a relative of his.

The organization's annual budget is "in the six figures," Ettedgui said. The exact amount for its second year will be determined by fundraising, which is set to begin in the next few months.

The new organization, which Ettedgui conceived of six months ago and founded in October, is funded by a small group of local philanthropists.

Among the factors contributing to Ettedgui's idea was his strong belief "that education — formal and informal — is the key to the continuity of the Jewish people, and that if we don't invest in education of our children now, then future generations will be ill equipped to lead our community."

Also, he credits the traditional Moroccan Jewish community in which he was raised, and his work for three summers at Camp Torolago, a Jewish overnight camp that hosts Israeli victims of terror. Ettedgui's involvement in bringing the Israeli campers here helped him realize the importance of assisting young people as well as the importance of informal Jewish education, he said.

As an undergraduate spending a year at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, he led a mission to Ukraine and Moscow to bring the Passover seder to Jews there, another experience that had an impact on him.

After some initial research for Yaldeinu, Ettedgui concluded that there "seems to be a void of international funding dedicated to Jewish education in Latin American communities."

Last month, Ettedgui, who speaks Spanish fluently, visited Montevideo, La Paz and Bogota to meet with Jewish community leaders and see for himself the situation in each city.

In Montevideo, which has a Jewish population of about 15,000, there are two Jewish schools. A third closed its doors recently,

and about 70 per cent of Jewish day school students receive tuition assistance, said Ettedgui.

The Jewish community in La Paz is down to 200 people, Ettedgui said. There is a Jewish school, but only a handful of the 300 students are Jewish, he added. There are also Jewish children who don't attend the school, but there is a supplementary school in the community.

"It's the kind of community where little sums of money will go a long way," he said. He is looking at bringing about 10 children between ages 11 and 14, and one madrich (leader), to summer camp from La Paz.

Yaldeinu is partnering with La Paz' Circulo Israelita, which oversees Jewish education there. Ettedgui plans to send Spanish language teaching materials there, and bring local children to

Canadian summer camps including Torolago.

Bogota, which has one Jewish school serving 275 students in a Jewish population of about 2,000, has a "very connected Jewish community, but with a hard-hit middle class," said Ettedgui. He plans to provide tuition scholarships and pedagogic materials to them.

Having visited the communities himself, he said he feels "an urgent responsibility to make good and help" them.

He also plans to bring Israeli children to camps here, and plans to put donors and recipients in contact where possible. "We want to create lasting relationships between Jewish people the world over."

"Yaldeinu will go wherever there's a need, and that we can afford."

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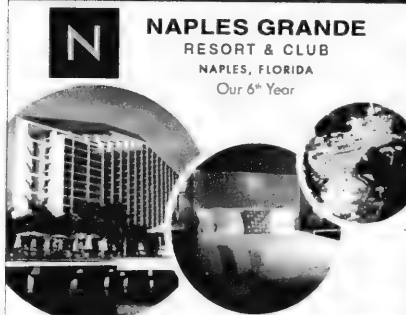
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The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

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In his personal memoir, *A Tale of Love and Darkness*, Amos Oz describes in beautiful detail the story of his family's phone calls from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv in the 1940s. The calls, which only took place every three or four months, were planned weeks ahead by sending letters to confirm the exact date and time. During the days leading up to each call, Amos and his parents pre-

pared themselves, ensuring that they would be on time and sound healthy over the phone. On the day of the call, they would put on their best clothes and march down to the pharmacy, the only local phone, to perform the ritual. At the appointed time, Amos' father would call the operator and ask to be connected to Tel Aviv 648 (imagine, a three digit phone number!) The operator would ask him to hold as the line was being used for another call.

The magnitude of the preparations was matched only by the excitement with which the young Oz beheld the event. In the hours leading up to the call, Oz would run back and forth from the clock in the kitchen to his father in the living room, counting down the minutes as if it were a NASA shuttle launch.

As I grew up, my family gathered for a similar ritual. Every Sunday morning, my parents, sister, aunt, uncle and cousins would assemble – one

week at my house and the next at my aunt's – to call my grandmother in South Africa. At the appointed time, my grandmother was wheeled to the telephone at her old age home and would sit waiting for our call, much as Oz's family did. I remember the excitement of waking up early in anticipation of the call, the planning of what I would share, and the inevitable disappointment when the call was over and I suddenly realized that I had forgotten the most important detail.



Class Act
By Daniel Held

Living in the age of cell-phones and instant messaging, many young people may view my and Oz's shared childhood experiences as mundane. With the steady development of communication technologies, are we losing the excitement of reaching across the ocean?

The summer after I completed Grade 11, I travelled to Poland, Ukraine and Israel with a group of American teens. When I returned from the trip, I yearned to reconnect with my new friends. I was quickly introduced to the world of Instant Messenger. Since that summer, I have spent hundreds of hours sitting in front of a computer typing to friends and relatives around the world.

Last Sunday, I met, online, the

daughter of a close friend living in Boston. When the live video image of the five-year-old popped up on my screen, we chatted awhile, each of us seeing and hearing the other. A few minutes into the conversation, she wanted to tell me a joke but couldn't remember the punch line. So she picked up the telephone and called her grandmother in New York. The three of us, from three different cities and three different generations, were connecting in a way that the young Oz could never have imagined.

With these new tools, however, we've lost an ability to communicate. Working with teenagers during the summer, I am amazed when they run to the computer labs during their free time to instant message with their friends sitting across the table. Instead of speaking in person or on the phone, they pour out their inner thoughts and emotions on a keyboard.

Communicating is a basic human desire. While technology has made communication more accessible than it was in Oz's youth, we must be careful to ensure that it does not jeopardize the quality of these conversations – the ability to talk, share, empathize and attend. Some would say that our kids have lost the ability to communicate. In truth, they may just be out of practice.

The night before the brit milah

By RABBI YEHIEL BEN AYON

The joyous nature of henna has certainly been the guarantee of its popularity. Everyone has been to, or at least

heard of, the henna party – that pre-wedding night event wherein the bride, on her return home from the mikvah, is fitted for the first time into the elaborate gown of velvet and gold embroidery in which she will be wed. (Before the acceptance of the white western bridal gown, this in fact was the usual bridal costume.)

Unfortunately, a tradition that is not so well maintained – and indeed even known – is that of the "brit Yitzchak," also known by various other terms: talamon or thahid, which are just different names for the same thing. I might add that this custom, with some significant variations, exists amongst Ashkenazi communities, where it is commonly referred to as "kriyas Shema leining" or "vacht nacht."

This custom concerns itself with the birth of a boy. It is a ritual that is performed on the night prior to the

baby's brit milah (bris). It is always done at the home where the baby and mother sleep. As an event, it combines the magic of mysticism with the solid foundations of family and faith.

The belief is that just before complying with such a great mitzvah as brit milah, being brought into the Covenant, the child is vulnerable and in need of divine protection. This is part of the concept of the constant battle of good

versus evil.

Hence, on this night, the family will gather, ensuring that there is at least the quorum of a minyan. After Arvit/Ma'ariv is said, all windows, doors and any other openings in the home are closed. Then, the verse relating to the episode of Noah's ark is first said: "And they went in [to the ark], male and female as God commanded him [Noah], and God shut him in."

In the same way as the hermetically sealed ark contained one family, and with it the future of life, this home, too, now likewise holds that promise. Kab-

balistically, at this moment of inclusion, one is also excluding anyone or anything such as evil spirits from being present.

The ceremony continues by symbolically taking a knife or a sword (*thahid* from the Arabic *hadida* meaning metal strip), which is passed over the walls and closed openings of the room containing the mother and her baby.

The liturgical part of the ceremony continues with a reading from Zohar, followed by the recital of the priestly blessing and two psalms, 91 and 121. The same sword and a book of Psalms are placed by the child and a specific amulet for this is hung over the crib till morning.

Before concluding the vigil with a festive meal, the words of Jacob's eternal blessing to Ephraim and Menashe are repeated three times to the baby: "The angel who saved me from all evil should bless these children and let my name be blessed in them and the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac, and let them grow into a multitude like the fish in the midst of the earth... Joseph is a fruitful vine by a fountain, its branches run over the wall."



Just Say Nu... Yiddish for Every Occasion (When English Just Won't Do) by Michael Wex, St. Martin's Press.

Yiddish is still breathing – but hardly. Learned experts have been predicting its demise for over a century. Abe Cahan, long-time editor of the *Daily Forverts* saw Yiddish as dead and buried by 1933. But as the late I.B. Singer pointed out, “In Jewish life, it’s a long way between being sick and being dead.”

At one time, the Yiddish press and periodicals in North America had a combined circulation of 800,000 – and readership was probably close to twice that figure. In New York City alone, there were 12 full-time Yiddish theatres.

In the period before World War II, most of the world’s Jews conversed in Yiddish. Growing out of medieval German, with elements drawn from Slavic languages and the holy tongue of Hebrew, Yiddish was a *lingua franca* for Ashkenazi Jews throughout eastern Europe and Germany, gradually spreading to far-flung Jewish communities in the United States and Australia.

Then, history played a series of ugly tricks on Yiddish. The Nazis wiped out half of its speakers in the Holocaust, and Stalin crushed another large segment. But in some ways, the worst damage was done by the freedom and comforts of North America,

Jewish Life

A new way to learn Yiddish

as assimilation drained Jewish Americans of the need to speak a language all their own.

Canadians will remember with nostalgic affection a number of organizations that struggled valiantly to preserve Yiddish. The Workmen’s Circle (Arbeter Ring) – which, in the ‘30s harboured a socialist-cosmopolitan outlook – engaged in numerous Yiddish cultural activities that included afternoon elementary and high school Yiddish classes, a summer camp, concerts, lectures and journals in Yiddish.

The Farband (socialist-Zionist) and the left-wing Jewish People’s Fraternal Order worked the same side of the street, only on a smaller scale.

Michael Wex, who lives in Toronto, has been hailed as “one of the leading lights of the current Yiddish revival.” He lectures widely on Yiddish themes and is the author of the recent enthusiastically welcomed book, *Born to Kvetch*. *Publishers Weekly* called it “a treasure-trove of linguistics, sociology, history and folklore.”

Just Say Nu contains nine chapters and provides Yiddish expressions for such life situations as meeting and greeting, food and drink, family life, health and illness,

and love and sex.

The author asserts that the eager beginner can go a long way conversationally with little more than the following five words: “*Nu*” (well), “*shoyen*” (already), “*epes*” (sort of), “*takeh*” (exactly) and “*nebach*” (too bad).

Wex offers hundreds of Yiddish phrases and expressions to cover every mood and situation.

Food: *Es hot der bubes tam* – “It has my grandmother’s taste.” *Oy, iz dos a meichl* – “Oy, is this a taste treat!” *Er shput de kishkeh* – “He stuffs his guts.”

Family life: *Mach tsee doos mohl* – “Shut your mouth.” *Zits in kris in shveig* – “Sit and grind your teeth and be quiet.” *Er tselaygt zach vee baym tatin in veingorn* – “He’s lying around like he is in his father’s vineyard.”

Health and sickness: *toyb vee dee vant* – “deaf as the wall,” *oysgemitchet* – “exhausted.”

One criticism – the author is a bit too free with four-letter words, and it’s no surprise that the book’s longest chapter is on “love and sex.” Do we really need 11 designations for women’s breasts and 12 terms for female genitalia?

The volume is enhanced by a Yiddish-English glossary and a brief appendix of basic Yiddish grammar. Final word to eager readers, *hot hanooeh* – “enjoy.”



Books
Bernard Baskin

Chicken soup like bubbe never made

bowls, from an expansive array of readily available and quickly assembled ingredients: shredded chicken, transparent noodles, tender rice, crisp bean sprouts, fiery chilies, crunchy cabbage, even potato chips. Then hot broth (soto) is ladled over all, warming the room-temperature fillings, which in turn fill the aromatic liquid with contrasting flavours and textures.”

As for the soup itself, you can choose the classic soto ayam, which is light and refreshing, or the soto resah, which is spicier and creamier. [tinyurl.com/269agqj]

Here are a few others that never made it to the shtetl: Amish chicken and corn soup with rivels, Chinese chicken elixir and Mexican Caldo Xochilt. [soup.song.com/sowl.html] For an eye-opening parade of chicken soups, browse through some of the 9,000 photos on Flickr. I came across Chicken Chili With Classic Pesto, Ginseng Chicken, Chicken Taco and the exotic sounding Chicken Soup With Ikea Equipment. [tinyurl.com/32m8es]

When you browse through the wonderful RFCJ Recipe Archive, you’ll find no fewer than a dozen different variations, including Drora’s Spicy Yemenite, Canja (Brazilian-Style) and the Persian Abgush-e-Gonde (chicken soup with chickpea meatballs.) [tinyurl.com/yomsgw]

Then there’s Thai Coconut-Curry Chicken Soup, German Chicken and Cabbage Soup with Garlic Sausage. [grandtimes.com/soup.html]

West African avocado soup calls for 2

ripe avocados, 4 cups of chicken broth, 2 tablespoons of lime juice and 1/2 teaspoon of cayenne pepper. What’s more, this chicken soup is served cold. [tinyurl.com/yomsgw]

Although I grew up in a traditional Ashkenazi home dining on my mother’s perfect clear-chicken-soup-with-a-carrot, I’m not fazed by all the variations I’ve encountered on the Internet. However, I must admit that two foods I never expected to see in a list of ingredients for the same bowl of soup were (1) chicken and (2) bananas. But that’s just what Caribbean Chicken Soup with Bananas calls for – along with bell peppers, zucchini, white rice and a spice mix. [tinyurl.com/2zasoj]

Whatever your preference, *ess gezunterheit!*

From time to time I am asked about the “tinyurl” address mentioned so often in my column. One of the challenges I have in trying to pass along website addresses is that they can be very, very long and subject to typing errors. That’s why tinyurl.com comes in so handy. Tinyurl.com is a free web service that converts long addresses into shorter alternatives. For example, you can find many of my past articles archived at [jewishtorontoonline.net/home.do?ch=highway]. Thanks to tinyurl.com, all you have to type is [tinyurl.com/3cfya4]. You may also find the site handy next time you want to send someone an unwieldy address.

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based website producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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Believe it or not, Jews don’t have an exclusive lock on chicken soup. There are a quite a few variations that would make any bubbe’s head spin. These international recipes are taken from a variety of websites, some of which are not intended for kosher palates. So you will have to do some substitutions if dairy products are called for.

How about a bowl of “murug”? A favourite of Calcutta Jews, this Oriental chicken soup calls for ginger, turmeric and coriander, and is served over rice. As the *Jerusalem Post*’s Judy Montagu discovered, “Some 200 years ago, as Jews moved from Basra and Aleppo, in Iraq and Syria, to Calcutta, they took along Middle Eastern foods, including murug, which then absorbed some Indian influences.” [tinyurl.com/32xv36j]

I can’t guarantee that bubbe never made the following recipes, but if she did, she probably had different names for them. Israeli food writer Daniel Rogov has passed along several “sophisticated” chicken soup recipes. Representative of the classic style of French haute cuisine, they include Consommé à la Lucullus, Lettuce Soup and Consommé à la Reine. Rogov cautions that these recipes are not easy to make, but “when prepared well, each of these dishes is a mini-masterpiece that will have your guests sighing with joy.” [tinyurl.com/vupdyj]

When you sit down to a bowl of Indonesian chicken soup, you are expected to add a personal touch to your meal. “Guests select the fillings for their own

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Health & Lifestyles

Preparing food for your baby can be fun, exciting

By LISA WEINBERG

Q. I have a four-month-old – my first – and I am starting to think about introducing solids. I really feel that I want to and should make the food myself for superior quality. How do I go about this?

A. I often hear this question from first-time moms. Good for you for wanting to do it yourself. First, your baby should typically start solids around six months of age. The recommendations used to be four months, but the World Health Organization changed it a few years ago, and now it is recommended that babies generally be exclusively breast or bottle fed for six months.

At around six months, you can start introducing solids, and you would usually start with baby cereal, first rice, then barley, then oats, then mixed grains. You should give each cereal a few times a day for four or five days to ensure that the baby is tolerating it and is not showing any allergic signs. Then you can progress to the next cereal. The cereal should be offered warm, not hot, and should be about the consistency of a pureed soup – fairly loose. For best results, give it when your baby is hungry but not starving.

Start by making about one tablespoon total, and you can increase up to one-quarter to one-half a cup at each meal, depending on your baby's appetite. Cereal should be viewed as the carb of the meal and can be offered at all three meals. Don't be surprised if your baby spits out and refuses cereal at first. It is a very foreign texture and taste, and the infant will likely be reluctant to accept it.

Once you have introduced cereal, you can start fruit and vegetables. There is a debate about whether to do fruit first or vegetables. The debate generally centres on the sweetness of fruit, and therefore leans toward veggies first; however, the

first veggies recommended are carrots, squash and sweet potato, which are all quite sweet. The first fruits are usually apples, bananas and pears.

When first introducing these, offer only one new food every 24 to 48 hours, again to ensure tolerance and possible allergies, and then move to the next. Once you have introduced all of these fruits and vegetables, you can feed your baby a nicely balanced meal three times a day, i.e., cereal plus fruit or cereal plus veggies or cereal plus fruit and vegetables.

About Nutrition

Now the make it at home or buy it debate: although I do make a lot from scratch and do not love packaged, processed foods, I believe that store-bought baby food is very clean, healthy and safe. In the interest of saving time and quality control, I think this is a great choice. If you do make food at home, remember that it is essential to carefully clean or sterilize tools, surfaces, hands and ingredients.

There are some good books on making baby food, and the public health department puts out a great kit on this, which you can order from your local department. One important note about baby food: make sure you do not keep opened jars longer than the recommended shelf life, usually one or two days. I used to write the date on the lid with a permanent marker so that I could remember, because I often opened several new jars at a time.

If you choose to buy baby food, you will find a vast array of jarred, frozen, conventional and organic varieties to choose from. Always select ones that contain only one new ingredient at a time and are age and texture appropriate.

When your baby is ready for baby meats – around eight or nine months – this is a good time to make your own if you want. I used to boil a piece of chicken along with a peeled apple and a peeled sweet potato or carrots. When everything

is soft, puree it with chicken stock and freeze it in ice cube trays. Meat alone is not very palatable, so mixing it with fruit and vegetables makes it smooth and flavourful. If you are using a chicken stock, make sure that it is natural, without a lot of added salt and has no MSG or colouring (a small amount of salt is okay).

This is a fun and exciting time, enjoy the process.

Lisa Weinberg is a registered dietitian/nutritionist in Toronto, in private practice and at the Genesis Professional Group. If you have any nutrition questions, please send them to The CJN.

Wolbrom visited Poland

Continued from page 2

Three years ago, Wolbrom visited Poland for the first time since the war, with his daughters and grandchildren, and then continued on to Israel with grandsons Jared and Dan.

Throughout the Beit Halochem mission, Wolbrom never missed an event and never complained about anything (an accomplishment within itself). He waded in the Dead Sea, hiked in Ein Gedi, entertained us all with his wonderful stories and anecdotes and always walked steadily, with his grandsons gently supporting him on each arm. In fact, his relationship with his grandsons is so infectious that it made all of us younger folk more in tune with the needs of the older participants on the trip. Young and old alike, we danced and laughed together and cared for one another.

Watching Wolbrom on the mission with his grandsons was a gift for all of us. A moment did not go by without a touch, a joke, a smile or a squeeze. Small yet meaningful gestures that we all crave at any age.

Rena Godfrey is a Toronto writer.

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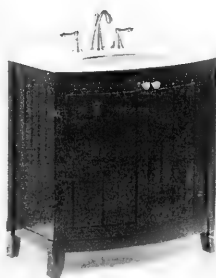
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Health & Lifestyles

Israeli doctor trying to build healthcare infrastructure in war-torn city

BY MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — In Dr. Ethan Rubinstein's eyes, Kabul, the capital city of Afghanistan, looks much the same as Gaza. The sidewalks are broken and dusty, the buildings scarred by war. There is no sewage system and infrequent electricity.

"I saw immense poverty," says the Israeli born and educated physician who recently returned from his first trip to Afghanistan. "And everybody, even kids, has a weapon."

Rubinstein, a Winnipeg-based infectious disease specialist, was in Kabul with colleagues Dr. Robert Chase and Dr. Wassay Naizi — an infectious diseases specialist in Kabul before moving to Winnipeg — from mid-November to early December to look into the possibility of building a public health infrastructure for Afghanistan.

The situation now is that health care is delivered throughout Afghanistan by an assortment of NGOs and foreign donor organizations such as USAID, the World Health Organization, the EEC and the Asian Development Bank. "Right now, there are no national health-care standards in Afghanistan," Rubinstein says. "The government has little or no money for health care. Each of the country's 39 provinces has a different health-care provider. There is no national reporting system, so no one knows how much disease there is in the country as a whole or in most areas of the country."

Although the population of Afghanistan is estimated to be about 17 million, there has been no census conducted in many years, Rubinstein notes.

The three Winnipeg doctors were in Afghanistan under the auspices of Canada's International Development and Research Corporation (IDRC). Their objective was

to meet with representatives of all the health-care delivery organizations active in the country and begin to create a national health-care platform which brings all the organizations to the same page.

"We conducted a two-day symposium where we talked about a standardized program of health-care studies with compensation for the students," Rubinstein says.

The three specialists are envisioning a four-year course of studies consisting of eight courses, each six months in duration. "As much as possible, we would like to see Afghans doing the teaching," Rubinstein says.

He and his colleagues foresee the University of Manitoba — in partnership with the government of Afghanistan's health ministry — taking the lead in providing the curriculum, providing some of the instructors and overseeing the program. They estimate that the four-year program will cost about \$6 million. They are hopeful that Ottawa and/or the World Bank will provide the funding.

"Canada has a solid history of international development," Rubenstein says. "Development programs such as the one we are proposing, if successful, have a far greater impact than military actions and are much less expensive."

While being an Israeli was not an issue for Rubinstein in Kabul, he does note that the city and country remain extremely dangerous for foreigners. "We weren't allowed to leave our hotel rooms without guards," he says, "and in most areas we weren't allowed to walk in the street."

Rubinstein has been practicing medicine in Winnipeg for three years. He is on staff at both the Health Sciences Centre and the St. Boniface General Hospital. He received his post-graduate training in Switzerland and London, and at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Md. and Loma Linda University in Loma Linda, Ca. He was in practice in Tel Aviv before coming to Winnipeg.

Keeping our brains active helps memory recall

BY FRANCES GOODMAN PELLATT
Special to The CJN

MONTREAL — We all know that a healthy lifestyle — eating properly and being active — is key to helping us live better and longer lives.

Yet this did not stop hundreds of men and women — looking to learn more about their brains and discover methods to ward off memory loss — from signing up for the Brainy Boomers lecture series that took place last October.

The program was initiated by the McGill Centre for Studies in Aging, as a joint project with the Alzheimer Society of Montreal, with assistance from the Jewish General Hospital and l'Institut universitaire de gériatrie de Montréal.

The three-part series stressed taking charge of our brains — a complex and intriguing organ that controls all of our physical and mental functions, much like a computer — and opened with a session on Memory and Aging. Dr. Lorraine Mazzella-Maiolo talked about how the brain functions, what happens to memory when there is brain damage, and noted that "old is not defined by age but by decreased function/dependence on others."

She explained that although there is aging

or shrinking of the brain which may cause a decrease in memory in a relatively normal person, there are ways to help ourselves retain things by "planning, organizing and writing things down."

Mazzella-Maiolo said it is important to continue to be active, interact with others, have social engagements and attend functions, take courses, and learn something new like a language, dancing, or how to use the computer.

The second lecture, Nutrition for a Healthy Brain with Risa Sigal, clinical dietitian, reviewed the importance of following Canada's Food Guide. Sigal reviewed the dietary recommended intakes (amount of nutrients and calories) we each require for good health and the prevention of chronic disease.

Our daily diets should include at least one dark green and one orange vegetable or fruit and important nutrients such as iron, potassium, antioxidants, vitamin C, folic acid, vitamin A, fibre and grain products lower in fat, sugar and salt, as well as an adequate intake of calcium through milk, cheeses and yogurt.

Dr. Lennie Babins and Dr. Nora Kelner introduced Brain Gym and Memory Gymnastics, the final lecture of the series, and gave strategies to recall information and thus help us improve our memories.

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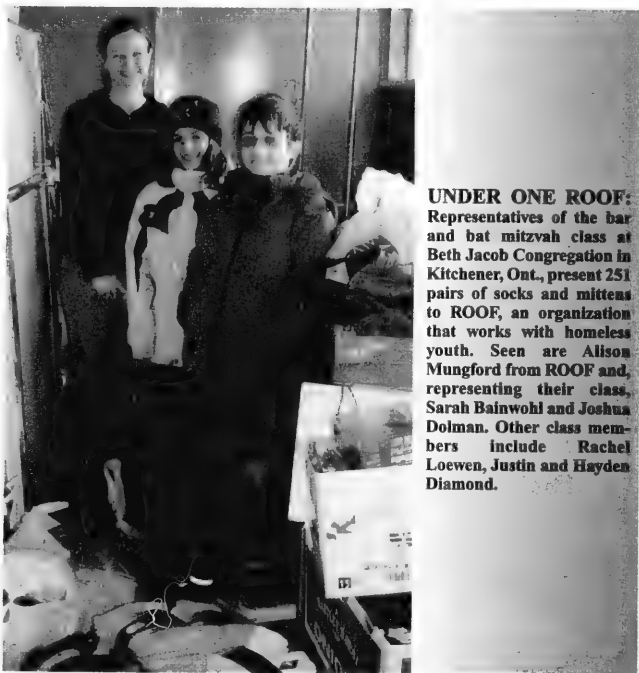
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Health & Lifestyles



MITTENS FOR A MITZVAH: Netivot HaTorah's youngest students collected mittens to be delivered to Jewish Family & Child for needy families. Pictured from left are Gan Netivot's Nina K., Nina S., Ivria M., Gilad G. and Yoni W.

[Rebecca Ansel photo]



UNDER ONE ROOF:

Representatives of the bar and bat mitzvah class at Beth Jacob Congregation in Kitchener, Ont., present 251 pairs of socks and mittens to ROOF, an organization that works with homeless youth. Seen are Alison Mungford from ROOF and, representing their class, Sarah Bainwohl and Joshua Dolman. Other class members include Rachel Loewen, Justin and Hayden Diamond.

Seminar series to start Jan. 16

Continued from page 12

The Toronto branch of Jews for Judaism will present its flagship program, a free "counter-missionary survival seminar," over six consecutive weeks, starting Jan. 16, at Congregation Shaarei Tzedec on Markham Street in downtown Toronto. The program is designed to point out the reasons why Judaism does not accept Jesus.

This is especially pertinent today, as many use the Internet to find Jewish answers, says Ciss, and it is almost impossible to search for a Jewish topic without getting a number of responses from Christian groups.

"Ultimately, you're going to get 'Hebrew

Christian' groups that will come up in some kind of search. These are spiritual predators. A lot of these groups have fluency in Hebrew and Judaism," says Ciss. Continuing to respond to these threats, Jews for Judaism is revamping their Internet home in 2008, www.jewsforjudaism.org.

What he is most proud of over 18 years is hearing how missionaries complain how difficult it is to get their message out, due to Jews for Judaism's activity. "It's because of the education we've been inculcating in our community," says Ciss.

"The preventative work we do makes us the pre-eminent group that works to stop the message of Christian missionaries and the misinformation that they are disseminating."

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish News



Congratulations to Gerald & Ida Paulin on their 55th wedding anniversary in January. Mazel tov and best wishes from family and friends.



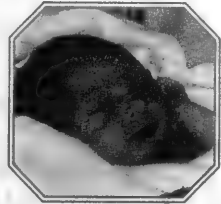
Mazel tov to Henry Czaryski on his 90th birthday. With love from Basia, Lily & Isaac, your grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



Happy birthday to Lityan Saltzman from all her family. We love you.



Mazel tov to Henry Melnick, who celebrated his 85th birthday, from his wife, children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, family and friends.



Welcome Ari Isaac to the family. Proud parents Marty & Stephanie David. Ecstatic babbies and zaidies Arthur & Sheila David, Sam & Sara Zameck.



Lev arrived on Sept. 12 to parents and brothers Amy, Jay, Ethan & Colby Goldberg. Love from proud grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins.



Jordana Solomon, born Oct. 6, is welcomed by parents Randy & Shana, grandparents Irving & Marilyn Starkman, Nick Solomon, Sheilah Solomon and Uncle David Starkman.



From Houston, Tex., three-year-old Aidan Abrams-Schwartz welcomes baby sister Elle Mali, while Mommy looks on. Mazel tov to all from Great-Auntie Lily in Toronto.

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What's New deadlines: Monday, Jan. 14, is the deadline for the Jan. 24 issue and Monday, Jan. 21, is the deadline for the Jan. 31 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Saturday, Jan. 12

CONCERT: CARMEL TRIO

Enjoy a concert by The Carmel Trio, Eyul Ein Hadar, flautist, Stephan Sylvestre, pianist, and Dudu Carmel, oboist, at the Al Green Theatre. 8 p.m. \$25. For tickets call Canada-Israeli Cultural Foundation, 416-932-2260, or the First Narayver Congregation, 416-927-0546.

Sunday, Jan. 13

BIG BAND CONCERT

Enjoy a free concert celebrating Israel at 60 by the Thelma Yellin School of Arts Big Band. 2 p.m. at the

Al Green Theatre. Tickets, MNJC reception or 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

A HEALING SERVICE

The Toronto Healing Project offers a healing service with Rabbi Reuven Tradburks and Yehudit Shier Weisberg. 3-4 p.m. at Lipa Green, room 421, 4600 Bathurst St. Wheelchair access. 416-944-3359.

Monday, Jan. 14

TORAH CLASS

Beth David Congregation offers an introductory class on focusing on historic personalities and insights related to the weekly Torah portion

with Hana Werner. 7:30-9 p.m. 416-633-5500

DIABETES MEETING

Pharmacist Alexandra Karmiris discusses "Over the Counter Medications and Vitamins: What We Need to Know About Interactions" at the general meeting of the Jewish Diabetes chapter. 8 p.m. at Shaare Shomayim Congregation. \$1. 416-363-0177, ext. 7403

Tuesday, Jan. 15

MOVIE AND DISCUSSION

Beth Tikvah Synagogue presents "Tuesdays with Larry," movies moderated by Larry Anklevicz, program co-ordinator of The Toronto Jewish Film Festival. 2 p.m. Today, *Echoes that Remain*, Jewish shtetl life before the Holocaust, using rare archival photographs and previously unseen

film clips, plus live action sequences. \$5. 416-221-3434

WHAT IS DEPRESSION?

Beth David Sisterhood is joining with Adath Israel and Beth Emeth sisterhoods to hear Dr. Abraham Sniderman speak on "Myths & Facts: What is Depression?" 7:30 p.m. 55 Yeomans Rd. Non-sisterhood members \$5. 416-633-5500

SAR-EL INFO MEETING

Find out about the Sar-El program, where civilian volunteers work on Israeli army supply/maintenance bases. 7:30 p.m. 788 Marlee Ave. 416-781-6089 or www.sarelcanada.org.

Other News

ISRAEL

Temple Har Zion presents a

lecture on Israel by Paul Liptz. Thursday, Jan. 17, 7:30 p.m. \$5 for non-members. 905-889-2252

YIDDISH CLASSES

The Committee for Yiddish offers Yiddish language classes for adults at beginner, intermediate and advanced levels. Conversation, reading and writing at each level. Sundays, 10 a.m. to noon, beginning Jan. 13, \$110 for 12 sessions. Conversational Yiddish, materials provided in transliteration, is offered Wednesdays beginning Jan. 9, 1:30-3:30 p.m. \$90 for 10 sessions. A free Children's Yiddish class with language, culture and the celebration of Jewish holidays, continues on Sundays, 9:30 a.m. to noon. Children ages 4-10 are welcome to join. There is a \$20 supplies fee. Classes are held at the BJCC. Registration, 416-635-2883, ext. 389 or ecocper@ujafed.org.
Continued on page 27

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What's New

Continued from page 26

TEXT STUDY IN 2008

Mekorot offers three new courses in January 2008. "My God, Why Have You Abandoned Me: Innocent Suffering and Religious Agony" with **James Diamond**. Study and discuss the challenge to religious faith of innocent suffering and catastrophe versus an omnipotent, just and all-merciful God. Mondays, Jan. 14-Feb. 4, 8 p.m. at Or Chaim Yeshiva. "Between Reverence and Resistance: Reactions to Rashi's Commentary on the Torah" with **Eric Lawee**. Study reactions to the Rashi's biblical commentary, the most authoritative and widely studied Jewish commentary. Wednesdays, Jan. 16-Feb. 6, 8 p.m. at Congregation Bnai Torah. And "King David and His Wives" with **Rachel Adelman**. Drawing on classical medieval commentary, Midrash, modern literary readings, art and poetry, study David's relationships with four women in his life: Avigail, Michal, Bathsheba and Avishag. Mondays, Jan. 21-Feb. 11, 9:45-11:00 a.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. All welcome. Each \$50. Register, 416-877-2050 or www.mekorot.ca.

FIGHTING ASSIMILATION

Chabad Lubavitch of Markham hosts a conference on "Fighting Assimilation" Jan. 18 and 19. Speakers include **Susan Jackson**. For info and to register for Friday night dinner, 905-886-0420, ext. 221.

YU KOLLEL YOM RISHON

Yeshiva University Kollel Yom Rishon program takes place on six Sundays between Jan. 20 and March 30. This year's theme is "Ethical Challenges." On Sunday, Jan. 20 **Rabbi Dr. Ephraim Kanarfogel**, of the Bernard Revel Graduate School and director of the Jewish Studies program at Stern College, will discuss "The Ethics of Halakhic Decision Making in the Medieval Jewish World and its Implications for Modernity." 9 a.m. at Shaarei Tefillah Synagogue. Info, www.kolleyomrishon.org, 416-783-6960 or canada@yu.edu.

TU B'SHVAT IN LONDON

Temple Israel of London celebrates Tu B'Shvat Sunday, Jan. 20, with a lunch and "Weird Fruit Auction." Info, 519-858-4400.

KOLEL TU B'SHVAT SEDER

Experience the four cups of Tu B'Shvat with **Baruch Sienna**. Monday, Jan. 21, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the BJCC. Adult \$10, children \$5, family maximum \$18. Pre-registration required. 416-636-1880, ext. 235 or www.kolel.org.

JEWISH INFO SERVICE

UJA Federation's Jewish Information Service of Greater Toronto is a one-stop Jewish spot for information on community events, holidays, shuls, camps community organizations etc. Call and let them help about all your Jewish needs. 416-635-5600 or www.jewishandclick.com "Doing Jewish In Toronto"

L'CHAIM SUPPORT GROUP

L'Chaim Cancer Support Group for Jewish Women provides confidential, caring support via telephone or personal visits to women facing cancer diagnosis and treatment. L'Chaim members are all cancer survivors. Info, 416-630-0203.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. Information/registration 416-638-7800 or www.jfandcs.com. Call **Shawna** ext. 215 for info and registration.

How to talk to Your "Ex" So That You Get What You Need. A 2-session workshop to help individuals learn effective communication and listening skills in order to better deal with their ex-spouse and issues around parenting and the children. Begins Tuesday, Jan. 22, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at The Promenade Mall, #313.

When You Are About to Separate: What to tell the Kids. A workshop for parents about to separate or in the early stages of separation. Tuesday, Jan. 29, 9:30 a.m.-12 p.m. at The Promenade Mall, #313.

FOR SENIORS

The Association of Jewish Seniors' hosts **Susan Jackson**, of UJA Federation, discussing "Jewish Toronto: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow" at their general meeting. Thursday, Jan. 17, 1 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. Members free, guests \$2. For info and reservations call **Tammy**, 416-635-2860, ext. 458.

Chai Shalom Social Club hosts **Nina Shapilsky**, vocalist and pianist, Sunday, Jan. 20, 1:30 p.m. Refreshments served. New members welcome. Info call **Sandy** at 416-633-3838.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Casino Rama, Thursday, Jan. 31; Mahjong, Tuesdays 10 a.m.-1 p.m. and Tuesdays 10 a.m.-1 p.m.; Duplicate bridge, Wednesdays, 12:30-3 p.m.; Bridge, Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m. Info, Tuesday-Thursday 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 416-395-7881.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Winter Festival "Come to the Circus" Wednesday, Jan. 16, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Free.

"Memory & Aging: What is

Normal? What is Not?" Thursday, Jan. 17, 1:30 p.m. Free.

Register now for winter season programs.

WAGMAN CENTRE

55 Ameer Ave. 416-785-2500.

"Music for Health," six-week program beginning Monday, Jan. 14, 11 a.m. Free. Register at ext. 2267.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

The Family Place at The Jewish Discovery Museum is adding new classes for young children ages birth to six this winter. Call about daytime, evening, and weekend programs. Info, call ext. 390.

Introduce your baby or toddler to Hebrew through lullabies, nursery rhymes, and Israeli children's music. Native Hebrew speakers and beginners welcome. To register call ext. 235.

Registration for September 2008 is now open. Spaces available for morning school for Tic Tac Two, nursery, and junior kindergarten. Extended morning option available for toddlers through Junior Kindergarten. Enriched program includes music, Hebrew, swimming, gym, and Discovery Museum. For information and to arrange tours call ext. 248.

Conversation Cafes, newcomers to Canada practice speaking English in a casual friendly environment with JIAS volunteers. Interested participants or volunteers should call **Joanna**, 416-630-6481, ext. 30.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www.mnjcc.org.

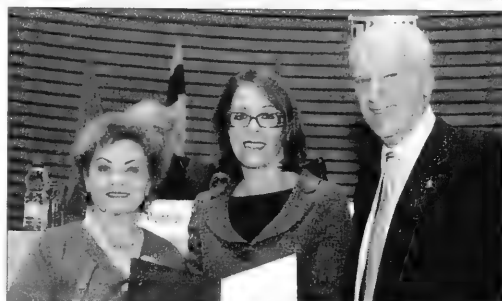
Register now for Jewish life courses including Hebrew, Aramaic, Jewish meditation.

Virtual Family Tree Workshop with **Bill Gladstone**. \$50, \$75 per couple. To register, contact the Ontario Jewish Archives, 416-635-2883, ext. 170.

Klezmer Players Workshop, a 10-week ensemble with **Eric Stein**,

from Beyond the Pale. Tuesdays, 7:30-9:30 p.m., beginning Jan. 15. Adult Pottery, Wednesdays 7-10 p.m. beginning Jan. 16.

Toronto Jewish Film Society subscription membership, eight film events from January through December, Sunday screenings 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Contact **Joelle Malka**, ext. 606 or joellem@mnjcc.org.



SUPPORTING CUTTING EDGE SCIENCE: The Milton and Frimette Snow Chair in Nanotechnology was recently inaugurated at Ben-Gurion University. Seen in photo, Ben-Gurion president Prof. Rivka Carmi, centre, presents the official chair certificate to the Snows.



SERVICE RECOGNIZED: At Na'amat Toronto's recent Tribute to Donors evening the Club One Founders Award was presented to exemplary volunteers. From left: National president Esther Rodzynek with award winner Ruth Beder, of Club Beersheba, and Toronto council president Sue Holtzman. [Photo: Mollie Rothman]

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BRIDAL SHOW

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 33

OBITUARIES and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Roncari, Lubov	Dec. 22/07	144 Esther Cres
Fine, Leslie	Dec. 22/07	11 Ruddington Dr
Ungar, Adolf	Dec. 22/07	175 Hilda Ave.
Frankel, Judith	Dec. 22/07	Private
Imwentsh, Molly	Dec. 23/07	171 Chelwood Dr
Kirk, Wynne	Dec. 23/07	38 Westhampton Dr
Borenstein, Isaac	Dec. 24/07	Private
Genina, Gitya	Dec. 25/07	15 Torresdale Ave.
Fuks, Rivka	Dec. 26/07	Private
Botvianski, Boris	Dec. 26/07	Private
Pindrus, Elka	Dec. 26/07	6101 Bathurst St.
Long, Norman	Dec. 26/07	2075 Bayview Ave.
Kogon, Matilda	Dec. 27/07	1955 Steeles Ave. E
Orgad, Tikva	Dec. 28/07	Private
Falvel, Elka	Dec. 28/07	3036 Bathurst St
Blume, Mary	Dec. 28/07	
Deenar, Eva	Dec. 28/07	Private
Martin, Maxwell	Dec. 29/07	555 Cummer Ave
Shmushkovich, Meir	Dec. 29/07	1101 Steeles Ave. W.
Yarmo, Helen	Dec. 29/07	Private
Dorfman, Lea	Dec. 29/07	Private
Press, Harry	Dec. 29/07	1925 Steeles Ave. W
Casseres, Aaron	Dec. 29/07	128 Sand Valley St
Monsaroff, Marion	Dec. 30/07	
Wilenski, Joseph	Dec. 30/07	105 Cocksfield Ave
Razbaum, Rozita	Dec. 30/07	Private

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Rachel Frydberg	Dec 14/07	100 Canyon
Mona Singer	Dec 15/07	10 Delisle Ave
Evelyn Mayers	Dec 16/07	3560 Bathurst St
Louis Consky	Dec 16/07	425 Walmer Rd
Joseph Lichtig	Dec 17/07	866 Sheppard Ave W
Morris Damin	Dec 18/07	42 Hallmark Crt
Frida Margel	Dec 18/07	1 Clark Ave W
David Balick	Dec 17/07	6060 Snowy Owl Cr
William Kadron	Dec 17/07	4003 Bayview Ave
Abe Ziskind	Dec 19/07	484 Steeles Ave W
Wilfred List	Dec 19/07	575 Briar Hill Ave.
Ada Subatchkoff	Dec 19/07	640 Sheppard Ave E
Yehosh Chieftetz	Dec 20/07	88 New Seabury Dr
Phillip Rosenbloom	Dec 22/07	485 Rosewell Ave
Richard Morton	Dec 22/07	40 St. Joseph
Freda Walker	Dec 22/07	240 Hesth St W
Eleanor Silver	Dec 22/07	40 Harding Blvd W
Harold Bellack	Dec 23/07	57 Whitaker Cres
Manny Wolff	Dec 24/07	91 Townsgate Dr
Bernie Nathanson	Dec 23/07	40 Rosehill Ave
Eleanor Klestin	Dec 25/07	550 Cummer Ave
Jean Beder	Dec 23/07	355 St. Clair Ave.
Arthur Krangle	Dec 26/07	3560 Bathurst St
David Goldfar	Dec 27/07	260 Seneca Hill Dr
Nathan Fox	Dec 28/07	3560 Bathurst St.
Bela Gulyas	Dec 29/07	124 Patricia Cres.
Eli Singer	Dec 22/07	14 Flemington Pk
Alan Clairman	Dec 28/07	3000 Dufferin St
Ruth Caplan	Dec 29/07	3560 Bathurst St

**HEDREW
BASIC**
CREATED BY
MICHAEL BRESLER

Sylvia Lofsky	Dec 13/07	346 Carnaby Crt
Marta Bresler	Dec 26/07	680 Roselawn Ave

Food, Scrumptious Food

Food Made Fast saves kitchen time

By SUE EPSTEIN
Special to The CJN

The well-known cookware establishment Williams-Sonoma has just introduced a new cookbook series, *Food Made Fast* (Oxmoor House; Fall 2006).

The 15-volume series is being released in batches. The first five books to be released are *Pasta*, *Soup*, *Weeknight*, *Baking* and *Slow Cooker*. The authors are Brigit Binns, Georgette Brennan, Melanie Barnard and Lou Seibert Pappas.

Each book is divided into dishes that are "30 minutes start to finish," "15 minutes hands-on time" and "Make more to store," and has over 90 full-colour photographs and 40 recipes.

Designed for busy people who can't or don't want to spend a lot of time in the kitchen, this series of books is all about getting a delicious dinner on the table – fast! The recipes are well-written and measurements are given in both "American" and metric (only the American have been included below).

In *Baking*, you'll find suggestions on how to fit baking into your schedule, how to shop efficiently to save time, and great recipes to enable you to have delicious baked goods on hand that take as little as 30 minutes.

Weeknight offers dishes like Thai Chicken Satay, Miso-glazed Salmon with Bok Choy and Chimichurri Steak that take 20 minutes from start to finish. In the "Make more to store" section, there is a recipe for Classic Roast Chicken to serve four, which makes enough to have leftovers for Chicken & Spinach Quesadillas, Chicken Couscous with Dried Fruit and Chicken & Mango Salad.

Slow Cooker offers recipes for Chicken Cacciatore, Braised Short Ribs – even dishes like Braised Duck with Figs & Port that take only 15 minutes hands-on time.

Soup offers dozens of simple and delicious soups designed with the busy cook in mind – all with very little effort.

Pasta, in addition to its 15- and 30-minute recipes, offers suggestions for making more than one meal from a recipe. Make the basic tomato-basil sauce for dinner tonight, store the remainder of the sauce (storage tips are given), and have two more meals of Spaghetti & Meatballs and Sausage Lasagna.

With this series, you won't have any more excuses to not cook, no matter how busy or hectic your day!

LEMONGRASS CHICKEN & ASPARAGUS

30 minutes start to finish

Cook's Tip: Lemongrass is available in many markets. Leave it out if you can't find it. Substitute 2 tsp. grated lemon zest and 1 tsp. lemon juice. Add the zest and juice along with the garlic and ginger in the first step.

- 4 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves, about 1 1/2 lb. total weight, cut into thin strips
- salt and freshly ground pepper
- 2 tsp. peanut or canola oil
- 1/4 cup green (spring) onions, thinly sliced
- 2 tsp. ginger, minced
- 1 stalk lemongrass, bulb part only, trimmed and finely chopped

- 3 large cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 lb. slender asparagus, trimmed and sliced on the diagonal
- 1/4 cup chicken broth
- 1/4 cup peanuts, (1 1/2 oz.), chopped
- steamed white rice, for serving

Stir-fry the chicken. Season the chicken lightly with salt and pepper. In a frying pan or wok over high heat, warm the oil. Add the chicken and stir-fry until golden on the outside and opaque throughout, 2-3 minutes. Transfer to a plate. Add the green onions and stir-fry until fragrant, 1-2 minutes.

Add the ginger, lemongrass and garlic and stir-fry for 30 seconds. Add the asparagus and stir-fry just until tender-crisp, 2-3 minutes.

Finish the dish. Add the broth to the pan and bring to a simmer. Return the chicken and any juices from the plate to the pan, reduce the heat to medium-low, and simmer for 1 minute to heat through. Sprinkle with the peanuts. Spoon the rice onto individual plates, top with the chicken and asparagus, and serve.

Here's another recipe from the Williams-Sonoma Kitchen.

WINTER GREENS SALAD WITH ORANGES & GOAT CHEESE

This refreshing salad combines three members of the chicory family (frisée, radicchio and Belgian endive), which have a pleasantly bitter taste. Oranges add a note of sweetness, while goat cheese lends a creamy texture.

For the vinaigrette

- 1 tbsp. Champagne or white wine vinegar
- zest of 1/2 orange
- 1 tbsp. fresh orange juice
- 1 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

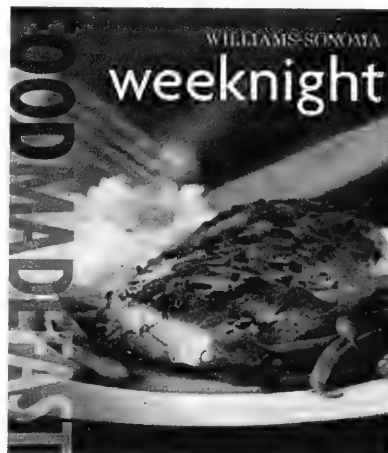
- 8-oz. log of goat cheese
- 1 cup finely chopped toasted pecans
- 1 head frisée, leaves torn
- 1/2 head radicchio, thinly sliced
- 4 Belgian endive, thinly sliced
- 4 oranges, peeled and segmented

Preheat an oven to 350.

To make the vinaigrette, combine the vinegar, orange zest, orange juice, mustard, olive oil, salt and pepper and blend until emulsified. Alternatively, in a small bowl, whisk together all the ingredients until emulsified. Set aside.

Cut the goat cheese into 1-oz. rounds. Using your fingers, carefully reshape any uneven rounds. Put the pecans in a bread pan or small bowl. Roll the goat cheese rounds in the pecans, pressing lightly so they adhere, then transfer to a baking sheet. Bake until the cheese is just soft and warm, 5 to 7 minutes.

Meanwhile, in large bowl, combine the frisée, radicchio and endive. Add the vinaigrette and toss to coat the greens evenly. Divide among 8 salad bowls or plates. Using a metal spatula, transfer 1 goat cheese round to each salad and garnish with the orange segments. Serve immediately. Serves 8.



Winnipeg to celebrate 100 years of Jewish education

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — The Winnipeg Board of Jewish Education is calling on alumni of Winnipeg's parochial Jewish school system

to come together on March 30 to celebrate 100 years of Jewish education in the city.

The gala evening at the Fairmont Hotel includes dinner, dancing, a live auction and entertainment by alumni, with the performers still to be determined.

"We would also like to encourage alumni to lend us their memorabilia and artifacts," says Nona Leibl, who is co-chairing the event with lifelong friend and Talmud Torah classmate, Sharon Delbridge. Delbridge's mother, Rochelle Fink, was a principal in the Jewish school system at Ramah for many years. Leibl and Delbridge say that they hope to have 450 to 500 alumni in attendance at the gala.

The two women and their committee plan to have an area at the gala for school memorabilia and archives. As well, plaques on display will list all the past teachers and administrators.

"A lot of our alumni formed strong bonds with their classmates and have stayed in touch with each other," Leibl

says.

Jewish education in Winnipeg goes back to 1902, when a Jewish studies program was established in one of the north Winnipeg public schools. It was in 1907, however, when Rabbi Israel Kahanovitch,

Winnipeg's chief rabbi, inaugurated the Winnipeg Hebrew Free School — Talmud Torah in its own building in the city's north end, where the majority of the city's Jewish community resided. In 1912, the school moved to a larger location nearby.

Over the next couple of decades, a growing number of Jewish schools opened to educate the fast-growing Jewish population in the city, including the I.L. Peretz School, the Folk School and the Arbeiter Ring. In the interwar years and the immediate postwar years, secular Yiddish education dominated Jewish education in Winnipeg. The Peretz and Folk Schools merged in the 1930s to form the I.L. Peretz Folk School. Among the school's innovations were the introduction of kindergarten classes and an elementary day school program. Evening classes continued for older students up to Grade 12.

The Talmud Torah only started to grow in prominence after World War II, when

Rabbi Avraham Kravitz became the new principal. Under his leadership, a Jewish high school day program was also developed. Joseph Wolinsky Collegiate opened in 1959, offering regular high school classes that included Jewish studies and Hebrew language classes.

In the 1950s, Winnipeg's Jewish population, which peaked at about 19,000, began shifting to the more affluent south Winnipeg, which had been unofficially barred to Jewish residents until after the war. In response, the Shaarey Zedek Synagogue, relocated in south Winnipeg in 1949, opened a school. However, with an ever larger number of Jewish families "moving south," a much larger school was needed. Ramah Elementary School opened its doors in 1959.

The growing south Winnipeg Jewish population, combined with an overall decline in the city's Jewish population, led to a corresponding decrease in the number of Jewish students enrolled in the north end schools. Thus in 1981, the longtime rival Talmud Torah and Peretz Schools merged into one under the aegis of the new

Winnipeg Board of Jewish Education. Ramah and Joseph Wolinsky Collegiate were also brought under the central control of the new board.

In 1997, the north end Jewish school was closed and merged with Ramah in a new school — the junior kindergarten to Grade 12 Gray Academy of Jewish Education — located in south Winnipeg in the newly opened Asper Jewish Community Campus. Just under 600 students are enrolled in the school this year. Smaller numbers of Jewish students also attend two public school Hebrew bilingual programs and an independent, more religiously oriented elementary and junior high school program.

The gala is being co-sponsored by the Winnipeg Board of Jewish Education, the Parent Advisory Committee and the Alumni Committee. Funds raised during the evening will be used to buy new laptop computers, LCD projectors and software for the school and to provide more professional training for staff.

For more information, visit www.grayacademy.ca.



Sharon Delbridge and Nona Leibl, co-chairs of a gala celebrating 100 years of Jewish education in Winnipeg

Mediation / Arbitration in Family Law Disputes – Part II

Family Matters

by
John Syrtash
B.A. (Hon.), LL.B.
Counsel

Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator
for 26 years



Question. Recently you wrote an article about how mediation can be a cheaper and faster way to resolve spousal disputes arising from separation by using one lawyer rather than two. What then is mediation/arbitration? What does a family law arbitrator in Ontario do? How does he replace a Court? Is he truly faster and more efficient than the public Courts? What training must he have? Are his decisions legally binding? What does he cost? How can he both mediate and arbitrate? What is the difference between mediation and arbitration? If I lose, can I appeal an arbitration ruling? Does the Ontario government keep track of his rulings? Does he have to keep records? Can he just be any hack? I'm not sure I will feel intimidated by my husband if I go to mediation or arbitration with my ex sitting beside me? Will the mediator/arbitrator protect me from signing away my rights to spousal support/child support or my house? Does a lawyer have to advise me before the mediation/arbitration or not?

Answer. In a recent issue, I explained the benefits and process of media-

tion/arbitration. To answer your specific questions: yes, once an arbitration agreement is signed and a certificate is obtained to show that both parties obtained Certificates of Independent Legal Advice, then the arbitrator does replace the trial judge (otherwise known as the "judge of first instance"). At this stage, the parties can no longer go to "Court". If either spouse does not like the decision of the arbitrator and has legal grounds for appeal, he or she can appeal the ruling of the arbitrator to a single Judge of the Superior Court later.

As an arbitrator, I am required to be familiar with family law, to keep records of all of my arbitrations and to submit reports of them to the Ontario government. Being a family law lawyer of 26 years, this presents no problem, but will be a major hurdle for certain well-meaning but less knowledgeable mental health professionals and social workers in our community. Accordingly, consumers should ask probing questions of potential mediator/arbitrators about their family law knowledge before retaining them as mediator/arbitrators. In addition, every arbitrator by April 30, 2008 must take a prescribed course in "power imbalances" between spouses to ensure that he/she can assist couples in need of mediation/arbitration and redirect those wherein a spouse may feel intimidated by their spouse. The costs of mediation and arbitration depend on each such mediator/arbitrator and typically are \$3000-5000 daily, split between the parties.

Neither Garfin Zeidenberg LLP nor John Syrtash is liable for any consequences arising from anyone's reliance on this material, which is presented as general information and not as a legal opinion.

Sponsored by Tzivos Hashem Canada, a children's charity. For program information call 416-398-1866.

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- Creativity to develop and implement programs that integrate learning and practice at home, synagogue and in the community;
- Strong written and verbal communication skills; Hebrew proficiency required
- Experience working with a multi-disciplinary team of professionals and volunteers

This is a full-time, permanent position that provides a competitive salary and benefits package.

Resumes may be sent to:
The Institute for Jewish Family Living, Director Search,
c/o Beth Zedec Congregation
1700 Bathurst St., Toronto, ON M5P 3K3
Email: JFLDirector@beth-zedec.org

Deadline for applications: February 1, 2008



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Prof. Boyarin is one of the world's most eminent scholars of Rabbinics. He has also contributed to the fields of Cultural Studies, Early Christianity and most recently, Greco-Roman religion. He is the author of numerous books in English and Hebrew, including *Dying for God: Martyrdom and the Making of Christianity and Judaism*, (Stanford University Press, 1999), *Powers of Diaspora: Two Essays on the Relevance of Jewish Culture* [with Jonathan Boyarin], (University of Minnesota Press, 2002) and *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaea-Christianity*, (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004). In 2006, Boyarin received the Award for Excellence in the Historical Study of Religion from the American Academy of Religion

Free and open to the public. No tickets required. For more information, visit www.utoronto.ca/jewish or call 416-978-8118.

Coast to Coast

Bill expected to advance to committee stage

Continued from page 1

Comeau said Bill S-210 will likely come for a vote on second reading when the Senate reconvenes later this winter. However, following consultations with Justice Minister Rob Nicholson, the Senate Conservatives have been advised not to support the bill.

The minister told Conservative senators that the bill would be unhelpful in tackling terrorism threats. "If we start to define every terrorist activity, some activities that are not defined won't be considered terrorist," Comeau said. "The bill, as it is, is at best unnecessary and could lead to confusion regarding current law on terrorism."

Comeau predicted, however, that given the Liberal majority in the Senate, the bill is likely to advance to committee stage.

Grafstein said such a step is long overdue, and he accused Conservatives of obstructing the bill. He also rejected

Against Suicide Bombing. The group has embarked on an e-mail and traditional mail campaign to convince senators that Canada should criminalize suicide bombings. Many high-profile Canadians have signed a letter asking the Senate to pass the bill. Among them are former New Democratic Party leader Ed Broadbent; former prime minister Kim Campbell; former Alberta premier Ralph Klein; Maj.-Gen. (Ret.) Lewis MacKenzie; former Ontario chief justice Roy McMurtry; former Ontario premier Bob Rae; and Ontario Progressive Conservative leader John Tory.

An open letter adopted by the group states: "Suicide bombing has become all too common in many countries throughout the world. Thousands of civilians are killed and maimed to advance a cause based on falsely implanted expectations of glory and martyrdom. We say no cause can justify suicide bombing."

Grafstein contended that "there hasn't been a more distinguished bipartisan group of Canadians supporting" the bill.

In a separate development last weekend, the Friends of the Simon Wiesenthal Center (FWSC) placed a full-page ad in the *National Post* "urging the United Nations to take action against suicide terror."

The ad (which can be seen at www.fwsc.ca) called on the UN General

Assembly "to hold a special session to deal exclusively with the scourge of suicide terror." It also urged the international community to designate suicide bombings a crime against humanity, and it encouraged religious leaders to denounce those who believe suicide killings are undertaken in God's name.

Almost identical ads were placed by the Los Angeles-based Simon Wiesenthal Center in the *New York Times* and the *International Herald Tribune*.

Leo Adler, director of national affairs for FWSC, said: "We certainly support Senator Grafstein's bill" and would like to see Parliament designate suicide bombings a crime against humanity.

He rejected the Justice Department's contention, as described by Comeau, that the bill would complicate efforts to address terrorist acts. Many crimes include clauses that more specifically define the offence, including child pornography (not limited to the general law against pornography), different killing offences (manslaughter, second-degree murder, first-degree murder), impaired-driving offences (which include an offence of causing death while driving impaired).

"There is absolutely no reason why we cannot specify that one of the acts of terror can't be suicide bombing," Adler said.

'It would make the Criminal Code more effective against those who counsel suicide bombings'

"I don't agree it will undermine the Criminal

Code. On the contrary, it would make the Criminal Code more effective against those who counsel suicide bombings," he said, adding that when they were in Opposition, the Conservatives supported the bill.

A House subcommittee as well as a special committee of the Senate on the Anti-terrorism Act are each reviewing the Anti-terrorism Act. The Senate committee has not yet reported its findings.

Grafstein said once the bill advances to the committee stage, opponents' concerns can be addressed by calling witnesses and hearing other evidence. "The committee could recommend against it after it hears the evidence."

He suggested opposition to the bill originated with bureaucrats in the Department of Justice, who have influenced the current Conservative government and the previous Liberal one as well. The government is "allowing bureaucrats to call the shots. They've been proven wrong in the past. The best way to expose these views is to hold a public hearing," Grafstein said.

In the meantime, he continued, suicide bombings continue around the world, affecting thousands of people, including Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan who are potential targets for terror attacks.

Grafstein's efforts have found support in a grassroots organization called Canadians

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Coast to Coast

Rady JCC undergoing major renovations

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Special to the C/JN

WINNIPEG — The Rose and Max Rady Jewish Community Centre is undergoing a \$3-million renovation.

"Government funding, along with major community donors and supporters, made the project possible," says Rady JCC president Murray Gilfix.

The completion of the Kaufman Child Care Centre in November 2007 marked the first milestone in the planned renovation and expansion.

"The new Kaufman Child Care Centre is more than double the size of our previous quarters. We now have 82 children ranging from three months old to 12 years being looked after in the new centre," says Gail Waxman, the Rady JCC's executive director. "We have doubled the number of spaces for school age children in our before-and-after care program, and we now have 48 full-time preschool spaces."

"[But] even with the new expansion, we have a waiting list of over 200 for day care. Some people are putting their child's name on a wait list as soon as they know that they are expecting a child."

Visitors to the new centre's room for three- and four-year-olds are "impressed by the amount of light the facility gets," Waxman says.

"We also have a new infant room for

children three months to two years old, which has its own kitchen and a nap room. We have up to 12 spaces in this program, which is a new program for us," she adds.

Tannis Podheiser Michaw, a parent with children at the new centre says, "I am happy to see my children thriving in this new child-care centre... The new facility is comfortable, spacious, and bright."

Children aren't the only ones who will benefit from the renovations underway. Adult fitness facilities at the Rady JCC are also being upgraded.

"We are expanding the track area upstairs, and on completion, we will have 100 pieces of workout equipment. Right now, we have only 50 or 60 pieces," Waxman says.

In addition, a new group fitness room double the size of the current space is being built, she says. "We have dedicated part of the area as a spin room for our spin program [aerobics on a stationary bike]."

Other renovations include a new youth lounge, a new membership area, new offices, and larger new locker rooms.

"We are anticipating that everything but the locker rooms will be ready by winter 2008. The locker rooms will be completed sometime later in the year," Waxman notes.

The Rady JCC currently has 5,000 members, about 50 per cent of whom aren't Jewish, she says.

But others enjoy the centre, too. "There are many people who attend the programs offered by the Rady JCC but are not members," Waxman notes. "With the new expansion of our facilities we could accommodate up to another 500 new members."

"We have not lost any members this year, despite the inconvenience of the renovations. This is a good sign," says Ilanit Shapiro, the new marketing director of the Rady JCC who moved to Winnipeg with her family from Toronto two years ago.

"I am confident that with our bright new state of the art facility, it won't be long until we are at capacity levels again," Shapiro says.

Waxman says that before the renovations began, the Rady JCC "had problems with crowding," because too many people wanted to use the fitness facilities at the same time.

A family membership at the Rady JCC is \$995. The centre has announced that it will be instituting an initiation fee for new members, as other fitness facilities in the city do. "This fee will not apply to current members, which is in accordance with the standard practice of other fitness centres in the city," Waxman says.

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Coast to Coast

Winnipeg Kashrut administrator leaves for new post

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Rabbi Mitchell Cohen, Winnipeg's kashrut administrator since August 2006, has resigned his position with the Vaad Ha'in of Winnipeg to become a geriatric home chaplain in Milwaukee.

He dropped into the office on Dec. 23 to turn in his keys, says vaad president Don Aronovitch.

Rabbi Cohen, who assumes his new posting on Jan. 21, was born and raised in Chicago, where he trained in and gained his first experience in kashrut supervision. He had served as kashrut administrator in Ottawa for a number of years before coming to Winnipeg.

The Winnipeg vaad originally hired Rabbi Cohen as a consultant in February 2006. The vaad's goal in bringing Rabbi Cohen in, says Aronovitch, was to raise the WK kashrut standard, which was considered suspect in some quarters, to the normal standard.

"He did a phenomenal job for us," Aronovitch says. "He raised the standard to the desired level faster than we thought possible."

Rabbi Cohen takes pride in what he was able to accomplish here. He has particular praise for longtime mashgiach Gabe Broges, and also for Rabbi Yacov Zerkowitz, who started working as a mashgiach here shortly after Rabbi Cohen became full-time kashrut administrator.

Some difficulties were, however, encountered in raising the kashrut standards.

The community's two ritual slaughterers were retired in the

summer of 2006 and have not been replaced. Also, for a time, the vaad temporarily had to suspend the certification for Omnitsky Kasher Food, the community's only kosher butcher, until the ownership agreed to meet the higher standard.

In his new position, Rabbi Cohen will serve as chaplain at the Jewish Home and Care Centre, an institution with 450 beds divided between two locations in Milwaukee. He decided to take the new job, he says, because it fits in well with his background and training, and also because Milwaukee is closer to his hometown of Chicago.

"My mother has not been well for the last few years," he says. "My family and I wanted to be closer to her."

Rabbi Zerkowitz has been appointed as the interim kashrut administrator for the community. The young Chabad rabbi has been the full-time mashgiach at Omnitsky since September, 2006.

Aronovitch reports that the vaad board is considering several different options. He hopes to be able to announce a decision about the vaad's future direction early in the new year.

Birthday bash in Quebec City

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

A series of events highlighting the history, culture and personalities of Quebec City's Jewish community will be held throughout 2008 as part of the city's official 400th anniversary celebrations.

The plans were unveiled at a recent press conference at Beth Israel Ohev Shalom Synagogue, with the participation of Pro-Mayor Jacques Joli-Coeur and Pierre Boulanger, president and CEO of the Société du 400e, the official organizer of the anniversary activities.

The central event is an exhibition titled "Same cloth, different thread: the Jews of Quebec City," which will be at the Gare du Palais train station from early May until the end of September. Open and free of charge, the exhibition will focus on "colourful individuals" from the past.

"By telling our story, we hope that people will discover how a cultural minority can contribute and integrate into a greater society while maintaining its own identity," said Simon Jacobs, executive director of Exposition Shalom Quebec, the non-profit organization behind the Jewish community's participation in the 400th anniversary.

Shalom Quebec's first activity, supported by Heritage Canada, will be the launching in March of an interactive website that will contain documentation and photos about the community's past and present, a genealogical survey of Quebec's Jewish cemetery, the oldest Jewish cemetery still in use in Canada, and interviews with and information about community members.

ע'כר ב'נ'נ'י

גידי קורן וחברים



ילדי השמש

זהו חצי שנה רץ בסימנטק של תל אביב הסרט "ילדי השמש" שנתקע בידים שדולו בקבוצים, תוך מראה צילום שחור לבן מקוריים, כשרבעק הם מדברים כאנשים מבוגרים על נסיון חייהם. תוקנה הקשה שעוברת כחוט שני בסרט היא הפרדת הילדים מהוריהם באמצעות הלנה המשותפת. רוב דוברי הסרט זוכרים את הפרדה מההורים כדבר אכזרי, מפחד ובעל נוק לטווח ארוך. חלקם טוענים שזה חשפני בצורה מסכנת על חוסר יכולתם לפתח אינטימיות עם אחרים. העובדה שקבוצת הילדים הפכה למעמד האנטימיות והחוסר היא בעייתית במיוחד, כי ילדים יודעים להיות מאד אכזריים לאחר ולשונה. בניגוד לזאת עכשווי רבב שמפנים את הקבוצים ואת החיים בהם, עשוי "ילדי השמש" באהבה רבה, ומשמשת בו כל קשת הדעות, בעד וגד. אני מאוד מקוה שהסרט המיוחד הזה ימצא את דרכו לסדרונות.

אין ספק שהקובץ של הגנאה והעזרים היה נסיון אנשי מאלף, ויחד בסונו לכך החיטוטוריה האנטימית רק חבל שבדרך סבלו עשרות אלפי אנשים צעירים קשפני נסיון. אבל שישאר בינו.

היי אילת היי אילת

כריסטמס אמורה להיות העונה שבה כל אירופה נודדת לחופים חמים ואקוויטים, כלומר לאלת. אבל הם אינם באים. עצוב לראות עד רפאים בתפוסה חלקית בלבד. "האירופאים נוסעו את אילת באינטימאדה השנייה, מסביר לי יוסי, טג המונת, אבל אז הם גילו את חופי סיני ומרוקו במצור נמוך ברובה, ולא חזרו יותר לאלת". האכן הסטיטיסטיקה תומכת בדבריו של יוסי: השנה נסבר שאי בקור והתחיים בישראל כשהשאי תוקדם והיה בשנת 2000, אבל הם לא באו לאלת.

למרה הצער, שחזת של שלושה ימים באילת מגלה שאין היא אטרקטיבית- תקופי של מלונות חיקורא לא ממש אטרקטיבי, הגנה ולחלואית וחלקים נראים כמו קאנקן לילה בית רוב הנהיים במלון שלטו היו ערבים ישראלים שבלו שם את הקורבן, וילדיהם עלו וידדו במעלות עשרים שעות ביממה. עוד לא נולד תייר אירופאי שיסכים בלול ברעש ובכלן כוח. אפרופו המלון- הוא חופי בכל החלשאים "לחמישה סוככים", בעד בשמציאות הוא היה מוקשה לקבל בטורונטו אפילו שלושה סוככים. מהר מאוד לא טוב קרה לאלת, וזה צריך להתרד את ישראל ברמה לאומית.

4 חודשים 3 שבועות וימים

סרט רומני שזכה לא מכבר בפסטיבאל קאן ובאוסקר האירופאי, ושהוא בעל סיכויי על במסר האוסקר המתקרב. הקיפוד מותרש בימים האחרונים של הקיפוד הקומינסטית של צ'אטקין, ומתאר שתי סטורנטיות בקולר שמנסות לחשי הפלה מלאכותית לאחת מהן, בקיפוד שבה הפלה מלאכותית נחשבה ברומניה הקומינסטית לבלתי חוקית. קבוצת שחקנים מדחמים רמת בימוי תיגום מהטובות שראויים בשנים האחרונות.

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On Campus

STUDENTS CHALLENGED TO MAKE PEACE

Israel Affairs chair at York University, Sammy Katz, far right in photo at left, recently organized the computer video game Peacemaker and invited students in Varti Hall at York University to play the game. The game puts the player into the position of a Palestinian or Israeli leader. It leads the player through a series of challenges in an effort to make peace with one's adversary. The program was very successful as more than 300 students throughout the day tried their hand at peacemaking. The availability of the game in the hall encouraged many students to stop, ask questions and seek more information about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

[Photos courtesy of Hillel of Greater Toronto]

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And now for something completely different:

HEEBONICS

Nothing trivial about this Jewish show

By AMY SOBERANO
Special to The CJN

Do you know the difference between LOL and Elul? Are you more familiar with the lineage of Jesus than with that of your forefathers? If so, the National Jewish Outreach Program, a non-profit independent organization dedicated to providing North American Jews with fundamental Jewish knowledge, wants to know.

Based in New York, the National Jewish Outreach Program (NJOP) was founded 20 years ago in response to escalating assimilation into secular society and declining Jewish identity throughout North America. The organization recently celebrated its inauguration to YouTube with Jew Walking, a comedic critique of western Jewry.

Jew Walking follows interviewer-comedian Simmy Kay as he traverses Manhattan's Upper West Side asking the local Jewish population basic questions about American culture, Christianity, and their own religion (www.njop.org/html/jewwalking.html).

In the video, the frightening reality, illuminated by Kay, becomes painfully clear: the foundation of today's Jewish community is slowly but steadily crumbling from beneath us, and an increasing proportion of western Jewry identifies more with pop culture and commercialized Christianity than with Judaism.

Rabbi Yitzchak Rosenbaum, NJOP's associate director and a contributing member of the program since 1989, encourages parents to allow their children to pursue a Jewish education and to also do so themselves.

"We absorb secular culture because it's what's in the air. We must make a point to not become Jewishly ignorant," he says, adding that often people are not conscious of the magnitude of their own or of others' ignorance.

Jew Walking reflects the National Jewish Outreach Program's goals of instilling the importance of preserving Jewish identity and of providing people with the tools to do so.

Rabbi Rosenbaum says the ramifications of a widespread drift away from Judaism include a troubling rate of assimilation and intermarriage across the United States.

Although in Canada intermarriage is not a big a problem as in the United States, Rabbi Rosenbaum maintains that the trend is still the same.

"If you can't define yourself as a Jew, what is there to make you stick to being Jewish?" he asks.

He fears that if we lose touch with our Jewish identity, it will effortlessly dissolve into the myriad of western civilization and eventually all ties to Judaism will fade into ancestry.

Rabbi Rosenbaum says that the community and educational programs must work hand in hand to combat the increased general detachment from Jewish life. In a world

inhabited by upward of six billion people, a population of only 13 million must unite or else face inevitable disintegration, he observes.

Approximately six million Jews live in the Dias-



Rabbi Yitzchak Rosenbaum, the National Jewish Outreach Program's associate director

pora, and Jewish neighbourhoods are becoming less frequent, membership in local community centres has declined, and a genuine connection with a synagogue has in many cases been reduced to convenience, compromise and consequently, disinterest.

As a minority, it is very difficult for Jews to maintain a committed Jewish identity within global society without a sense of belonging and unity, says Rabbi Rosenbaum.

Without a strong basis of Jewish knowledge and understanding, he believes it is impossible for the community to flourish. As well, it is difficult to defend the Jewish religion and culture without a basic understanding of its tenets.

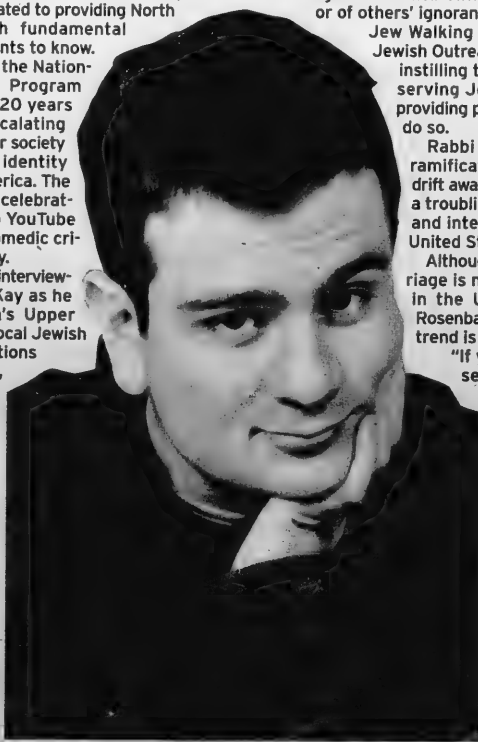
In other words, the rabbi says, it is impossible to identify with something that we cannot define. That is not to say that the base-level knowledge of facts and terms tested in Jew Walking can equip one to truly define Judaism. Rather, it can serve as a starting point – as that first step along the path to understanding what it means to live a Jewish life.

The more one learns, the more one realizes how little they know, and it is from within that beautiful irony that a lifetime of education is propelled. So, too, with an increase in knowledge comes an increase in the depth and richness of experience, which only serves to further a more meaningful identification with Judaism.

NJOP attempts to unite the values of community and education by serving as a co-ordinating organization for Jewish life across Canada and the United States.

The Internet allows for NJOP to have an even greater impact – as evidenced firsthand by the instant popularity of Jew Walking. As of June 2007, the organization had reached close to one million North American Jews with its programs, at more than 3,650 locations in 35 countries worldwide, according to its website, www.njop.org.

NJOP strives to make its programs accessible. "We think people should really try it," says Rabbi Rosenbaum. "We're not going to make anyone become Jewishly committed, but don't walk away from Judaism without knowing what it is."



Comedian Simmy Kay

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Bush visits Middle East in friendship

President expected to press Jerusalem to freeze settlements

By **RON KAMPEAS**
JTA

WASHINGTON — The message from the White House on the eve of George W. Bush's first presidential visit to Israel was that his staunch support for the Jewish state has set the stage for peace and given him room to exert some pressure on Jerusalem.

Bush was to launch an eight-day tour of the region on Jan. 9, beginning with three days in Israel and the West Bank and continuing to Persian Gulf states, Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

In a Jan. 3 interview with Reuters, Bush said he would press Israel to freeze settlement expansion in the West Bank, considered by Palestinians to be the principal obstacle to peace.

"I will talk about Israeli settlement expansion, about how that is, that can be, you know, an impediment to success," he said. "The unauthorized outposts, for example, need to be dismantled, like the Israelis said they would do."

The next day Haim Ramon, the Israeli deputy prime minister, said such a crackdown on unauthorized outposts could come as early as next week.

During a pre-trip briefing on Jan. 3, Bush's national security adviser, Stephen Hadley, also said the question of settlements would come up. He praised Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert for pledging to tackle the issue.

"I think it's interesting that Prime Minister Olmert, in his comments this week, addressed this issue of settlements in terms of how — that there would be no additional confiscations, no new settlements and no confis-

cation of land, that sort of thing — no expansion of settlements," Hadley said. "So it is an issue. It is one we've talked about and is an issue that will be part of the discussions over the implementation of the 'road map.'"

A standoff over settlement construction would represent a rare public break between Washington and Jerusalem during Bush's two terms in the White House, and could raise unpleasant memories of the first president Bush and Israel feuding over settlements.

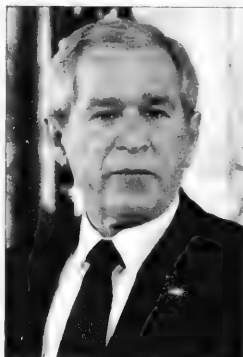
But, the White House argues, the current president's unflinching support for Jerusalem's tough anti-terrorist measures will go a long way toward smoothing over any disagreements.

One of the things that the younger Bush "did was, he made it very clear that there would be no compromise with terror, that the use of violence against innocents is not justified by any cause, and that any state — including Israel — has the right to defend itself against terror," Hadley said. "That built an enormous confidence in the Israeli government in the president."

Hadley downplayed expectations of a breakthrough, noting for instance that Bush would meet separately with Olmert and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas.

"It's probably going to be a series of bilateral meetings," Hadley said, counting out the prospect of a trilateral summit. Bush has no plans for a major address during his time in Israel — just a speech in the United Arab Emirates.

At the Jan. 3 briefing, Hadley was asked



George W. Bush

to challenge criticism that Bush neglected the Israeli-Palestinian crisis in his first seven years in office, waiting until last November to relaunch talks in Annapolis, Md.

In response, Hadley cited as other building blocks Bush's isolation of Yasser Arafat, the late Palestinian leader who never entirely eschewed terrorism, and the U.S. leader's open advocacy of Palestinian statehood, a first for a president, although former president Bill Clinton came close to doing so.

"What we now see is the emergence within the Palestinian community, in the form of President Abbas and Prime Minister [Salam] Fayyad, of leaders who are committed to peace and are willing to negotiate with Israel and understand the importance of fighting terror, and that terror will never be an avenue to get a Palestinian state," he said.

Hadley acknowledged some missteps taken by the Bush administration, including insisting on Palestinian legislative elections in 2006 that resulted in Hamas, an Islamic fundamentalist terror group, taking power. He said that had a deleterious effect on the Bush policy of promoting democracy in the Middle East.

"I think the election of Hamas in the Palestinian elections gave a number of countries pause as to where this was heading," he said. "There has been, I think, concern in that respect."

Hadley said the White House would press Congress to approve \$20 billion in arms sales to Saudi Arabia and its allies, arguing that the sales were critical.

"We think they're important as a signal of long-term U.S. commitment to the region and support for our friends and allies in the region," he said. "It's an important piece of our strategy in the region."

Hadley suggested that Bush would have tough words for the Egyptians over their failure to stop arms smuggling into the Gaza Strip, which is now controlled by Hamas.

He expressed understanding of Egypt's humanitarian concerns in allowing some Gazans to cross its territory to complete the Muslim hajj pilgrimage to Mecca.

"There are also people living in Gaza who wanted to participate in the hajj and a way needs to be found for them to do so," Hadley said. "On the other hand, we also see that Gaza is a place where Hamas and others reside and are building up the capacity to frustrate the hopes in the region for an Israeli-Palestinian peace."

"And so everyone in the region has a right and should be concerned about the flow of weapons and other instruments of war into Gaza that could be used to frustrate the opportunity we now have for peace."

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We thank all applicants for their interest. However, only those applicants considered for the position will be contacted. The Ottawa Talmud Torah Afternoon School is an equal opportunity employer.

World Jewish population hits 13.2 million

JERUSALEM — The world Jewish population in 2007 rose to 13.2 million, according to a Jerusalem-based think tank.

The figure is 200,000 more than in 2006, said a report released Sunday by the Jewish People Policy Planning Institute.

In addition, the number of Jews living outside of Israel dropped by 100,000, and Israel's Jewish population grew by 300,000, making it home to 41 per cent of world Jewry.

The 92-page report, which can be found at www.jpppi.org.il, also discusses world reaction to the Second Lebanon War and tiers in Diaspora Jewry.

The Jewish People Policy Planning Institute was established by the Jewish Agency for Israel in 2002 as an independent, non-profit organization. The institute examines the challenges, threats and opportunities facing the Jewish people, and engages in long-term policy planning.

Experts debate terrorist inroads in Latin America

By LARRY LUXNER

JTA

ISLA DE SAN ANDRES, Colombia—This tiny, palm-fringed island off Nicaragua's Atlantic coast seems like an idyllic Caribbean paradise. Duty-free shops, resort hotels and rustic snack bars line streets filled with European scuba divers on holiday.

But a powerful Arab presence here has led to claims that a place famous for snorkeling and scuba diving is becoming a hotbed of Hezbollah terrorist activity.

Ely Karmon, director of Israel's Institute for Counter-Terrorism in Herzliya, says that since the 1980s Hezbollah has been recruiting and raising money from Lebanese and Syrian immigrants living in three specific areas of Latin America and the Caribbean: the tri-border area where Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay meet; Venezuela's Margarita Island; and the Caribbean coastline of Colombia, including Maicao and San Andres.

"In all three areas you have Lebanese Shi'ite communities," Karmon told JTA. "Latin America is a soft-belly target because nobody is prepared – not the law enforcement authorities, not the public, not the threat."

Others say the threat is overblown.

Chris Zambelis, a Middle East analyst with the Jamestown Foundation, a Washington-based think tank, says offshore islands

like San Andres and Margarita do have large numbers of Muslims, but that "there's no evidence at all" to suggest that local Arab merchants are financing Hezbollah activities overseas.

"Colombian and regional governments have played on U.S. concerns by moving to curry favour with the United States to further their own domestic agendas and international standing," Zambelis wrote in a policy paper last year. "In doing so, they often highlight the alleged threat of al-Qaida or other brands of radical Islamist terrorism within their own borders."

The very idea of linking San Andres with Hezbollah is a stretch of the imagination, insists Bashir Harb, the secretary of the board of directors of the Centro Islamico, a mosque in downtown San Andres that is a spiritual home to hundreds of Lebanese Muslims who live here.

"Here nobody is involved in Mideast politics," said Harb, 25, whose parents left Lebanon's Bekaa Valley and came to Colombia in 1950, when the government declared San Andres a duty-free zone. "The islenos don't even know what's happening in the rest of Colombia, let alone the Middle East."

Claudia Marcela Delgado, the secretary of tourism for San Andres and the nearby island of Providencia, discount suggestions that Hezbollah maintains an active presence along Colombia's Caribbean coastline.

"One can assume that terrorist groups exchange information," Delgado said, "but I wouldn't say there's a strong presence here."

Arabs in Latin America's various free zones have come under increasing scrutiny since 1994, when Hezbollah agents financed by Lebanese sympathizers in the tri-border area were believed to have carried out the truck bombing of the AMIA Jewish community centre in Buenos Aires. The blast killed 85 and injured more than 300.

This month, Interpol voted to issue arrest warrants for six men – five Iranians and one Lebanese – wanted for involvement in the AMIA attack.

The vote, taken at Interpol's 76th General Assembly in Morocco, follows Argentina's issuance last year of an international arrest warrant for former Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and eight others on charges of masterminding the AMIA bombing.

As evidence of Iran's hand in radical movements across the region, Karmon pointed to the formation a year ago of a new Iranian-backed organization, Hezbollah Latin America, which supposedly has branches in Argentina, Chile, El Salvador, Mexico and Venezuela.

"In all these countries there are Arab communities involved" in terrorist financing, Karmon said.

"There's a big Islamic centre in Buenos Aires connected to the

Iranian Embassy," he said. "This infrastructure is kept alive for fundraising and recruitment. But the moment they decide they need to attack a target, or if the United States attacks facilities in Iran, Latin America could be one of the main areas for Iran – through Hezbollah – to retaliate against the United States or other western countries."

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, whom Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez has called "my brother," has visited Latin America three times this year. Ahmadinejad has opened new diplomatic missions in Latin America and initiated direct weekly flights between Caracas and Tehran.

Karmon says Chavez also has allowed Hezbollah to infiltrate the Guajira peninsula shared by Venezuela and Colombia, and convert the Wayuu Indian tribe to Islam.

"In Venezuela's case, the entire Wayuu Indian tribe simply converted to Islam because their chief, Teodoro Darnott, was a member of the pro-Chavez Grupo Nacionalista party," Karmon told JTA. "Last summer they put up a website in which they threaten to organize terrorist attacks against Zionists."

A look at that site brings up a large banner that reads "Bienvenidos – Allahu Akbar," which means "Welcome – God is Great," as well as colour photos of kaffiyeh-clad terrorists bearing AK-47 rifles under a bilingual Arabic-Spanish caption that translates, "The sweat of the workers is as holy and glorious as the blood of the martyrs."

But Zambelis doesn't see the newly minted Wayuu Muslims as much of a threat to anyone.

"Whoever's running that website is a crackpot," he said. "It's someone who is using the Hezbollah name to gather attention to his movement. There is absolutely no link between the real Hezbollah and that organization. Nobody takes him seriously."

Earlier this year, U.S. and Trinidadian authorities arrested four men in a plot to blow up fuel storage tanks at New York's John F. Kennedy Airport. The four allegedly had ties to an Islamic terrorist cell in Trinidad, and one of the suspects is a former member of the Guyanese Parliament.

But Karmon says his biggest worry is that Iran could deploy nuclear missiles in Venezuela, at the invitation of Chavez, in much the same way the Soviet Union sent nuclear weapons to Cuba, sparking the Cuban missile crisis in 1962.

"In my opinion, Chavez will continue to radicalize the regime internally," Karmon said. "I know Chavez from my activity as an adviser to the Israeli Anti-Semitism Monitoring Forum, and I think he is actually a proto-fascist."

"In the 1990s he co-operated with the most hateful right-wing Argentines. He's much worse than Fidel Castro, who was never an anti-Semite and never collaborated with these kinds of people."

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Book reveals Sarkozy's Jewish-Greek roots

By JEAN COHEN

JTA

ATHENS — A new book detailing the Greek-Jewish roots of Nicolas Sarkozy shows political involvement for the French president's family.

According to *Me, the Grandson of a Greek*, a new book written by three Greek authors, two Sarkozy ancestors were members of the Greek Parliament in the early 20th century.

One of the authors is Leon Nar, a Jewish writer from Salonika, also known as Thessaloniki, the former hometown of Sarkozy's mother's family.

The book theorizes that Sarkozy's mother's family came to Salonika from the French region of Provence. Sarkozy's great-grandfather, Mordechai Mallah, a well-known Salonika jeweller, and his wife, Reina, had seven children. One was named Aaron, Sarkozy's grandfather.

At the age of 14, Aaron Mallah and his mother left for France, where Aaron studied medicine and served as a doctor during World War I.

It was in Paris that Aaron met the gentle nurse who would become his wife. In order to marry Adel Bouvieux, Aaron was baptized and converted to Catholicism, taking the name Benedict, or Benico. A daughter, Andree Mallah, married a Hungarian refugee named Paul Sarkozy. The couple had three sons, including Nicolas.

Paul Sarkozy left the family when Nicolas was 5 years old,

and Benico took care of them. Nicolas, according to the book, was very attached to his grandfather, who used to tell his grandchildren stories from Salonika.

Until Benico's death in 1972, Nicolas Sarkozy and his brothers did not know they had Jewish roots. The Sarkozys brothers would learn the truth about their Jewish roots from their mother.

The authors said Benico did not tell his grandchildren about their Jewish roots to protect them, fearing anti-Semitism and another Holocaust, which killed most members of the Mallah clan.

In 1973, with his family facing financial difficulties, the 20-year-old Nicolas Sarkozy travelled to Salonika to sell his family's leftover property.

During a visit to Greece in July 2006, the Jewish community of Salonika honoured Sarkozy at a ceremony at the French Embassy in Athens.

The community gave Sarkozy, then France's interior minister, an album of his family tree going back to his great-great-grandfather, along with pictures of his ancestors. Sarkozy recognized some of the faces in the pictures from his own family albums.

At the event he met Lucy Saltiel, the wife of the president of the Jewish community of Salonika and a member of the Mallah family. Visibly moved, Sarkozy told the Jewish community members, "My roots are here."

Israel & the Jewish World

Israelis remember Sharon

Israelis marked two years since Ariel Sharon was incapacitated by a stroke. Marking the second anniversary of the Jan. 4, 2006, brain hemorrhage that ended the former prime minister's career and shook the Middle East, Israeli newspapers published never-before-seen pictures of Sharon as a child, while radio stations interviewed his aides and confidants. The comatose Sharon, 79, is in a long-term-care ward at Tel Hashomer hospital, where a select group of relatives and friends visit regularly, doctors said. He is sometimes propped up in front of the television, eyes open, though he is not responsive.

Olmert, Abdullah meet

Ehud Olmert met with Jordan's King Abdullah in an unannounced visit. Last Thursday's meeting in the Jordanian coastal town of Aqaba was arranged to co-ordinate the Israeli and Jordanian positions on regional issues ahead of U.S. President George W. Bush's visit to the area, according to Israel Radio. It was not announced in advance for security reasons. During the meeting, the Israeli prime minister told Abdullah that Israel will not build any new settlements nor appropriate any more land claimed by the Palestinians. Abdullah urged Israel and the Palestinians to honour their commitments to the current peace process. Jordan's largest political party, the Islamic Action Front, condemned Olmert's visit. Though Abdullah secretly visited former Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, he has not accepted numerous invitations from Olmert to visit Israel.

Israel retaliates

Israel retaliated for a rocket fired deep into the country, killing at least nine Palestinians in the

Gaza Strip. Ground and air attacks last Thursday targeted buildings used by Palestinian terrorists. More than 30 Palestinians were wounded. Three of the dead were civilians. The army responded to an attack from Gaza by a rocket believed to be a Soviet-style "Grad" that hit northern

Ashkelon, causing no damage or casualties. Israeli officials said it was the longest-range rocket ever fired from Gaza.

Labor**may leave coalition**

Ehud Barak hinted his Labor party could quit the Israeli government over the investigation into the Second Lebanon War. Barak, the defence minister and Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's most important coalition partner, was asked in an interview whether he will quit the government after the Winograd Commission of inquiry publishes its second and final report on the summer 2006 offensive against Hezbollah in Lebanon. The report is expected at month's end. But Barak was circumspect about his plans. "I will sit quietly and think what the right thing to do is from the country's perspective, as well as how to do it, and when I decide, I'll do it," Barak told Israel Radio. Most political pundits believe his Labor party is in no rush to join the opposition, especially given current Israeli-Palestinian peace moves. But Barak had strong words against a Knesset foreign affairs and defence committee report last week that faulted the armed forces over the war but was sparing in its criticism of the government. He said the military's handling of its missions in Lebanon was "exemplary," but that it was limited by the planning and preparations made in Jerusalem. "I won't let the armed forces be a scapegoat," he said.

Israel Briefs

CIC reps to accompany Bernier

Continued from page 1

Ronen and a CIC team will be travelling to Israel with the minister.

Ronen told *The C/JN* that he is "encouraged" by what he sees as the purpose behind Bernier's trip.

"Our expectation is... that he will be conveying a message to the Saudis vis-a-vis the constructive role they can play in normalizing relations with Israel," Ronen said.

Ronen also reaffirmed the CIC's hope that Bernier will tell Abbas that

Canada expects him to exercise rigid control over the financial aid it has pledged to the PA.

"As the Palestinians look towards enhanced civil society, institution-building, enhanced security and the like... we feel it's important for Palestinians to understand that the support from the international community, and from Canada in particular, is not unconditional," Ronen said.

Earlier this month, a spokesperson for the Department of Foreign Affairs told *The C/JN* that Canada would ensure

that its promised funds "do not directly or indirectly benefit Hamas or other terrorist groups listed under Canadian law."

Ronen said the CIC is also looking forward to Canada re-affirming its "special relationship" with Israel and conveying the support that the Jewish state enjoys in Canada as it "tries to navigate a better situation on the ground and an optimistic future."

Calls by *The C/JN* to the Foreign Affairs Department for comment were not returned by deadline.



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Israel & the Jewish World

Below the journalistic standard

By ANDREA LEVIN

David Landau, editor of Israel's *Ha'aretz* newspaper, made statements on Sept. 10 to the U.S. Secretary of State so vulgar, so outside the bounds of professional and social conduct, he'd be fired if he were heading up a mainstream American paper.

At a private dinner for Condoleezza Rice and some 20 journalists and academics in the home of U.S. Ambassador to Israel Richard Jones, Landau told the Secretary Israel wants to be "raped" by America - i.e., to have a political settlement forced on the nation.

Equally shocking, he admitted in the *Jewish Week*, which broke the story: "I told

[Rice] that it had always been my wet dream to address the secretary of state" on the matter of coercing Israel.

Beyond the gross crudeness and lack of judgement in the words Landau chose in addressing a high American official lies, of course, the obscenity of the content - his claim that Israel desires, and deserves, to be raped. This perverse mind-set has also been reflected in Landau's consistent flouting of journalistic standards at *Ha'aretz*. While the paper includes fine reporters doing professional work, others are little more than propagandists, their writing filled with falsehood and incendiary distortion denigrating Israel.

Under the paper's current leadership - Landau and publisher Amos Shoken, who

shares his editor's views - the stridency of attack has intensified. In both news stories and editorial commentary, for instance, *Ha'aretz* assails Israel as "apartheid" and ruthlessly oppressive.

This false, poisonous message is being spread globally in English on the publication's popular website. Rosters of incendiary columns by *Ha'aretz* writers are posted on virulent anti-Israeli and anti-Jewish Internet sites, included with relish as proof and validation of the criticisms of Israel's detractors.

Some of the most extreme *Ha'aretz* writers are also championed in more elevated locales, given prizes, quoted in the media and invited to conferences. Danny Rubenstein, Arab affairs reporter and editorial board member of *Ha'aretz*, spoke in August in Brussels at a UN event sponsored by its Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. In the midst of an assemblage demonizing his country and calling for boycotts against it, he rose to denounce Israel as an apartheid state.

Similarly, *Ha'aretz* columnist Gideon Levy excoriates Israel both in the newspaper and in public venues, regularly invoking the apartheid epithet. Likewise, columnist Amira Hass denounces what she terms Israel's "apartheid laws" and urges Israelis to join in toppling "the apartheid regime we have created here."

But indicative of the paper's disregard for factual accuracy in its supporting of this charge, or of other assertions advancing the publication's extreme political agenda, is the repeated claim by Levy and Hass that Israel maintains exclusive, "apartheid" Jewish-only roads in the West Bank. They have levelled this baseless charge repeatedly, sometimes citing absurdly as a specific example Route 443. Anyone driving that highway can readily observe the many Arab vehicles with Arab drivers and Arab passengers. A gas station on 443, owned and operated by the Israeli-Arab Hawaja family, serves Arabs and Jews who stop to fuel their cars and shop in the attached convenience store.

That is to say, Israelis of all religions and ethnicities, including Jews, Muslims, Chris-

tians, Bahais and any other background, can and do travel these roads.

When confronted with the facts on this particular, serious error, Amos Shoken conceded, "the term 'roads for Jews only,' which may be 'mathematically' incorrect, is fine with me because it describes the true nature and purpose of the roads."

The paper ferociously opposes the Israeli presence in the West Bank and in its zeal to pressure the government to take action it seeks, Shoken and Landau regularly print misinformation ostensibly demonstrating the evils of "occupation" and the fault of Israel in not making greater and speedier concessions.

But it is not only the Israeli presence in the West Bank that prompts distorted and erroneous criticism. Plentiful too are stories about the allegedly discriminatory, oppressive nature of Israeli society generally, including false charges about Arab property rights, building permits, economic development and more.

Ha'aretz is, in effect, used by its publisher and editor as a propaganda cudgel whose aim is to persuade both the Israeli consumer of the Hebrew edition and the global audience of the English version that Israeli wrongdoing and moral failure should be met with severe measures. In Landau's ugly formulation that action should have the traumatizing impact of a brutal sexual assault.

Hanoch Marmari, a previous editor, expressed far different views about the responsibility journalists such as those at *Ha'aretz* bear. At a conference on media coverage of the Arab-Israeli conflict, he warned that stories castigating Israel and carrying the "brand name" of *Ha'aretz* can appear to offer, in his words, "proof of Israel's profound and pervasive evil."

Regrettably, that message is just what Landau and Shoken seem more than eager to promote. The question is whether the Israeli public which is most directly imperiled by the defamation spread by the paper, will demand redress.

Andrea Levin is Executive Director of CAMERA, the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America.



David Landau

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Arts & Travel

Don't get Deb Filler started

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to The CJN

Losing one's luggage is no laughing matter, but it's funny when it happens to comic Deb Filler.

"My bag was in transit for two days," she says. "I'm used to it... The trip before that, I'm checking my bags and I ask the airlines rep to send one suitcase to Jerusalem, one to Paris and the third to Tonga."

"The woman says, 'We can't send your bags to three different places!'"

"Why not?" I say. "You did it last time."

She laughs. "I just couldn't resist [the joke]." Barring the inconvenience of lost luggage, the Toronto-based comic says she was thrilled with her recent performances in Los Angeles and Las Vegas. "It was a terrific success. I didn't expect it to be so well received."

The show, *Don't Get Me Started*, will be performing in Toronto at the Al Green Theatre (Miles Nadal JCC) 8 p.m. Jan. 19 with an added matinee at 3 p.m. Jan. 20.

Filler notes that this is her first public stand-up performance in Toronto in five years. "I've been travelling so much I haven't had a chance to do a show here."

She describes *Don't Get Me Started* as a melange of buoyant Jewish songs, poignant stories, and cameo appearances of benchmark characters who have peppered her various solo shows.

Also included are some of the Jewish jokes she's been amassing for 25 years.

"I'm from the school that one has to master these great Jewish jokes and pass them on. I love the element of surprise in most Jewish jokes."

But the humour is also rooted in familiar-

ity, she adds. "We recognize all those characters – the lady in the old age home, the five Jewish men playing cards, the Jewish mother on an El Al flight, you get the picture."

Filler calls the show "an evening of soul. I weave in stories of my life experiences."

Indeed, the New Zealand-born entertainer – she bills herself as the only Jewish comedian in her native country – comes by story telling naturally.

"Both my parents were great storytellers. They were a real inspiration to me. My mother fled Germany and arrived in colonial New Zealand in 1938. Her history informed her whole life experience and that was reflected in her stories."

"My father had more stories than anyone I've ever known. They weren't always happy stories because he was a survivor of several camps including Auschwitz. But he told stories with a sparkle in his eye. His memories before the war were happy ones."

Comedy was a part of Filler's life from the time she was seven, she recalls. "The emotional impact of being a first generation child of survivors inspired me to use humour to try to lessen my father's pain. He had a quirky sense of humour and he loved to laugh. I realized very early on that I could make him laugh. I tried to help lighten the load for the whole family."

"Miraculously, my father did not harbour much bitterness. He was a very special man. He was key to my sense of humour. Humour is universal and it's so liberating."

Her father followed his brother to Australia after the war. Her parents met there because her mother had been sent "to shop for a Jewish husband." The couple ran a bakery in Auckland, New Zealand, a city with around 2,500 Jews.

Continued on page 42



Deb Filler performs at the Al Green Theatre on Jan. 19 and 20.

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Arts & Travel



Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

FORMER TORONTONIAN ELI MARCUS HAS BEEN 'TOUCHED BY THE BLUES'

Former Torontonian Eli Marcus ran the Fingerboard coffee house and open stage in Toronto in the late 1970s, and organized several blues and jazz concerts on the University of Toronto campus while completing a science degree. He also worked as a freelance writer and photographer for some local papers and magazines, usually writing about blues artists.

In 1981, Marcus immigrated to Israel, where he has remained active in the music scene, both on the stage and off. He has played on the kibbutz circuit and at clubs and festivals, some of which he has helped organize. He has also produced radio shows on the blues, written a monthly magazine column in Hebrew on the blues, and been active in the Blues For Peace organization.

Marcus recently published a second edition of *Touched By the Blues*, a book of stories he has collected from blues artists around the world; its subtitle is *The Unsung Heroes of the Blues*. For ordering information, visit the website <http://elimarcus.com>.

Don't Get Her Started: Comic Deb Filler presents *Don't Get Me Started*, a one-woman show offering "some of the best Jewish jokes this side of the Catskills." The comic en-

tertainer from New Zealand may be remembered for her solo show *Punch Me in the Stomach*, which she performed in Toronto and around the world. See her at the Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre, 750 Spadina Ave. at Bloor. Tickets \$25. Saturday, Jan. 19, 8 p.m. and Sunday, Jan. 20, 3 p.m. E-mail Totix.ca, 416-535-4556, www.fillerup.ca

and is scheduled to give a free community concert. Co-presented with the Canada Israel Cultural Foundation, the concert is at the Miles Nadal JCC, Sunday Jan. 13, 2 p.m. Free tickets are available at the MNjcc reception desk. 416-924-6211, ext. 0

Music & Drama Notes

• Stage Centre Productions presents the award-winning play *ART*, by French-Jewish playwright Yasmina Reza. A long friendship is challenged after three friends engage in

an emotional debate over the value of an expensive work of abstract art. Fairview Public Library Theatre, 35 Fairview Mall Dr., North York. \$25, \$20, \$15. Jan. 10 to 26 (intermittent). 416-299-5557, www.stagecentreproductions.com

• Tickets are on sale now for Teatron's next production, *Chaim's Love Song*, a comedy by Marvin Chernoff to be directed by artistic director, Ari Weisberg. The story is a "lilting family drama" that focuses on Chaim Sholsky, a retired mailman in Brooklyn who is an American Teve. The production comes to the Leah



Eli Marcus

Posluns Theatre Feb. 27 to March 9. 416-781-5527, www.teatrontheatre.com

• The Blues of Winterfolk is an evening of blues in advance of the Winterfolk Festival. Artists include Al Lerman, Mose Scarlett, Mr. Rick, Noah Zacharin, Brian Gladstone, Maureen Brown, Tony Quarrington, Julian Fauth and Mike Branton. \$10. Hughsroom, 2261 Dundas St. W. Thursday, Jan. 10, 8 p.m. 416-531-6604

• Factory Mainstage Theatre presents *The Russian Play and Essay*, two plays by Hannah Moscovitch. The first deals with a teenage flower-shop girl who falls in love with a married gravedigger; the latter focuses on the academic and gender politics generated by a cat-and-mouse debate between a student and professor. Runs Jan. 19 to Feb. 17. 416-504-9971, www.factorytheatre.ca

Carmel Classical Trio: Flautist Eyal Ein-Habar and oboist Dudu Carmel of the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra join Canadian pianist Stephane Sylvestre in an evening of works by Bach, Mendelssohn and Israeli composers. The Carmel Classical Trio is presented by Canada Israel Cultural Foundation and the First Narayever Congregation, in partnership with the Al Green Theatre/ MNjcc. Presented as part of Israel @ 60 weekend. Al Green Theatre, Saturday Jan. 12, 8 p.m. Tickets are \$25, available from the foundation, 416-932-2260, or First Narayever, 416-927-0546.

Free Community Concert: The Big Band of Israel's Thelma Yellin School of Arts is in town for the conference of the International Association of Jazz Educators (IAJE)

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TOUR EAST

HOLIDAY

World's first Holocaust museum was founded by survivors

By **SHELDON KIRSHNER**

Staff Reporter

KIBBUTZ LOCHAMEI HAGETA'OT, Israel — The Ghetto Fighters' Museum in this kibbutz, one kilometre north of Acre and six kilometres south of Nahariya, is the granddaddy of all Holocaust museums.

Tamir Porter, an official in its overseas department, describes it as the world's first Holocaust museum.

It was founded in 1949 by survivors of ghettos and veterans of partisan bands to commemorate compatriots lost in the Holocaust.

Designed to evoke a spirit of rebellion rather than death, it received 120,000 visitors last year, many of whom were students.

Adjacent to the grand remains of a Roman aqueduct, the museum consists of two adjoining buildings — a functional box-like structure whose exhibits document the genocide, and Yad Layeled, a space-age cone-shaped building dedicated to the memory of the 1.5 million Jewish children killed by the Nazis and their collaborators.

The museum, whose attractive green spaces were laid out by the Jewish National Fund, gets its message across through impressive technology.

Upon entering the main building, a visitor is struck by a large plasma screen in which the names of 4,700 decimated Jewish communities are represented by floating white letters that alternately merge and fall away.

Additional screens relate the stories of victims and survivors, and these are often poignant.

Interconnected pavilions, covering a variety of themes, form the heart and soul of the museum.

The Warsaw Ghetto uprising, which broke out in the spring of 1943 and was mercilessly crushed by the Germans, is evoked through the medium of stark photographs of pain and resistance and of heart-rending testimonies.

Facing the armed might of the German army and police, the ghetto fighters had relatively few weapons at their disposal, and this fact is graphically conveyed in an exhibit in which primitive homemade bombs, pistols and rifles are displayed.

Further pavilions deal with the ghetto system, the deportation process and the concentration camps.

Still others concentrate on the mythical shtetl and on the rise of Adolf Hitler's fanatical regime through photographs, models and maps.

The art gallery, lit by natural light, contains more than 3,000 original pieces. Only Yad Vashem, in Jerusalem, has a larger collection. The drawings are by turns sorrowful and defiant, a microcosm of the artists' hellish ordeal.

One of the most interesting artifacts is the wood and glass booth in which the arch Nazi war criminal, Adolf Eichmann, sat passively as his trial unfolded in Jerusalem in 1961.

As you gaze upon the eerie exhibit, a rush of images flood the mind: Eichmann in Palestine in 1937 to assess the possibility of Jewish emigration from Europe; Eichmann in Vienna in 1938 to expel Jews from Austria; Eichmann in Wannsee in 1942 to participate in the infamous conference at which the Final Solution emerged; Eichmann in Buenos Aires in 1960 when he was kidnapped by Israeli security agents; Eichmann in Ramla in 1961 when he was hanged, the only person to be executed in Israel.

Yad Layeled, primarily intended for young visitors aged 10 and up, was opened in 1996 and is made up of two permanent exhibitions, a temporary exhibition and workshops for organized groups and families.

"The Story of the Jewish Child During the Holocaust" recounts the fate of the murdered children.

Overhead speakers and television monitors convey their experiences, while photographs, sacks and suitcases offer a glimpse of the uncertainty and terror that must have gripped them as the Nazi terror descended on the European continent.

"Janusz Korczak of the Children" honours an educator, author, humanitarian and hero who, in August 1942, sacrificed his life for the sake of the children in his Warsaw Jewish orphanage. Offered sanctuary on the Aryan side, he chose death instead, aligning himself with his charges, who were summarily deported to and gassed in Treblinka.

The man and his ideas are introduced through an interactive presentation.

"Following the Path of One Picture" delves into the testimonies of 22 child survivors and engages visitors in a research and discovery experience.

The workshops, at the end of the tour, enable visitors to express their feelings by way of arts and crafts, drama, creative writing and projects combining some or all of the above.

The museum's amphitheatre is located in a perfect setting, next to the Roman aqueduct and overlooking the green hills and plains of the Galilee.

Appropriately enough, the closing ceremony of Holocaust Remembrance Day, an annual event, takes place in this theatre.



The museum's main building

[Sheldon Kirshner photo]



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Novel based on unknown origins of Israel

By DAVE GORDON
Special to The CJN

The Witness Tree, a new novel by John Loftus, and co-written by Canadian author Brendan Howley, delves into what for most is the unknown background to the origins of the modern State of Israel.

Loftus, who spoke at a book signing in Toronto recently, described the book as "a murder story, a love story and a detective story."

The historical novel is about a famous American family, the Dulles family: John Foster Dulles became the secretary of state, and Allan Dulles became the head of the CIA. But the star of the book is their sister, Eleanor.

Her government career began in Franklin Roosevelt's social security administration, then moved onto wartime intelligence where she had security clearances for state department information, enabling her to go into classified vaults and discover well-hidden secrets.

It was there she found out that in the 1930s and '40s her brothers were lawyers for Hitler's bankers. They had moved investment capital from Wall Street, which built the Third Reich from the ground up. They also had Canadian business partnerships that traded with Nazis, says Loftus.

Eleanor acquired blackmail information on one man in particular, Nelson Rockefeller, who was to become governor of New York in 1959, and then the vice-president under Gerald Ford. During World War II, Rockefeller was the chief of intelligence in Latin America – but had been engaged financially with the Nazis.

A few days before the UN Palestine partition vote in November 1947, a test resolution, conducted by the Arab nations, was held. The Zionists won, but nowhere near the

two-thirds majority needed. If the votes didn't change within the next three days, there would not have been an Israel.

The turnaround came when the Zionists played their trump card: Eleanor Dulles gladly handed over damning documentation to Zionist activists, who presented it personally to Nelson Rockefeller.

"Giving aid and comfort to the enemy during a time of war is considered to be treason. So he called everybody he knew, and in three days he turned around every vote in Latin America, coaxing them to either abstain, or vote in favour of Israel," says Loftus. These new votes helped break the impasse.

"I think it's fair to say that without Eleanor Dulles, there would never have been a State of Israel. She was a quiet heroine."

Loftus himself is a U.S. intelligence expert, who has had high security clearances while in the U.S. Justice Department, and worked with NATO, the Israeli army and CIA. Much of what is contained in his new book, his fourth, could only have been acquired through his intelligence community network, he says. He describes *The Witness Tree* as being like the film *Schindler's List* in terms of the story being true, but the dialogue and some characters were fictionalized or composites.

"I'm hoping that a new generation will understand this



John Loftus

time of history a little bit better," says Loftus. "I want it to be especially for people who don't know a lot about World War II, or the 1930s, to get the story across easily."

Though the Nazis were defeated in Europe, their terrifying legacy survives with those who wish to harm the Jewish people, such as some dictators in the Arab world.

For example, Loftus says that as an Arab Nazi reared Saddam Hussein – and given Saddam's financial gifts to Palestinian homicide bombers' families – it wouldn't be a stretch to imagine that Saddam would make an effort to maximize damage with the pursuit of deadlier artillery.

In fact, lately Loftus has even more secrets to share, pertinent to the Jewish people – intelligence docu-

ments and other previously classified information reveal the invasion of Iraq may have prevented Saddam from continuing an ongoing trade in chemical, biological and even nuclear weapons, a subject which Loftus elaborates on his website. Nuclear materials, he maintains, made their way to Syrian hands, or were still in Iraq when coalition forces invaded, but spirited out, right under the nose of the coalition troops.

He also suggests the recent mysterious air strike by Israel against Syria was intended to destroy the facility carrying out this nuclear work.

Remembering A Lost Hero

The Holocaust Centre of Toronto invites the community to commemorate Raoul Wallenberg Day
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416.635.2883 ext. 153 or hschwartz@ujafed.org.



One-woman show is a melange of Jewish jokes

Continued from page 39

Filler trained as a singer and school teacher and taught for three years before becoming a full-time writer/performer. She is currently a guest teacher in the theatre and dance department at Brown University.

She lived in New York City for 14 years before moving to Toronto in 1997 to be the executive producer of a feature film of her show *Punch Me in the Stomach*.

In 2002, Filler performed another one-woman show, *Filler Up!*, all over the world. "I was sold out for eight-week runs in London, Sydney and Berlin. In Auckland we sold out a large theatre for three weeks. That really meant a lot to me because it was my hometown."

She did *Filler Up!* for the first time in New York City last spring. "I was humbly honoured by the positive response. New Yorkers have so much choice for theatre. It was really an honour for me to get that kind of reaction."

Filler is currently co-writing and producing a new show *I Only Laugh When It Hurts – My Life with the Martz Sisters*. The research involves collecting Jewish jokes, she explains.

"I already have 500 pages of great Jewish jokes. Real classics. The play is a work in progress. I've showcased it to a few backers and everyone seems pretty excited about it."

Tickets for *Don't Get Me Started* can be purchased from the T.O. TIX booth at Yonge and Dundas or on line at totix.ca. For more information call 416-535-4556.

Arts & Travel

Torontonian compiled Israeli music CD for British label

By SHLOMO SCHWARTZBERG
Special to The C/JN

A British record label saluting the music of Israel? If that sounds far-fetched, in light of the current anti-Israel climate in Europe, it's not, as I discovered last year when I came across *The Rough Guide to the Music of Israel* (2006). Even more interesting, Dan Rosenberg, the compiler of this CD, and many others in the Rough Guide series, just happens to be a Torontonians.

The Rough Guide CDs, which are put out by World Music Network, are dedicated to the promotion of the music of various countries and genres from around the world. To date, since the first Rough Guide disc came out in 1994, there have been more than 150 record releases, encompassing everything from the music of Tanzania, Peru, Hawaii and Canada, among many other countries and regions, to explorations of musical genres and sub-genres such as soca, fado, Chicago blues, bhangra and klezmer and everything in between.

The discs, which usually mix the tunes of established artists, up-and-coming stars and musicians not known outside of their own countries are rightfully considered the cream of the compilation crop in the incredibly multi-faceted world-music musical scene. And the American – born Rosenberg, who moved to Toronto in 2001 when his wife, Anna Shternshis, accepted a teaching post at the University of Toronto – has had a lot to do with the Rough Guides' success and acclaimed reputation.

"When I said let's do Israel," Rosenberg says, "there was a little gulp at the other end of the [phone] line, but I explained about the music that's there and essentially, too, that this isn't going to be a CD of Meir Kahane [founder of the New York-based Jewish Defense League] supporters."

Elaborating on that provocative comment, he explains, "Well, you have to do that because that's the attitude [about Israel] there. [But] it didn't take much selling because Phil Stanton, the guy who runs the label, he knows Chava Alberstein and a number of the other artists [in Israel]."

(The Rough Guides have also featured Israeli musicians on other discs such as the recent *Planet Rock* and Volumes 1 and 3 of their World Music series.)

The Israeli CD that the 40-year-old Rosenberg put together features 14 artists, including longtime stars such as Alberstein, the late Ofra Haza and Arik Einstein, as well as hot newer acts such as Idan Raichel's Project and Tea Packs. Not coincidentally, I suspect, Putumayo World Music, the other significant world music label, put out their own 12-track Israeli disc in 2007; it's a testament to the incredible richness and diversity of the Israeli music scene that the two CDs only had two performers, Idan Raichel and Tea Packs, in

common.

Rosenberg is especially proud of his perspicacity in choosing to highlight songwriter/ keyboardist Idan Raichel on the disc before Raichel gained an international following with his Ethiopian-influenced debut album, *Idan Raichel's Project*. "Nobody had ever heard of him [outside of Israel]," Rosenberg says.

And sometimes luck, as well as musical knowledge, plays a part in making a compiler like Rosenberg, who typically spends about a year creating a disc, look good. "When I put together *The Rough Guide to Bluegrass*,"



Dan Rosenberg

says Rosenberg, "I included many of my favourite artists like Alison Krauss, Ralph Stanley, Rhonda Vincent and others. As it turned out, my compilation hit stores days before [the Coen brothers' movie] *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* was released in theatres [in 2000]."

Referring to the soundtrack of the film, he points out that "both CDs happened to feature many of the same artists. So what I should be doing," he says with a laugh, "is encouraging the Coen brothers to do a movie full of music from Israel, Venezuela or Belize."

Rosenberg, who majored in molecular biology and worked for a biotech software company before finding his true calling, does express some frustration in having to reduce the music of any particular country, such as Canada, to just one disc. "I kind of wish these could be two- to three-disc sets but the market being what it is, nobody wants to pay thirtysomething dollars [for a CD]," he says.

**'When I said
let's do Israel,'
Rosenberg says,
'there was
a little gulp
at the other end
of the [phone] line'**

He did get to do a double disc in 2003, for Rounder Records, titled *The Hidden Gate: Jewish Music From Around the World*, dividing the compilation, roughly, into Ashkenazi and Sephardi, and other non-Ashkenazi music.

Next up for Rosenberg in 2008 are two more Rough Guides on klezmer music (he wasn't involved with the excellent 2001 *Rough Guide to Klezmer*). *The Rough Guide to the Klezmer Revival* "will feature a number of Russian artists who are involved in the klezmer revival in Europe, as well as artists here leading the revival in North America," he says. It will showcase "artists that fuse jazz, hip hop, bluegrass and a variety of other styles with klezmer." He's also preparing

Rough Guide discs on Romanian, Hungarian and Russian Gypsy music.

And while the world-music record scene isn't quite as vibrant as it was in its heyday in the '90s – "there were more music people in the business than there are now just because economically the record business is not what it used to be" – his is still a dream job, Rosenberg says. Though with two kids to help raise, he can't afford to go to different countries and personally research his CDs as he used to do.

"It's loads and loads of fun [but] there's times you wish you had more hours in the day."

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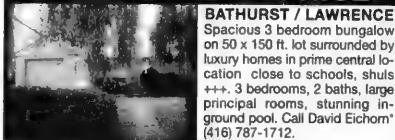
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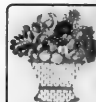
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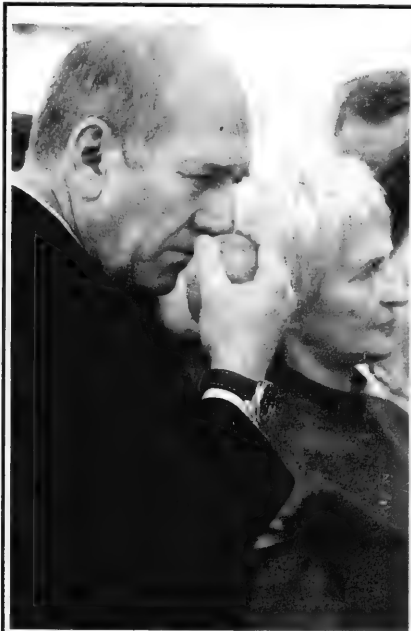
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Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert is curious about a new fruit. He and his wife Aliza last week visited the Vulcani Agricultural Research Institute in Beit Dagan where they were presented with a variety of exotic fruit and vegetables from the Far East and South America that are now also growing in Israel.

[Israel Sun photo]

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Prolific scorer 'Chick' Zamick starred in England

By HARVEY ROSEN
Special to The CJN

WINNIPEG — The province of Manitoba can lay claim to a number of former National Hockey League stars such as the Chicago Blackhawks' Bill Mosienko; the Boston Bruins' Tom Johnson; Andy Bathgate of the N.Y. Rangers; Terry Sawchuk of the Detroit Red Wings; and Toronto Maple Leafs' Bill Juzda and Bill Ezinicki.

All of the aforementioned, of course, gained prominence because they rose to stardom in the best hockey league in the world. One other lesser-known skater from the prairies however, a Jewish Manitoban who died this past fall, took his act overseas and became a household name, if not a legend, in Britain.

The man in question, Victor "Chick" Zamick, 81, died on October 8, 2007 in London, England. Jewish folk who grew up in Winnipeg's north-end were quite familiar with the Zamick clan.

As the story goes, all the kids were called "Chick" because there were twelve Chiclets in a package of chewing gum and there were a



Chick Zamick fights for the puck in this vintage photo from his playing days with Britain's Nottingham Panthers.

similar number of offspring in the family whose parents came originally from Ukraine. Many of them excelled in sports, whether it was hockey, football, track and field, softball, soccer, box-

ing, gymnastics or baseball.

Victor, a member of the Manitoba Hockey Hall of Fame since 1995, became the most well known athlete of the family. The Winnipeg-born centre, who started playing hockey at age 15, spent two seasons in the Manitoba Junior Hockey League, mainly with the Winnipeg Monarchs, and then went east to play with the St. Catherine Teepees of the (Junior 'A') Ontario Hockey Association. He also earned a tryout with the American Hockey League (AHL) Cleveland Barons.

It was in 1947 that Alex Archer, who was born in West Ham, London but moved to Winnipeg when he was three, encouraged and recruited young Victor to join him abroad. Archer was already enjoying a successful hockey career across the pond.

Being only five-foot-eight and 175 lbs., Zamick saw little future for himself as a small man in the rough and tough game of Canadian hockey. He made his way to England where he starred primarily with the Nottingham Panthers, now of the British Elite League.

The numbers the diminutive speedster compiled in Jolly Old England would make any coach salivate. He won seven scoring titles, compiling 778 career goals with the Panthers while adding 645 assists in 624 games. He made the first all-star team seven times and the second team three times. Zamick is a member of the British Hockey Hall of Fame.

In his best season, his second last with Nottingham in 1954-55, Zamick scored 94 goals

and added 75 assists in just 62 games.

Zamick was known in some circles as the Gordie Howe of British hockey; others compared him with Rocket Richard.

Bob Goring, a Manitoban who is the father of one-time NHL star Butch Goring and who played in the British League around the same time as Victor, confirmed that Chick was indeed a legitimate talent. He said Zamick's diminutive stature didn't put him at a disadvantage, as his skating speed plus the fact he was extremely elusive made him hard to check.

In 1958 Zamick took a coaching position in Geneva, Switzerland that lasted three years. Afterwards, he returned to play a number of games with the Wembley Lions. After he retired from hockey, he opened several businesses, including a dry cleaner, sauna and squash courts.

Zamick is survived by his wife Vera, four children, and six grandchildren.

POST PATTERN:

- HC Lausanne of the Elite Swiss League now has a pair of Jewish skaters who played last season in the AHL. Cory Pecker, a one-time Manitoba Moose forward who played with the Binghamton Senators in the 2006-07 campaign, has recently joined former Grand Rapids forward Eric Himelfarb. Both players played junior hockey in the Ontario Hockey League, where they were prolific scorers who never shied away from the rough stuff. They have good speed and were sixth-round NHL draft picks: Himelfarb by Les Canadiens and Pecker by the Flames.

- Left winger Adam Henrich, a 2002 second round selection of Tampa Bay, has been promoted from the East Coast Hockey League where he was scoring up a storm with 10 goals and 10 helpers in 12 games with the Wheeling Nailers. Now in Norfolk of the AHL he was recently voted "Player of the Week," recording four goals and an assist in four games.

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Don't say WOFFEN

Peer knocks out Safina but loses in tournament semi-final

CJN news services

Shahar Peer, Israel's top women's tennis player, lost in the semi-finals of Australia's Women's Hardcourts tennis tournament to Viktoriya Azarenka of Belarus.

The 18-year-old Azarenka, ranked 30, upset fifth seed Peer 6-4 6-2 to reach her third WTA Tour final.

Peer had saved five match points in beating defending champion Dinara Safina to get to the semi-finals. But the effort in getting past the Russian



Shahar Peer

took its toll on the Israeli and Azarenka took full advantage to win in 68 minutes.

Peer has not won a tournament in more than one and a half years.

She avenged last year's loss to Safina in the tournament's semi-finals by defeating the Russian player, ranked 15 in the world, 6-4, 1-6, 6-7 (10-8).

Azarenka reached the semi-finals after winning in three sets against the Czech Republic's Dominika Cibulkova in the quarter-finals.

Our divorce laws must be changed

By YONI GOLDSTEIN

The system of divorce as prescribed by Jewish law is fundamentally flawed. There is simply no other way to judge a set of rules that grants such overwhelming power to the male divorcé who must grant his former wife a *get*, a Jewish divorce, if she is to continue living a Jewish life of any significance.

Without a *get*, a divorced woman may not remarry a Jew in a religious ceremony, and any future children she gives birth to are automatically deemed Jewish outcasts. It is bad enough that Jewish law considers a fair balance of power unnecessary. What's worse is that the modern-day rabbinic arbiters have not recognized the need to overturn the stance of our earliest lawmakers on this issue.

There can be no alternate opinion on the subject of Jewish divorce laws. Even those who would argue that Jewish law was never meant to be "feminist," that there is a paternalistic foundation to God's Torah, have no grounds to argue in favour of the status quo. The granting of a *get* isn't about empowering females, it is, simply, about protecting one's basic human rights.

Considering how unwilling Jewish lawmakers have been to change the laws of divorce, many people will be celebrating the Supreme Court of Canada's recent ruling in favour of Stephanie Bruker, a Jewish woman from Montreal who sued her husband for damages because he had refused to give her a *get* in the 15 years after their 1980 civil divorce. Previously, the Quebec Court of Appeal had decided it had no jurisdiction over a case whose essential nature was based on a separate set of religious laws. But the Supreme Court reversed that decision, awarding Bruker \$47,500 in damages at the end of December.

Long-suffering ex-wives and champions of balancing the powers of the sexes in Jewish law are no doubt celebrating this

ruling. I don't think there's any reason to consider the Bruker case a victory. Consider this: the court's decision doesn't mean that Jewish divorce laws have been altered, only that the risk of facing a lawsuit might force those few

odious men to reconsider if they would otherwise withhold a *get* from their ex-wives without fear of punishment. But the basic weakness of the Jewish law remains exposed.

If anything, the Bruker ruling should cause us all to lower our heads in shame. We – Judaism – lost. We knew there was a problem and yet did nothing to fix it. And to make things worse, lawmakers outside of our community were forced to use their rules to fix our rules. If laws of Jewish divorce are deplorable, we are all the more so for allowing them to stand, even as an outside force threatened to change the rules unilaterally.

Worse still, I fear we may look back on the Supreme Court's ruling on the *get* as the moment when we lost our ability to self-govern based on our own set of rules. Now that the court has seen fit to wade into religious waters, what, for example, will happen when someone claims that ritual circumcision constitutes a cruel punishment?

And all this because we were too weak, too pathetic, to fix our own problems, too afraid of change, even when we knew that change was desperately necessary.

The Supreme Court decision should be a wake-up call to all Jews – rabbis and laypeople alike – to act immediately to deal with the agunah issue. The shame of inaction can now never be undone. Those in charge of our system of laws must have the courage to institute change, even at the expense of tradition and written law, to emancipate Jewish women from the tyranny of our divorce system. The rest of us must show unflinching resolve to force our leaders to make those changes – not only to keep the civil courts out of our traditions, but for the sake of those Jewish women whom we continue to fail.



New Views

TANGY BROCCOLI SALAD

Ingredients

Dressing:

- 3/4 c. mayonnaise or Miracle Whip
- 2 tbsp. sugar
- 2 tbsp. white vinegar

- 2 bunches broccoli, cut into florets
- 1 small red onion, chopped
- 2 c. red grapes
- 1/4 c. unsalted sunflower seeds

Directions

Wisk together mayonnaise, sugar and vinegar in large bowl. Prepare remaining ingredients in salad bowl. Pour dressing over salad and garnish with a few more sunflower seeds.

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TORONTO, FRIDAY, JANUARY 10, 1908—SIXTEEN PAGES



Some Personages Involved in the Troubles of the Hebrew Congregation of B'Nai Abraham Brought Before Judge Winchester in the Court of General Sessions.

By BILL GLADSTONE

TROUBLE AT B'NAI ABRAHAM: It has been exactly a century since a bitter dispute at Toronto's old B'nei Abraham congregation spilled onto the front page of the *Toronto Daily Star*, as drawn by artist C. W. Jefferys in this January 1908 illustration. When the congregation split into two factions, both claimed the Torah scroll as their own. Faced with a problem that might have stymied Solomon, the judge locked the scroll in a vault at City Hall for a month while determining its rightful owners.

"Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God"

-Book of Ruth (Judaism's first convert)

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

Last week, I wrote Part I of "And Then I Became a Jew," based on an interview I conducted with Bruce Cowley, a Torontonion who converted to Judaism from Baptism. "Conversion," Bruce said, "is not often discussed openly. I hope this article makes people think and consider what it means to make the choice of becoming a Jew." I concur. Here is more of what Bruce told me.

How do other Jews treat me? Jews are always interested in my choice to become a Jew. We are self-reflective. We're always questioning our existence.

I'm very comfortable with the questioning. I don't think I've ever had a negative reaction from a Jew or a non-Jew about convert-



URBAN WRITER

ing. The most uncomfortable questions I have been asked are: "Do you feel Jewish?" or "Are you really Jewish?" These are legitimate questions.

What's the experience of the Jewish experience. We hold a unique place in the world, and it's natural for Jews to ask.

I liked the inherent debate within Judaism that encourages questioning the existence of God and the behaviour of people.

Of course I feel Jewish. Being Jewish is being vibrant. To be Jewish reminds me more often that I am part of the human race. In Judaism, the focus is on where we are today, not in the future world; it's on our relationships with other people and the issues of everyday life.

It's feeling your place in the world and seeing what other human beings are up to.

Within Judaism there is an obligation to help our fellow human beings. I don't know

if people understand the importance of giving. What's good about it is that you're putting yourself out there – there is some discomfort, so it's got to be good.

My concept of Jesus? Well, my beliefs were a little underdeveloped, and you must remember I was under the influence of my parents. My belief in Jesus as my saviour was never based on debate. Debate was not encouraged around the issue. I therefore never felt free enough to embrace that belief. It was simply expected that I would.

I have three children, two boys and a girl. They tease me sometimes over how I might mispronounce a Hebrew word. But my "ch" is good.

I would be a total hypocrite if I said I don't want my kids to marry non-Jews, but the truth is I want them to marry Jews.

I converted through the Conservative movement. An Orthodox rabbi once suggested I convert through Orthodoxy. My response

was that I don't need to. I'm Jewish. The rabbi responded: "Don't think of it as converting again. Think of it as being on an airplane. I want to move you from economy up to business class."

I didn't want to convert to simply keep my future in-laws happy. It had to feel good to me.

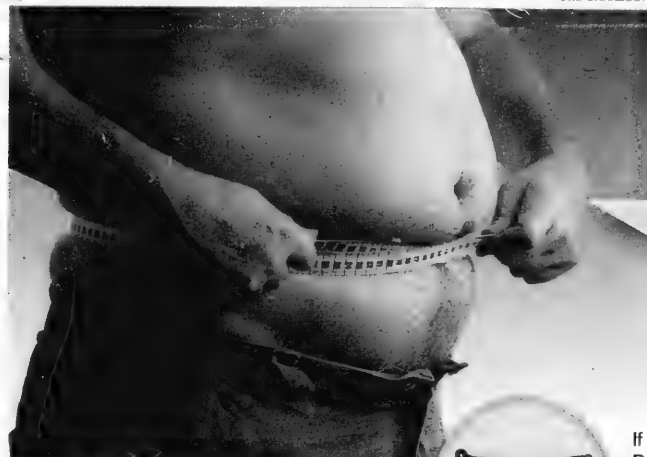
We know people who converted for marriage, and some of them are good Jews. I know someone else who said she could no longer give up certain things and did not feel comfortable calling herself a Jew anymore. The children are still raised as Jews.

I'm reminded every day how lucky I am to be Jewish. It offers me more opportunities to reflect on my behaviour and my status as a human being. When I wasn't Jewish, I didn't think about these things as often.

Being Jewish gives me more reason to keep my eyes open. It's part of being a Jew.

Please discuss this with my blog: <http://avrumrosensweigideas.blogspot.com> or e-mail me at avrum@veahavta.org.

And then I became a Jew – Part 2



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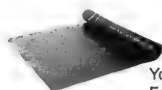
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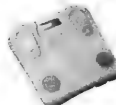
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Israeli use of force against Iran still an option

CANADA

MDA Chapter Opens

VANCOUVER — A new branch of Canadian Magen David Adom for Israel (CMDA) has opened in Vancouver, making it the fifth city in Canada with a chapter, along with Montreal, Toronto, Edmonton and Calgary. Chair Richard Wenner told the *Jewish Independent* that the chapter aims to raise more than \$100,000 to buy a new ambulance for Magen David Adom, Israel's equivalent to

the Red Cross, in time for Israel's 60th birthday in May.

Asper Bio Coming

TORONTO — Veteran Canadian journalist Peter C. Newman will write a book about the late Winnipeg businessman Izzy Asper, publisher HarperCollins announced last week. The unauthorized biography of Asper, the philanthropist and founder of CanWest Global Communications who died in 2003 at 71, will be published next fall. "Newman will be

writing with the assistance of, but not the approval of, the Asper family," HarperCollins said.

CJC Mourns Lawyer

VANCOUVER — Canadian Jewish Congress, Pacific region, paid tribute last week to one of their most officers, lawyer Marvin Stark, a professor emeritus of business at Simon Fraser University, who died Jan. 8 in Vancouver. Stark, a member of CJC Pacific region's officers committee for many years and vice-chair of its board of directors from 1992 to 1995, will be remembered "for his significant contributions to public policy issues and, in particular, aboriginal justice. He will be greatly missed," the CJC said in a statement.

New Kosher Vitamins

MONTREAL — Pregnant women who keep kosher and want prenatal multivitamins with iron and calcium that are less likely to upset their stomachs now have a new option. Duchesnay, a Laval, Que., pharmaceutical firm, announced last week that its prescription-based PregVit Folic 5 and PregVit vitamins are now certified by the Toronto-based Kashruth Council of Canada and bear its COR hechsher. The vitamins have also been similarly certified as halal by

Don't Court 'Israel Lobby,' Candidates Told

LOS ANGELES — U.S. presidential candidates aren't helping Israel by offering unconditional support, the authors of a controversial book on the Israel lobby say.

John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, who wrote *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*, wrote in the *Los Angeles Times* that the candidates' devotion to Israel, including support for more than \$3 billion in annual foreign aid, and their seeming inability to criticize the Jewish state is out of fear of losing the support of the "Israel lobby."

"Such pandering is hardly surprising, because contenders for high office routinely court special interest groups, and Israel's staunchest supporters — the Israel lobby, as we have termed it — expect it," they wrote in the *Times*. "Politicians do not want to offend Jewish Americans or 'Christian Zionists,' two groups that are deeply engaged in the political process."

Mearsheimer and Walt criticized all the candidates in the 2008 race of bidding to be Israel's best friend.

"These candidates, however, are no friends of Israel," they said. "They are facilitating its pursuit of self-destructive policies that no true friend would favour."

the Islamic Society of North America, the company said.

Jews Closely Knit

VANCOUVER — Jews are the most closely knit ethnic group in the Vancouver area, a new federal report says. *Multiculturalism on the Ground*, a Heritage Canada study that looks at where cultural groups settle in major cities, found Jews live in a tight cluster on Vancouver's west side, which it attributed to the fact many Jews want to be close to shuls, CBC News reported. The second-most-concentrated group are Iranians, located in the city's

North Shore area. Chinese people, the area's largest group, are fourth on the list.

WORLD

Yeshiva Head Dies

NEW YORK — Thousands attended the Jan. 7 funeral of the longtime head of the Mir Yeshiva in Brooklyn, N.Y. Rabbi Shmuel Berenbaum, who was rosh yeshiva for more than 50 years, died Jan. 6 at 87 of cancer. The native of Poland studied at the yeshiva in Mir before World War II. He fled the Nazis and later moved to the United States.

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New federation president focuses on education costs

**Organization
has evolved from
previous generation,
says Koschitzky**

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

David Koschitzky says he thinks it's important for people to recognize that UJA Federation of Greater Toronto is "not their father's federation."

The organization – of which Koschitzky became president in late November – has evolved, he said in a recent interview. UJA Federation is the umbrella and main funder for Toronto-area Jewish agencies through its annual UJA campaign, which also funds overseas Jewish needs.

Koschitzky, 49, thinks a lot of people see

the federation "as a gigantic organization with lots of money – like the Jewish government."

But that is "a poor perception," he said in a recent interview. One reason is that the federation does not tax community members, which means it does not have the ability to decide how much money will be available, he explained.

Koschitzky, who was born in Calgary and moved to Toronto with his family after Grade 6, sees the federation as "an old-style switchboard operator" who connects "donors who want to give money to specific causes, with recognized agencies."

In Koschitzky's first speech as federation president, he said his number 1 priority would be "to find solutions so that the middle class will not be squeezed out of the ability to provide their children a Jewish education."



David Koschitzky

Ultimately, he said, "the long-term solution is government funding." Despite the results of October's provincial election in Ontario, when the Progressive Conservatives under leader John Tory were trounced for their support of the idea, Koschitzky has not given up.

"We're the only province in Canada that has a major Jewish population that doesn't have funding," said Koschitzky, a father of five who first became involved in his children's day school and in federation while living in Chicago from 1983 to 1995.

"It's happened in every other province. I believe it has to happen here."

"Do I think it's possible? When women went to get the vote the first time, they were defeated... Bottom line: they got the vote."

In the meantime, options for lowering the cost of education include decreasing teach-

ers' salaries – which he is "firmly against" – and maintaining or increasing class size, Koschitzky said. He added that he would "challenge anyone" who believes there is much waste in the system.

As well, the federation recently announced \$2 million in additional annual funding for elementary schools that provide tuition subsidies. It is also planning to introduce a \$100-million endowment fund that would provide an estimated \$5 million annually for education.

However, Koschitzky noted, "it will not meet the needs of giving every Jewish child an education."

"The average family is giving up vacations, cars, and standards of life that other people at their level expect."

Koschitzky said that there are also sacrifices on the part of the federation. "We have to put a handle on costs. We don't have the luxury of funding every type of school people would like. [Every] school has to show economic feasibility."

Continued on page 20

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Each year, for the past three years around this time, *The CJN* has publicized some of the key findings of the annual report of the Jewish People Policy Planning Institute (JPPPI).

Based in Jerusalem, the institute is an independent think-tank whose mission "is to help assure a thriving future for the Jewish people and Judaism by engaging in professional strategic thinking and planning on short and long-term issues of primary concern to the Jewish people, with special attention to critical choices that have a significant impact on the future... based on deep commitment to the future of the Jewish people with Israel as its core state."

The very long and large language of the mission statement attests to the high-minded conviction and seriousness of purpose with which the thinkers of the institute apply themselves. They are dedicated, simply and entirely, to the well-being and betterment of the Jewish people "in all their habitations," to borrow a biblical reference.

The scholars at the institute are a distinguished group. Far-seeing Prof. Yehzekel Dror is the founding president of JPPPI. Former U.S. ambassador Dennis Ross is chairman of the institute's board and renowned journalist Avinoam Bar-Yosef is its managing director.

The members of the board, among whom is Mount Royal MP Irwin Cotler, include some of the most recognized intellectual and activists in the wide Jewish world, all experienced in government, academia, the private sector and Jewish communal life.

The JPPPI's annual report is a much-anticipated multiple-use document. It provides a macro summary of the state of the Jewish world and a micro snapshot of its constituent communities.

It also identifies issues, problems, challenges and opportunities that they suggest should appear on a policy-making agenda of communal organiza-

Greater Toronto Area

Thinking of the Jewish future

tions around the world.

This year's report is somewhat of a departure from previous years. As Ross explains in his foreword, "[T]his year's assessment differs from its predecessors in several respects. First, it focuses heavily on the effect of the 2006 war in Lebanon not only on Israel, but also on the largest Jewish community outside of Israel, the Jewish community in the United States. Second, rather than providing an

overview of the changing status of different Jewish communities internationally, this year's assessment analyzes a number of societal aspects and developments in leading Diaspora communities and in Israel. And third, by out-

lining socio-economic, migration, family and religious patterns, it offers insight into cultural directions and trends among the Jewish people."

This week and next, I will highlight some of the key observations that appear in the *JPPPI Annual Assessment 2007: Social Aspects*.

The underlying assumption of the report, as explained at the outset by Prof. Chaim I. Waxman, Senior Fellow at JPPPI, the project head of the report (and a contributor to the 5767 Rosh Hashanah supplement in *The CJN*) is the "perception that the notion of the Jewish people comprised of Jewish communities around the world with a core state in Israel is one which shows signs of weakening and... is increasingly expressed by the more deeply affiliated members of organized Jewish communities as well as by some Israeli leaders."

It soon becomes apparent that the

sense of a weakening notion of a worldwide, but Israel-centric, Jewish people is, in truth, a sense of the weakening connection between the Jews of the United States and the State of Israel. Hence, Waxman explains, "this year's assessment looks at some societal aspects of the largest Diaspora Jewish community, with some attention also on other Diaspora communities." (my emphasis)

On page 12 of this issue, we have published the chart from the report that depicts "selected indicators of world Jewry." In effect, it is as up-to-date as possible a snapshot of the worldwide Jewish community.

A number of facts immediately leap off the page.

- The population of world Jewry hovers simply at a figure just barely more than 13 million. It will rise very slowly past that figure even after more than a decade. In fact, the number of Jews in the United States will decline over the same period of time. The number of Jews in Canada will increase but minimally.
- Only three Jewish communities are expected to experience an increase in population by the year 2020: Israel, Canada and Mexico. (And Asia, but by a minimal projection of 1,000.)
- Slightly more than a third of American Jewry have ever visited Israel, while nearly two-thirds of Canadian Jewry have travelled there.

Next week I will tease out some of the Diaspora societal issues that concern the writers of the report.

The report can be viewed on the JPPPI website.

—MBD

SeeJN



'WE MUST REMEMBER'

Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier visited Yad Vashem's Hall of Names on Monday, accompanied by David Metzler, director of the international relations division's English desk at Yad Vashem. In the guest book at the end of his visit, Bernier wrote: "We must remember."

[Yossi Ben David/Yad Vashem photo]

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B'nai Brith Canada moves to oust dissidents

Members to fight proposed expulsions

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

B'nai Brith Canada (BBC) will hold disciplinary hearings on the proposed expulsions of more than a dozen members – including one who has been part of the organization for 68 years – for conduct it says is “unbecoming a member of BBC and contrary to the best interests of our organization.”

Notices were mailed to the members in late November 2007 indicating that an executive committee had determined

their membership in the fraternal organization will end, but leaving open an appeal to a disciplinary committee that will convene at 6:30 p.m. on Jan. 21 at BBC's Toronto office at 15 Hove St.

Some of the members, including Harvey Crestohl, a past BBC president, and Henry Gimpel, past chair of the Toronto regional co-ordinating committee – as well as Lloyd Lindsay and 93-year-old Lou Ronson, the organization's longest living member – have retained lawyer Rochelle Cantor to represent them.

In the past, they have raised concerns over corporate gov-

ernance at BBC, which they claim suffered from a lack of transparency and centralized control of decision-making, as well as a failure to make available audited financial statements at several annual general meetings (AGMs) and the purported passage of a new constitution that they contend was defeated by the members at the 2005 AGM.

Most of the members contacted by *The CJN* indicated they would contest the removal, but one of them, former national president Morley Wolfe, has resigned over BBC's treatment of Ronson, its longest serving member.

Wolfe said he was disgusted that BBC would move to strip Ronson of his membership, given that he was instrumental in developing its League for Human Rights and was named one of B'nai Brith's most outstanding 150 volunteers in its history.

In a letter to BBC, Wolfe called the proposed expulsion of Ronson “shameful and intolerable.”

“To commit this distinguished gentleman to the ordeal of expulsion in his 93rd year, while he is still mourning the recent death of his wife, is not only mean-spirited but continues to reflect the lack of respect and concern BBC has for its longest-serving members,” Wolfe wrote.

Crestohl, a lawyer, was scathing in his denunciation of the expulsion attempt, saying it was little more than a bid by BBC's head office to stifle legitimate concerns. “They want to go after us so they can intimidate the rest into keeping quiet,” he said.

Identical letters sent to Lindsay and Gimpel, signed by Rochelle Wilner, chair of BBC's disciplinary committee, state the reason for expulsion. She indicated that the committee “has received a complaint regarding your conduct as part of a group calling itself ‘Concerned Members of BBC (CMOBBC).’”

“The complaint charges that your conduct is unbecoming a member of BBC and contrary to the best interests of our organization. The remedy sought is an order of expulsion.”

Attached to the letters was a copy of a resolution passed by BBC's executive committee. The resolution alleges that the CMOBBC circulated documents at the June 11, 2006, annual general meeting (AGM) regarding matters that were before a B'nai Brith International (BBI) court of appeal, which was hearing a case alleging that BBC had improperly adopted the new constitution. The documents, the allegation states, “contained serious and unsubstantiated allegations against the organization and leadership.”

The executive committee further alleges that before and after a ruling was rendered by the appeal court, CMOBBC circulated e-mails that included “defamatory allegations of wrongdoing, both financial and otherwise.”

The executive committee noted that the BBI appeal court issued a gag order “requiring that the parties not discuss this appeal outside this forum.” It also said the conduct of those subject to expulsion has been “harmful to the organization's best interests and contrary to its mission and the standard of behaviour required of its members.”

Frank Dimant, BBC's national executive vice-president, said members' concerns over corporate governance were addressed (on July 20, 2007) by BBI's court of appeal – a forum chosen by the dissidents. “We do comply with all the necessary items for a corporation, and, quite frankly, I find it strange that members who went through the process of asking BBI court to rule on it” are unhappy with the decision. “It's the highest court on it. That's the end of the matter.”



Morley Wolfe

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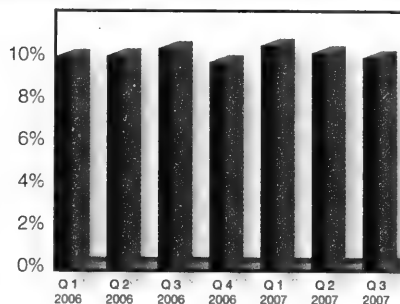
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The start of a new year is often a time for reflection and review. Looking back over 2007, it's impossible to not feel proud of the outstanding achievements of the Romspen Mortgage Investment Fund (RMIF).

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Vision or mirage?

It was certainly unexpected, and perhaps unprecedented. At the end of his official business in Ramallah last Thursday with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, visiting U.S. president George W. Bush held a special, unplanned press conference at the fabled King David Hotel in Jerusalem.

His language was unusually blunt.

"The point of departure for permanent status negotiations to realize this vision [two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security] seems clear: There should be an end to the occupation that began in 1967. The agreement must establish Palestine as a homeland for the Palestinian people, just as Israel is a homeland for the Jewish people. These negotiations must ensure that Israel has secure, recognized, and defensible borders. And they must ensure that the state of Palestine is viable, contiguous, sovereign, and independent."

The president minced no words, enunciating beliefs that pleased and displeased both sides. (See the text of Bush's statement on the Perspectives page.)

He spoke with a harsh resolve that evinced his determination to help broker a peace agreement between the Israelis and the Palestinians. He is to be commended for his resolve, and, we believe, his sincerity, too, though we understand there are many more factors underlying American policy than concern alone for Israel's future.

"The establishment of the state of Palestine is long overdue," the president said. "The Palestinian people deserve it."

Not too many people in Israel would disagree with the president's propositions. But they would quickly add that the establishment of the state of Palestine has been thwarted by Palestinian leaders who, countless times over the past eight decades, have betrayed their own people by constantly striving to destroy the Jewish state rather than build a Palestinian one.

The president has urged immediate negotiations between Israeli and Palestinian leaders. He is even optimistic that "the peace agreement should happen, and can happen, by the end of this year."

But the president's optimism hardly seems justified.

Setting aside the difficult, religiously charged issue of Jerusalem, the president is ignoring the proverbial gigantic elephant in the room: Hamas.

Of course, he said what needed to be said regarding terrorism: "Security is fundamental. No agreement and no Palestinian state will be born of terror. I reaffirm America's steadfast commitment to Israel's security."

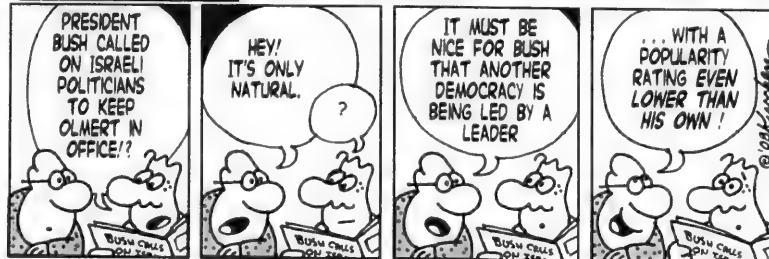
But what does that mean in an actual, practical sense? Hamas is sworn to the elimination of a Jewish state. Abbas has not, likely cannot and apparently will not remove Hamas from the Palestinian picture. The vision of "two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security" is doomed to be nothing more than a delusional mirage on a bloody horizon as long as Hamas – and all that it represents – remains entrenched as part of the Palestinian society and cultural ethos.

25 years ago in The CJN

To mark the 35th birthday of Soviet prisoner of conscience Anatoly (now Natan) Scharansky, Jewish groups – including Canadian Jewish Congress, the Canadian Zionist Federation and B'nai Brith – organized a day of protest in front of the Ontario Legislature and the Soviet consulate in Montreal. There was a two-hour fast at noon.

Editorials & Letters

Dry Bones



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From a former She'arim student (1)

When I attended Associated Hebrew School, it was discovered that I had a learning disability. The staff at Associated and my parents felt that the only solution would be for me to enrol at She'arim Hebrew Day School ("She'arim parents fear school will close if funding ends," *CJN*, Dec. 20). I completed grades 6 and 7 in 1988 and 1989 at She'arim. I was retrained how to learn using cutting-edge strategies that are not used at mainstream schools.

It is often difficult for teachers to identify students who might require a "different" type of instruction in a large class. The She'arim staff was amazing at catering to my personal needs and helping me grow. They helped me to strengthen my ability to learn and to retain information being communicated to me. I returned to the mainstream school system and was very successful in keeping up with the rest of the students. I then attended the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto and graduated with the rest of my classmates.

I have a bachelor of arts degree in psychology from York University and a diploma in human resource management from the Seneca College Business School, and I am now a sales manager at IBM Canada. I have always felt that if it were not for those two years at She'arim, I might not have been able to reach my current level of success.

I would hope that if my one-year-old daughter grows up with similar challenges that she would have the same opportunities available to her as I had. I urge the Toronto community and Mercar (formerly the Board of Jewish Education) to take action to ensure She'arim receives the funding it requires. Our children's future education and future careers might depend on it.

Michael Weintraub
Toronto

From a former She'arim student (2)

Before I was enrolled at She'arim Hebrew Day School, I was having academic difficulty ("She'arim parents fear school will close if funding ends," *CJN*, Dec. 20). Taking me out of my classroom for remedial tutoring didn't accomplish much other than demoralize me and single me out from my peers. My parents hired tutors for me, but that didn't help, either. My parents asked administrators at the school I was attending for advice, and they were told that I should stay in the school, struggling, and hopefully be able to pull off a pass. At She'arim, however, they saw that I had potential, and in only a little while, I began to see the same thing.

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman,
Ehud Goldwasser, Guy Hever,
Yehuda Katz, Eldad Regev, Gilad Shalit

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At She'arim, my classmates and I received the individual attention we needed. The teachers at She'arim introduced me to new ways to study and new ways to think. After two years at She'arim, I was accepted in a challenging high school. In my final year, I achieved an average of above 90 per cent in my program, which included three math courses and two science courses – the very subjects that I was failing before attending She'arim. At my high school graduation, I received an award for the highest grades in sciences.

I was offered scholarships at several universities. I chose to study sciences at York University, but after one year, I was accepted into the chiropody program at the Michener Institute for Applied Health Sciences. When I graduated, I received a letter from the Michener Institute congratulating me – I had the highest grade point average in my class.

Currently, I operate a business providing chiropody services to nursing and retirement

homes.

Shaul Soroka
Toronto

People search

I have received two old photographs taken in Burzenin, Poland. One picture shows three girls in a garden, one of whom has a Star of David on her dress. Her last name was Galbart. The photograph was reportedly taken during the early stages of the German Nazi occupation of Poland. Ms. Galbart lived on Burzenin's main street, Koscielna. The other picture, an aerial view of Burzenin, includes the Galbarts' house, a white-walled building on the right side of the street. A Jewish family by the name of Majloch lived next door to the Galbarts.

Ms. Galbart survived the war and later lived in Toronto. She would be about 80 years old now. If you have any information about her or any relatives who might want to have these photographs, please let me know.

Peter Jassem

Toronto
416-775-1572
pjassem@rogers.com

Yiddish dance

The Yiddish Dance Action Network is a non-profit association of musicians, dancers, ethnographers and others who strive to document and continue the traditions of Yiddish dance.

If you have information about the dances that you would like to share with the network, please contact me.

Helen Winkler
Toronto
416-912-7112
winklerh@hotmail.com

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Perspectives

Bush delivers blunt message to Israel

'Establishment of the state of Palestine is long overdue'

By RON KAMPEAS
JTA

The thorny question of Israel's West Bank settlements dogged U.S. President Bush's overarching message during his eight-day tour of the Middle East: democracies must unite to confront terrorism.

In language that is unusually blunt, considering his warm relations with Israel, Bush made clear his frustration with Israel's failure so far to deal with outposts, or unauthorized new settlements.

"In terms of outposts, yeah, they ought to go," the Bush said, standing alongside Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert last Wednesday after a day of meetings.

"Look, I mean, we've been talking about it for four years. The agreement was, get rid of outposts, illegal outposts, and they ought to go."

In response, settlers said they would expand two existing outposts and pledged to add another. The president was able to view outposts last Thursday on his way to talks with the Palestinian Authority. One, near Beit El, was fronted by a sign – in place long before the Bush visit – that stated: "We have returned to our home established 3,800 years ago."

Bush needs progress in Israeli-Palestinian peace to nudge forward his twin visions of democratizing the Middle East and diminishing the influence of Iranian theocrats. His sole speech in the region was to be made in Abu Dhabi Sunday, when he was to press his case for greater liberties in the region – in the emirate that faces Iran across the Persian Gulf.

For years Israel, pro-Israel groups and neo-conservatives have been telling Bush that promoting stability in the broader Middle East was not necessarily contingent on Israeli-Palestinian peace.

If he ever believed that message, it's clear he is now retreating from it. With just a year left in his presidency, he is eager for a legacy better

than the Iraq morass.

Israeli foreign ministry officials said they redelivered the message in meetings, telling Bush that nudging Arab states toward accommodating Israel was perhaps more achievable in the short term.

But Bush wants the outline of an agreement in hand before he leaves office.

Speaking last Thursday in Ramallah, standing alongside Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, Bush was unequivocal: Palestinian independence was not as intractable a goal as some would have it.

"Now, look, there are some in the world who don't believe in the universality of freedom," he said. "I understand that. They say, like, 'Freedom is OK for some of us, but maybe not all of us.' I understand it, but I reject it. I believe in the universality of freedom."

"I believe, deep in the soul of every man, woman and child on the face of this earth is the desire to live in a free society. And I also believe free societies yield peace. And, therefore, this notion of two states living side by side in peace is based upon the universality of freedom, and if given a chance, the Palestinian people will work for freedom."

Later in the day he reiterated that view, summarizing his two days of meetings with Israeli and Palestinian leaders.

"The establishment of the state of Palestine is long overdue," the U.S. leader said at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem. "A peace agreement should happen and can happen by

the end of this year."

Bush reiterated calls for the parties to adhere to the internationally sponsored "road map" peace process that he launched in 2003, calling on the Palestinians to stop terrorist attacks and create a secure environment for Israel. And he called on Israel to end settlement expansion and remove illegal outposts.

He said the parties must address all the core issues. On borders, he reiterated one of the principles of his 2004 letter to then-Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon, saying "any peace agreement will require mutual adjustment to the 1949 line." This was widely seen at the time as an acknowledgment that Israel would retain some of the areas beyond the 1967 borders.

At the same time, he said a Palestinian state must be contiguous.

Bush also said the Palestinian

refugee issue should be addressed by "new international mechanisms, including compensation."

Bush said the agreement "must establish Palestine as a homeland to the Palestinian people just as Israel is a homeland to the Jewish people."

Bush did not let the Palestinians off the hook during his visit. While in Ramallah with Abbas, the president said he understood why Israelis want to keep in place the roadblocks and checkpoints that frustrate Palestinian travel.

"I can understand why the Palestinians are frustrated driving through checkpoints," he said. "I can also understand that until confidence is

gained on both sides, why the Israelis would want there to be a sense of security. In other words, they don't want a state on their border from which attacks would be launched. I can understand that. Any reasonable person can understand that."

Abbas, standing beside Bush beneath portraits of himself and his late predecessor, Yasser Arafat, beamed – and understood.

"We are fully satisfied with the outcome that we reached through this visit of Mr. President George Bush," he said. "All the issues are in agreement. We are agreed on all topics. All topics are clear."

Bush also urged Israel to clear the way for a Palestinian security force.

"By any obvious measure, the Palestinian security forces are improving," he said at the news conference in the "Muqata," the PA headquarters that were levelled by Israel during the second Palestinian intifadah from 2000 to 2004 and rebuilt in part with U.S. assistance.

"My message to the Israelis is that they ought to help, not hinder, the modernization of a Palestinian security force," he said.

Israel has prevented PA security forces from receiving some equipment. It wants assurances that the forces is fully professional, noting the involvement in the past of some PA troops in attacks on Israel.

Bush's message on the outposts was a jarring moment in an Israel trip that has otherwise been a love fest between Bush and Olmert. The Israeli prime minister appeared so taken aback that he rushed to say – in Hebrew – how much he trusted Bush and how he would act soon on the settlement issue.

"Thank God I can conduct political negotiations with George Bush at my side as one of my partners," Olmert said, elevating the U.S. status from arbiter to peace partner. "Thank God we can conduct political negotiations when the largest and most important power in the world, and the most important for us, is headed by such an important friend of Israel."

'Occupation must end,' president says

Statement by U.S. President George W. Bush on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, at the King David Hotel, Jerusalem, Jan. 10.

Good afternoon. I'd like to, first, thank [Israeli] Prime Minister [Ehud] Olmert and [Palestinian Authority] President [Mahmoud Abbas] Abbas for their hospitality during my trip here to the Holy Land. We had very good meetings, and now is the time to make difficult choices.

I underscored to both Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas that progress needs to be made on four parallel tracks.

First, both sides need to fulfil their commitments under the road map. Second, the Palestinians need to build their economy and their political and security institutions. And to do that, they need the help of Israel, the region and the international community. Third, I reiterate my appreciation for the Arab League peace initiative, and I call upon the Arab countries to reach out to Israel, a step that is long overdue.

In addition to these three tracks, both sides

are getting down to the business of negotiating. I called upon both leaders to make sure their teams negotiate seriously, starting right now. I strongly supported the decision of the two leaders to continue their regular summit meetings, because they are the ones who can, and must, and – I am convinced – will lead.

I share with these two leaders the vision of two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. Both of these leaders believe that the outcome is in the interest of their peoples and are determined to arrive at a negotiated solution to achieve it.

The point of departure for permanent status negotiations to realize this vision seems clear: there should be an end to the occupation that began in 1967. The agreement must establish Palestine as a homeland for the Palestinian people, just as Israel is a homeland for the Jewish people. These negotiations must ensure that Israel has secure, recognized, and defensible borders. And they must ensure that the state of Palestine is viable, contiguous, sovereign, and

independent.

It is vital that each side understands that satisfying the other's fundamental objectives is key to a successful agreement. Security for Israel and viability for the Palestinian state are in the mutual interests of both parties.

Achieving an agreement will require painful political concessions by both sides. While territory is an issue for both parties to decide, I believe that any peace agreement between them will require mutually agreed adjustments to the armistice lines of 1949 to reflect current realities and to ensure that the Palestinian state is viable and contiguous. I believe we need to look to the establishment of a Palestinian state and new international mechanisms, including compensation, to resolve the refugee issue.

I reaffirm to each leader that implementation of any agreement is subject to implementation of the [internationally sponsored] "road map" [peace plan]. Neither party should undertake any activity that contravenes road map obligations or prejudices the final status negotiations.

On the Israeli side, that includes ending settlement expansion and removing unauthorized outposts. On the Palestinian side, that includes confronting terrorists and dismantling terrorist infrastructure.

I know Jerusalem is a tough issue. Both sides have deeply felt political and religious concerns. I fully understand that finding a solution to this issue will be one of the most difficult challenges on the road to peace, but that is the road we have chosen to walk.

Security is fundamental. No agreement and no Palestinian state will be born of terror. I reaffirm America's steadfast commitment to Israel's security.

The establishment of the state of Palestine is long overdue. The Palestinian people deserve it. And it will enhance the stability of the region, and it will contribute to the security of the people of Israel. The peace agreement should happen, and can happen, by the end of this year. I know each leader shares that important goal, and I am committed to doing all I can to achieve it.



U.S. President George W. Bush was met by Israel's Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, left, and President Shimon Peres upon his arrival last week. [Israelnet photo]

Opinions

Proud to be a fox

Are you a hedgehog or a fox?

The late political philosopher Isaiah Berlin divided thinkers into two categories: "hedgehogs" and "foxes." A hedgehog knows one dramatic way to engage its enemies: rolling into a ball and pointing its barbs outward. Similarly, "hedgehog" thinkers have one central idea around which they structure all their thought.

"Fox" thinkers, on the other hand, present multiple ideas in a less-than-unified fashion, like a fox, who employs multiple strategies to hunt prey.



Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz, in Montreal

The hedgehog and the fox are excellent metaphors for thinkers — there are thinkers with one big, central idea, and big thinkers with lots of small ideas.

To me, the "hedgehog" and the "fox" are also excellent metaphors for personal accomplishment.

There are hedgehog accomplishments and fox accomplishments. Usually, we notice the hedgehogs a lot more. The Bible features hedgehogs such as Abraham and Moses who transform the world through faith and leadership. Chronicles focus on the hedgehogs of history, heroic statesmen such as George Washington and David Ben-Gurion.

However, most people won't be hedgehogs. For the rest of us, there is still the possibility of heroism, albeit of a different sort: the heroism of "foxes."

A fox is content to know he doesn't have to transform history by himself. Rabbi Tarphon's statement in *Pirkei Avot* that it's "not incumbent upon you to finish the task" is his creed. The fox humbly accepts he can't solve the world's problems by himself.

At the same time, the "fox" is very busy. Rabbi Tarphon also reminds us that "neither are you free to absolve yourself from the task." The fox isn't a quitter. He simply manages his expectations. In fact, because the fox doesn't desire an immediate triumph, he doesn't despair in the face of overwhelming odds. Instead of grand gestures, the fox works slowly at changing the world, one good deed at a time.

The Torah is made for the heroism of foxes. With a scheme of 613 duties, the Torah is telling us that foxes make a difference. One small act of goodness may seem insignificant, but an army of foxes doing hundreds of small mitzvot can perform truly heroic acts.

All of us have been transformed by the deeds of foxes. I can recall my seventh grade teacher complimenting me on a good question, which encouraged me to pursue new intellectual vistas. I can recall how my grandfather's joyful nature taught me to always interact with others in a cheerful way.

It's usually the foxes — the people who cook dinner or teach Talmud — that transform our lives.

Foxes can't change the world overnight. But they don't quit, either. By changing one life at a time, foxes also accomplish the truly heroic, without fanfare and grandeur.

That's why I'm proud to be a fox.

Lessons from a flawed process

Don't worry, the Bouchard-Taylor commission recently assured critics. A statistical analysis of the 22 reasonable-accommodation forums proves that only two per cent of the comments made by "citizens of French-Canadian origin" were racist or xenophobic.

Another 13 per cent of the citizens said something "negative" about minorities, but consider the good news: 85 per cent were "moderate or pluralistic" or "respectful, even when they were off topic," Gérard Bouchard told the *Montreal Gazette*.

Alas, the tragicomedy of this commission and the entire "reasonable accommodation" debate cannot be quantified or so easily dismissed. Did applause meters gauge the ovations that some of the hostile comments received? Did the commission's statisticians compare the loud-mouths' coverage to the pluralists' coverage?

Just as a good attorney never asks a question to which he or she does not know the answer, such well-educated commissioners should have known that their lovely forum risked showcasing the haters among us. In today's media environment, the bad usually upstages the good. The hostile make headlines, the shrill get heard.

Moreover, the commission itself was created after a string of petty complaints about immigrants and ethnics daring to be different were exaggerated into a full-blown crisis by strident xenophobes feeding sensation-seeking reporters. The commission played into their hands, giving the narrow-minded a platform for broadcasting their views — and feeling validated by the

applause they received. As a result, rather than teaching bigots to hide their prejudices in shame, xenophobes learned how to become local heroes and have their views taken seriously.

The commission's greatest failure stems from the silence we have heard in reacting to the bigots. Had Quebec Premier Jean Charest — or any other natural leader in society — denounced the bigots in a searing, dramatic fashion that the media could have showcased, the commission would have had more positively dramatic results. The uncomfortable silences and awkward, half-hearted defences amid the bigotry are part of the hearings' depressing narrative — and a fact of life that liberal-minded Quebecers must shamefacedly acknowledge.

In fairness, the commission raised an interesting democratic dilemma, worthy of the kind of brilliant analyses Charles Taylor has produced in his academic work. In a democracy, free speech allows all kinds of views to be expressed. Those of us with faith in the free marketplace of ideas trust the good ideas to drive out the bad ones. Moreover, the only thing worse than a travelling show that unwittingly showcased some of Quebec's racists and haters would have been a sanitized, politically correct forum that lacked authenticity.

The commission hearings — and this entire issue — have provided a wakeup call to those who long preferred to ignore Quebec's provincialism. Even the phrase "reasonable accommodation" sends a message to immigrants, ethnics and others that they're not welcome. It unrea-



Gil Troy in Montreal

Campus anti-Zionists don't need protection

Those of you not immersed in the politics of academia may not have heard about the anti-Israel resolution put forth at the recent annual meeting of the Modern Language Association. The MLA, a scholarly organization, represents researchers and professors of literature and languages.

With more than 30,000 members, the influential organization provides a forum for the exchange of research, as well as addressing other matters of concern to the profession. It plays a vital role in the process of hiring literature professors and helps shape policy regarding tenure, standards and working conditions. Through its conferences and publications, it exerts influence on what and how millions of students learn. Most literature professors consider MLA membership de rigueur. I joined as a graduate student and over the years have held office in the organization.

At the most recent MLA conference, which convened in Chicago just before the new year, the delegates' assembly — the governing body of the organization, elected by its members — considered a resolution tabled by the MLA's Radical Caucus that averred that critics of Israel were subject to prejudicial treatment on university campuses and in need of special protection.

The resolution contended that professors who openly criticize Israel put their careers at risk and were "fraudulently" labelled anti-Semitic. Untenured professors might find themselves denied tenure because of their politics, and more established professors might find their invita-

tions to speak rescinded once their anti-Israel views are made public.

According to the resolution, such persecution of critics of Israel poses "serious danger to academic study and discussion." To remedy this, the resolution called on the MLA to "defend the academic freedom and the freedom of speech of faculty and invited speakers to criticize Zionism and Israel."

What is noteworthy about the resolution — in addition to its demand that a scholarly organization devoted to the study of literature and languages take on the politics of the Middle East — is its singular focus. Freedom of speech must be defended — but only the freedom to criticize

Israel, not the freedom to promote or defend it, to advocate for Zionism, or even to entertain open debate. The resolution made no mention of the myriad other contentious issues on campus.

The resolution's supporters defended its unilateral language. They contended that critics of Israel are subject to intense pressure, from both inside and outside the university campus. The "silencing" of Israel's critics, they assert, has resulted in a neo-McCarthyism, an atmosphere in which anti-Zionists fear to air their views.

Excuse me? What universe of universities would they be talking about? Last time I was on a campus — and I am on campus almost every day of the year — critics of Israel had no problem finding a voice, a podium, a group of supporters. I speak not only of my own university, York, but of other Toronto campuses, as well as universities

sonably pits the supposedly accepting majority against the unacceptable or tolerated minorities.

Both Quebec and Canada have too many faces, too many different groups, to see this dynamic as healthy. The Québécois themselves may be a majority in parts of Quebec, but they are a minority throughout Canada. Would those who treat tax-paying immigrants and ethnics as outsiders be willing to put up with a similar kind of condescension and questioning on a national level?

For many in Quebec's Jewish community, a year's worth of insulting controversies and prejudiced proclamations has been sadly instructive. True, the hostility expressed against Muslims shows that the issue is more about provincial xenophobia and fear of the "other" than it is about traditional anti-Semitism. But that offers little solace, especially as Jewish community leaders are forced to beg for continued school funding, as well as to justify the now-demonized kashrut label on grocery products and abjectly claim that the new, heavy-handed "Ethics and Religious Culture" course being imposed on Jewish day schools is somehow acceptable.

It seems that Jewish leaders so fear the anger expressed by the "two per cent" and "13 per cent" that they forgot the value of justified, righteous indignation. It also seems that too many of our non-Jewish and non-Muslim friends forgot the value of eloquently, passionately and boldly standing up for enduring Canadian and western ideals of democracy, diversity and true acceptance. And it seems the time has come to remind our neighbours and ourselves that love and liberty are fragile flowers that we all need to tend vigorously, and at times aggressively.

across Canada and the United States, where I frequently visit and lecture, and also keep abreast of through conversations with colleagues.

Anti-Zionism is in no short supply.

The resolution's defenders want to have it all ways: the right to speak and write their mind (academic freedom), but not to accord others the right to debate them. They demand the right to accept speaking engagements from those who agree with them, but not the right of those who disagree with them to refuse to invite them. They wish to stir others into political activism, but deplore activists whose politics disagrees with theirs.

At the extreme, they wish to write, speak and teach what they choose, even if it fails all academic (and sensible) standards, and yet not be called to account. In a companion resolution, the Radical Caucus asked that the MLA support Ward Churchill, a former professor of ethnic studies at the University of Colorado who was dismissed for "research misconduct" that included plagiarism and falsification of information. Churchill found his way to notoriety, you may recall, in a 2001 essay that referred to the victims of 9/11 as "little Eichmanns."

To the MLA's credit, the delegate's assembly refused to pass the Radical Caucus's resolution. Instead, it passed an amended resolution that acknowledged the contentious nature of Middle East politics and affirmed the right of professors "to speak forthrightly on all sides of the issue."

How fortunate for us. And how fortunate for the MLA, which skirted sliding into irrelevance in not allowing itself to be corralled in the way that the British professors' unions have been.



Sara R. Horowitz in Toronto

The Kirshner File

Engel beats back a devastating illness

That hot summer morning in 2001 could not have been more catastrophic for Howard Engel. When he picked up the daily newspaper from his front porch in the Annex neighbourhood in Toronto and scanned the stories on the front page, he was unable to read them.

The letters looked like Cyrillic one moment and Korean the next. Engel had suffered a stroke and succumbed to a rare condition, alexia sine agraphia. He could write but no longer read.

For a man who was addicted to the printed word, who described himself as a "reading junkie" and who earned a living as a professional writer, this was an unmitigated disaster.

But Engel, whose rich imagination spawned the Benny Cooperman detective novels, fought back and won.

Thanks to his dogged spirit, the skill and dedication of rehabilitation therapists and the moral support of friends, Engel more or less beat alexia and managed to reclaim his old life as a voracious reader.

Engel, too, resumed his career as a writer, using his experiences with alexia as grist for his mill. *Memory Book*, the latest instalment in the Benny Cooperman series, appeared two years ago and turns on Cooperman's recovery from a serious head wound. *The Man Who Forgot How to Read* (HarperCollins) was published this past summer.

Despite these signposts of progress, Engel, 77, has not exactly picked up where he left off six and a half years ago.

"I can read, but not with great speed," he said in an interview in his cluttered kitchen. "Some words trip me up, but I'm still hard-wired to reading."

Yet Engel, who now reads in a slow and ponderous fashion, has learned to live without newspapers and magazines.

"It would take me a day to get through a newspaper or a magazine. I get my news from

the radio and friends."

Further, since Engel can't keep up with the fast-moving subtitles in foreign movies, he confines himself to English-language films these days. And because his memory was affected by his bout with alexia, Engel has resigned himself to living with a disability.



Sheldon Kirshner
in Toronto

Yet he continues to buy and read books, which he considers his vice, and he has never stopped writing. In short, as he put it, he is getting on with his life.

Oliver Sacks, the famed neurologist who contributed an afterword to *The Man Who Forgot How to Read*, praises Engel's pluck in the face of adversity: "It is a struggle that calls for heroic determination

and courage, as well as great resourcefulness, patience and, not least, humour, simply to survive, let alone to continue to write creatively, as Howard Engel has done."

Even during his darkest days in hospital, when the light at the end of the tunnel seemed dim, Engel continued to write. As he observed in his book, "I kept up my diary almost from the first. The fact that I couldn't read hadn't

stopped me from writing."

To Engel, however, a book seemed beyond his abilities as he lay convalescing. "But without my knowing it, another part of my brain was beginning to plot out a story. Images began popping into my head."

And so Engel embarked on *Memory Book*, the 14th Benny Cooperman novel. But it was a rough slog. Words would fail him and ideas would vanish into a black hole. And whereas he

could once whip off Cooperman mysteries in about two months, Engel needed six months each to finish *Memory Book* and *The Man Who Forgot How to Read*.

Engel wrote the latter to be a memoir, but his editor deleted the biographical details and focused on his illness. "For a while, I wondered whether we were going in the right direction, but I think it was a good decision,"

said Engel, who plans to use the discarded material in a future memoir about himself and his family.

Several months ago, Engel submitted his latest Benny Cooperman novel for publication. Titled *East of Suez*, it unfolds in a mythical country in the Malayan peninsula.

An indefatigable worker, he is now finishing his next Benny Cooperman novel after *East of Suez*, *Taffy Was a Thief*, which is set in the fictitious town of Grantham, Ont., in the Niagara region. "I thought it was time to get him back to his home turf," he said.

Engel, the founder of the Crime Writers of Canada, was a CBC-TV producer when he wrote his first Benny Cooperman novel, *The Suicide Murders*, in 1979.

He and his second wife, Janet Hamilton, had just had dinner when he retired to his room, leaving her and a guest to chat. Engel sat down in front of his manual typewriter and started typing. After an hour, he had composed seven pages. Within five weeks, he had produced a manuscript.

He had always enjoyed reading crime fiction, even as a child. His mother introduced him to the likes of Ellery Queen, Rex Stout, Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler.

"What came out was a voice with a personality, a guy with a high school education who lived in a small town," he explained as his tiny tortoise-shell kitten slithered across the kitchen table and meowed. "He was soft-boiled rather than hard-boiled. He was closer to Ellery Queen than to Sam Spade because he never got into a fist fight."

And, of course, Cooperman was one of the few Jewish detectives springing from the pages of a novel.

Until that burning creative moment, Engel had never harboured writerly ambitions. "I wanted to be an actor, a director or a puppeteer, but not an author. My earliest writing was for puppets in a show at school. I walked

into the world of writing through a side door."

The "door" to which he refers was at CBC radio, where he produced such programs as *Anthology*, *The Arts in Review* and *Sunday Supplement*. For each segment, Engel would

write "a little bit of script," and this exercise taught him the meaning of economy. "I learned that every word has to pay its own way."

Engel never imagined that *The Suicide Murders* would find a considerable readership. "I had no idea that anyone would buy it, and I was surprised that the publisher asked for more."

By the time he was let go from the CBC in the mid-1980s after a round of major staff cuts, Engel could support himself and his family quite well from the proceeds of the

Benny Cooperman series. It has been published in dozens of languages, from Russian to Mandarin, and has proven to be lucrative. "My last car was a Volvo," he said.

Engel, nevertheless, has no inkling how many copies of his books have been sold worldwide. "I leave that to others," he said. "I don't read royalty statements. I just put the money into the bank."

One of his novels was optioned for a movie, but was never made. *The Suicide Murders* and *Murder Sees The Light*, his fourth novel, were turned into CBC television dramas in which the Canadian actor Saul Rubinek played Cooperman. Paul Soles portrayed Cooperman in two CBC radio adaptations of his other books.

As a character, Cooperman has undergone change since the appearance of *The Suicide Murders* in 1980. "He's older and better at his job," said Engel. "At the beginning, he was a divorce detective. But the laws in Canada have changed, and now Cooperman is involved in more interesting and challenging mysteries and gets a better class clientele."

As far as Engel is concerned, Cooperman will be around for many more years to come.

As he put it, "As long as I'm interested, I'll keep going."



Howard Engel



The Man
Who Forgot
How to Read
Afterword by Oliver Sacks

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By RACHAEL TURKIEVICZ

The holiday of Tu b'Shvat has taken on a new focus over the years. It began as the birthday of the trees and has become symbolic of various aspects of Judaism and environmentalism.

There is no question that Judaism, in its ethics and rendering of Jewish law, sits firmly on the recognition of environmentalism and our obligation to guard nature and repair the world. We have laws that dictate which fields to plant – and when and with what seeds – as well as laws that prohibit cruelty to animals and mixing species of vegetation.

Even in dire war circumstances, we are prohibited from levelling the trees around a besieged city, since we cannot declare war with the trees. Maimonides expanded that law to include a prohibition on the wanton destruction of anything. One states the obvious by saying that aspects of Judaism can only be fulfilled through environmentalism.

The midrash in Kohelet Rabbah states that God warns humanity to preserve nature. God instructs Adam and Eve: "See to it that you do not spoil and destroy My world, for if you do, there will be no one else to repair it!" We are the defensive guards of nature, and we are charged with restraining ourselves as we defend nature against its worst enemy: us.

It's interesting that in a modern world charged with environmental issues and causes and organizations, there is far more flag-waving than actual environmentalism, and yet in the ancient world, the reverse seemed



The Jewish environmentalist

to be the goal. One would think that in the rabbinic era, the Sages would have viewed preserving nature as being of the utmost importance, as everyone's lives were more directly connected with the flow of nature than in our technological world.

There is a beautiful text that discusses Abba Hilkiah and his wife. Abba Hilkiah is the grandson of Honi the Circle Maker. This is the family that has mastered the merit for achieving rainfall. The Talmud discusses a time

of drought when the Sages seek out Abba Hilkiah and encounter baffling behaviour.

He is out in the field hoeing. They greet him, but he does not respond. When evening arrives, he puts his pile of wood on one shoulder and his cloak on the other rather than cushion his shoulder from the wood. He doesn't wear his shoes as he walks home, but puts them on as he walks through water. When he walks through thorns, he raises his cloak rather than protect his legs. All the way home, his behaviour baffles the sages.

When Abba Hilkiah enters his house, he tells his wife that he knows the sages have followed him to ask him to pray for rain. He suggests to his wife that the two of them slip away to the roof and pray for rain without the sages knowing – that way they will not have to thank them. They follow his plan, and his wife stands in one corner of the roof as he stands in the opposite corner. Shortly after his wife begins to pray, the rain starts.

The sages finally confront Abba Hilkiah and ask for explanations, and what follows is a beautiful list of things noticed by a Jewish environmentalist. Abba Hilkiah did not greet the Sages because he had been hired for his labour that day and didn't want to speak to anyone at the expense of his employer. He did not cushion his shoulder with the cloak because it was borrowed and he didn't want to risk damaging it. He didn't wear his shoes walking in the field because he could see where he was stepping and saw no need to damage his shoes. However, in the water he couldn't see and, therefore, put his shoes to use. He lifted his cloak walking through the thorns because if his skin got scratched, it would heal quickly, but the linen of his garment would permanently tear.

Again, his detailed explanations are striking for how they reveal his acute awareness of every action that he takes and its impact on those around him, as well as nature's impact on him and his belongings.

The sages finally ask why his wife's prayer was answered first. Abba Hilkiah answered, "My wife stays at home and gives bread to the poor, which benefits them immediately, while I can only give them money."

Jewish environmentalism is not just about obedience to Jewish laws that prohibits the obvious harms to nature. It's about the understanding that even the small choices we make in our daily lives can help us achieve what we pray for every day in the *Aleinu*: "letaken olam bemalchut Shadai," to repair the world that exists within the Sovereignty of God.

Selected indicators on world Jewry – 2007

from the Jewish People Policy Planning Institute in Jerusalem

Country	Jewish Population (Core Definition)		Index of Human Development		GDP per capita (Purchase Parity US \$)	Jewish Day-school Attendance Rate (%)	Recent Out- marriage Rate (%)	Ever Visited Israel (% of Jew. Pop.)	Aliyah	Tourists to Israel	
	1970 ^a	2007 ^b	Projected 2020 ^c	2004 ^d							2004 ^d
World	12,633,000	13,155,000	13,558,000	966-331	1-177	38,454-779			19,264 ^f	1,822,257 ^g	
Israel	2,582,000	5,393,000	6,228,000	927	23	24,382	97	5			
North America	5,686,000	5,649,000	5,581,000	960-948	6-8	39,676-31,263			2,385	545,018	
United States	5,400,000	5,275,000	5,200,000	948	8	39,676	25h	54	35	2,157	493,653
Canada	286,000	374,000	381,000	960	6	31,263	55	35	66	228	51,365
Latin America	514,000	393,000	364,000	879-482	31-154	15,720-1,892			1,355	69,243	
Argentina	282,000	184,000	162,000	863	34	13,298	50-55	45	>50	293	11,803
Brazil	90,000	96,000	90,000	792	63	8,195	71	45	>50	232	15,476
Mexico	35,000	40,000	42,000	821	53	9,803	85	10	>70	72	13,311
Other countries	107,000	73,000	70,000	879-482	31-154	15,720-1,892	75	15-95	>50	758	28,653
Europe non-FSU	1,331,000	1,155,000	1,030,000	966-757	4-92	38,827-7,753			3,686	874,907	
France	530,000	490,000	482,000	942	16	29,300	40	40-45	>70	2,408	251,166
United Kingdom	390,000	295,000	238,000	940	18	30,821	60	40-45	78	594	161,048
Germany	30,000	120,000	108,000	932	21	28,303	<20	>60	>50	110	89,536
Hungary	70,000	49,000	34,000	869	35	16,814	<15	60		63	7,588
Other EU ⁱ	171,000	149,000	134,000	956-856	4-42	3,827-14,623	10-25	33-75	>50	326	293,609
Other non-EU ^j	144,000	52,000	34,000	965-757	1-92	38,454-7,753	5-20	50-80		185	71,960
FSU ^k	2,151,000	357,000	173,000	858-652	40-122	14,565-1,202			7,469	131,343	
Russia	808,000	225,000	130,000	797	65	9,902	<15	80		3,593	73,416
Ukraine	777,000	77,000	25,000	774	77	6,394	<15	80		1,777	30,574
Rest FSU Europe ^l	312,000	37,000	15,000	858-694	40-114	14,565-1,729	<15	65-75		813	16,876
FSU Asia	254,000	18,000	3,000	774-852	79-122	7,440-1,202	<15	50-75		1,286	10,477
Asia (rest) ^m	104,000	20,000	21,000	949-492	7-150	29,251-679			490	115,435	
Africa	195,000	77,000	60,000	842-331	47-177	11,652-779			3,801	60,543	
South Africa	118,000	72,000	57,000	663	121	11,192	85	20	79	114	16,589
Oceania	70,000	111,000	101,000	957-523	3-139	30,331-2,543			72	20,887	
Australia	65,000	104,000	95,000	957	3	30,331	65	22	70	66	18,165

a. Source: Division of Jewish Demography and Statistics, The A. Herman Institute of Contemporary Jewry, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

b. Source: DellaPergola, *American Jewish Year Book* (2006), Provisional data.

c. Source: adapted from DellaPergola, Rebutin, Tots (2000), medium variant.

d. A measure of a country's public health, educational attainment, and real income. Source: United Nations Development Programme (2005).

e. Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (2006).

f. Including country not reported.

g. After downward reduction from NPS 2001.

h. Based on partial responses from NPS 2001. A more

accurate estimate would probably be 25-26%.

i. Revised population projections for 2020.

j. Without Baltic states.

k. Including Turkey.

l. With Baltic states.

m. Without Israel, FSU and Turkey.

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Jewish Life

Archeological beginnings, Part II: excavating Ai

By ALEX GROPPER

The ruins of ancient Ai, the modern Et Tell, are an imposing heap of stones not far from the city of Ramallah. They are found just below the modern Arab village of Deir Dibwan.

I first became aware of their existence almost 40 years ago when I was one of a handful of students chosen to be part of a Canadian university contingent that was to excavate this important site. We were excited, since this was the first time Canadians would be involved in a major excavation since the legendary Kathleen Kenyon had stopped her work in Jerusalem after the Six Day War.

The site of Ai had first been excavated in the early 1930s by Judith Marquet-Krause, a brilliant, young Jewish-French archeologist who died tragically before she was able to finish her excavations. The site is crucial to the ongoing debate about the historical veracity of the Israelite conquest. The Bible ascribes its capture to Joshua and the Israelite army, but archeology seems to paint a different picture, indicating that the site of Ai had been in ruins since the end of the third millennium BCE.

Attempts have been made to reconcile the two versions, either by describing Joshua's conquest as an etiology,

which means that the story of the existing ruin was ascribed to a more familiar figure such as Joshua, or by saying, as some scholars have done, that the conquest of nearby Bethel was transferred to Ai. Regardless, for me, that summer of 1968 was an amazing adventure.

Living among the Arab population of Deir Dibwan was an eye-opening experience. Once, my cousin Danny, who was an officer in the Israeli army, came looking for me. The Arabs, not knowing that he was my relative, assumed that I was in trouble with the authorities and tried to protect me by disavowing any knowledge of me or my whereabouts. I became an instant hero in the village as a fugitive from the Israelis.

For me, the excavations were more of a concern than my newfound heroic status among the Arabs. And indeed, we did find some amazing things. One of them was a large expanse of wall more than three metres high dating from the middle of the Early Bronze Age, around 2600 BCE. It was a phenomenal find from the dawn of civilization and showed that Canaan had been more than just a cultural backwater between the splendid and awe-inspiring civilizations of Mesopotamia and Egypt.

We found strong proof of Egyptian

presence on the citadel, or acropolis, where the remains of the palace showed evidence of having been fashioned with an Egyptian saw at about the same time as the Pyramids were starting to be built.

Separated by about 3,000 years from the acropolis and located a short distance further down the wadi, leading from the top of the tell to the Jordan Valley, we came upon the remains of a Byzantine monastery. (The term Byzantine refers to the period in Israel after Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire in the fourth century CE, as well as to the eastern part of the Roman Empire, including Israel, that survived the fall of the Roman Empire in the West.) It was an exceptionally well-preserved complex that revealed much about monastic life from this period, which lasted until its destruction during the Arab conquest in 638 CE.

I got quite a shock when one of our workers pointed to a nearby Arab village and asked if I knew a friend of his from there. I was puzzled as to how I was expected to know a young Arab from a small village thousands of miles from my residence in Toronto until our worker told me the man's name and I was frozen with horror. This was the home of Sirhan Sirhan, the man who had assassinated Robert Kennedy just before I embarked on my voyage of discovery. The past had come forward into the present for me with chilling reality.

Past Forward



By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

This year, the State of Israel celebrates 60 years of independence. During the next few months, I will be presenting articles in honour of that milestone. The first one, appropriately enough, is about birthdays – from a Jewish point of view.

At first glance, it seems that the Torah does not have a lot to say about birthdays. In her essay Let Us Eat Cake, Lynn Harris points out that *Encyclopedia Judaica* is very blunt on this topic: "The celebration of birthdays is unknown in traditional Jewish ritual." In fact, the encyclopedia says that the only birthday party mentioned in the Bible is Pharaoh's! (Genesis 40:20). [tinyurl.com/2elf5g]

Rabbi Yanki Tauber says that Judaism traditionally observes the death of an individual, while the anniversary of a birth does not get as much attention. He explains that that's logical since a *yahrzeit* commemorates a lifetime of achievement. However, Rabbi Tauber then suggests that the birth of a child does merit celebrating in our tradition. "Birth marks the point at which your body received and fused with your soul, the point at which you attained your individuality." [tinyurl.com/rfgk6]

The Ohr Somayach site mentions several sages who marked their birthdays as auspicious days. "Rabbi Yisrael Lifshitz instructed his children that when one of

them has a birthday, the others should visit and bless him. Similarly, distinguished members of Jerusalem's Jewish community used to visit Rabbi Shmuel Salant on his birthday and offer him their blessings."

[tinyurl.com/occhj]

The Talmud informs us that on our Jewish birthdays our mazal (good fortune) is dominant. Rabbi Naftali Silberberg explains that "your birthday is a day to express gratitude to God

for bringing you into this world, entrusting you with the mission of illuminating it with the radiance of Torah and Mitzvot. This day, which is akin to a personal Rosh Hashanah, is the appropriate time to recommit to the mission at hand, resolving that the added maturity and experience gained during the past year will cause the following year to be even more productive and fruitful." [tinyurl.com/24csrq]

How can you help your child celebrate the day in a Jewish manner? In "Birthdays, Jewishly," Sandra Widener and Lisa Farber Miller have several suggestions: plan a Shabbat dinner dedicated to the person celebrating a birthday; have a *tzedakah* party at which kids are given extra money to put in a *tzedakah* box; or start a Saturday slumber party with a *havdalah* ceremony. [tinyurl.com/pw8or]

If you are marking a special birthday

in the coming year, you may want to check out related wisdom found in Pirkei Avot, the Teachings of our Fathers. Rabbi Yehudah ben Teima used to say:

"Five years is the age for the study of Scripture.

- Ten, for the study of Mishnah.
- Thirteen, for the obligation to observe the mitzvot.
- Fifteen, for the study of Talmud.
- Eighteen, for marriage.
- Twenty, to pursue a livelihood.
- Thirty, for strength.
- Forty, for understanding.
- Fifty, for counsel.
- Sixty, for sagacity.
- Seventy, for elderliness.
- Eighty, for power."

(I'll leave it to you to check out what Rabbi Ben Teima had to say about turning 90 and 100.) [tinyurl.com/3d6djd]

While we're in the stratosphere of Jewish aging, one of the most famous blessings that Jews bestow on each other is, "*Bis hundred und zwanzig – until 120!*" The age of 120 is considered the ideal lifespan because Moses was 120 years old at the time that he died. (Deut. 34:7) [jewfaq.org/moshe.htm]

Happy Birthday to Israel and to everyone celebrating a birthday this year!

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.



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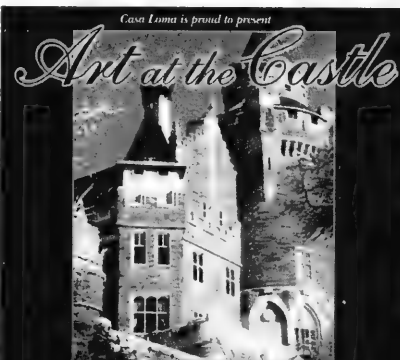
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If you are marking a special birthday



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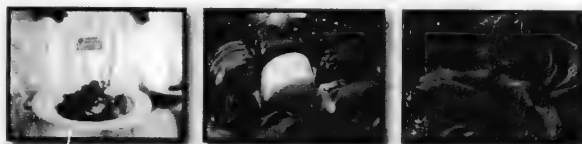
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Greater Toronto Area.

Shuls bring guests in from the cold

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF

Staff Reporter

With temperatures dipping into the -20C range, many of Toronto's poor and homeless began 2008 with a desperate search for shelter.

And as it has for the last 21 years, the city's Out Of The Cold program - which provides shelter, food and companionship - offered sanctuary to some of the community's impoverished.

First begun in 1987 by some students at St. Michael's School who befriended a homeless man and helped him until his death, the idea quickly caught on with churches and synagogues around town as a permanent social action activity.

The proactive, multifaceted program, which runs from November to April, is co-ordinated out of Dixon Hall - a former downtown soup kitchen and now a charitable service agency - and continues to be a staple tikkun olam component for some Toronto-area shuls.

This season, along with numerous churches and schools, synagogues representing a broad spectrum of the Jewish faith will participate, including Holy Blossom Temple, Beth Shalom, Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda, First Narayever, Darchei Noam, Beit Rayim and Temple Har Zion. Many began housing, feeding and helping the needy through the program in late 2007.

According to the most recent statistics - the City of Toronto's 2003 Housing and Homelessness Report Card - close to 32,000 Torontonians made use of a shelter in 2002. Among those seeking refuge that year were more than 4,700 children.

This is why participating in programs like Out Of The Cold is a natural fit for shuls and their congregations: because in this instance, chesed is something that can literally warm those in need.

Participating congregations open their doors or offer aid one day of the week on a rotating basis, ensuring that at least one place of refuge is available every wintery night.

For example, Holy Blossom, 1950 Bathurst St., serves meals and entertains more than 100 guests and sleeps about 40 at its Out Of The Cold program every Thursday night via the efforts of more than 500 volunteers from the congregation and the community at large, according to its website.

The shul has participated in the program since 1996.

Program co-chairs Brooke Saks and Gary Pile help co-ordinate the effort at Holy Blossom.

"I love that we can put a smile on [guests'] faces. We have a really warm environment," Saks said. "We serve meals restaurant-style, so that our guests stay seated. I tell every volunteer that it's a 'guaranteed feel good' because [they] are making a difference in people's lives."

At Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda, 100 Elder St., the shul opened its doors for this year's program on Monday, Jan. 14.

Beth Emeth serves dinners for up to 90 guests and has up to 30 people sleep over each Monday evening.

"I'm completely energized when I come to the program," said Shelley Cobrin, co-chair of the program at Beth Emeth for the past six years. "It's a safe environment, and you feel good about it [because] our guests

are so appreciative. But the sad part is that it's just a drop in the bucket. These people need so much more."

Beth Shalom, 1445 Eglinton Ave. W., now in its ninth year with the Out Of The Cold program, provides accommoda-

tions for between 90 and 100 guests every Tuesday night until March 25.

Beth Shalom Rabbi Aaron Flanzraich says that this year, his shul has partnered with the Beth Tzedec, 1700 Bathurst St. in order to accommodate more guests.

"The program is a true and pure form of care and chesed. It provides the opportunity not only for some to get a meal and a bed in the winter, but for us to care for people in need," Rabbi Flanzraich told *The CJN*. "We've been told that spots at our place are 'coveted'... And we know [guests] understand that this program is an unequivocal expression of our faith."

For its part, Darchei Noam supplies around 60 volunteers to work in their Thursday night interfaith program, which runs out of St. Matthew's United Church, 729 St. Clair Ave. W.

Lynda Champagne, Darchei Noam's Out Of The Cold co-ordinator, said the shul has been involved in the program for the last 12 years.

"Our congregation really got behind the program. We offer friendship and companionship," she said. "I started out wanting to save... and fix homeless people's lives. But I've since learned that we're offering a band-aid solution. There are still many people who need to be housed who have mental problems or drug addictions."

Most synagogues rely on private donations and funds for their continued participation in Out Of The Cold, and are always on the lookout for benefactors to continue providing this service in their communities.

For more information, visit www.oetc.ca.

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Arab anti-Semitism spoiling chances for peace

The Jan. 6 *New York Times Sunday Book Review* was titled "The Islam Issue." Notable writers and academics contributed 12 book reviews and several essays on the topic.

Writer Jeffrey Goldberg reviewed German scholar Matthias Kuntzel's *Jihad and Jew-Hatred: Islamism, Nazism and the Roots of 9/11*. If the book is as chilling as the review, it's a must read.

Goldberg began by recounting a recent visit to the gift shop of the Damascus Sheraton Hotel, looking for something to read. Among the slim pickings were several publications attacking Jews and Israel. For example, writes Goldberg,

According to Reports

By
PAUL MICHAELS

a pamphlet called "Secrets of the Talmud" alleged that "[t]he Talmud apparently teaches Jews how best to demolish the world economy and gives Jews the right to take non-Jewish women as slaves and rape them."

Sadly, such hideous anti-Semitic conspiracy theories are popular not only in Arab states, but in the wider Muslim world as well.

Goldberg writes that Kuntzel's book is "bracing, even startling... [and] reminds us that it is perilous to ignore idiotic ideas if these idiotic ideas are broadly and fervently believed. And across the Muslim world, the very worst ideas about Jews — intricate, outlandish conspiracy theories about their malevolent and absolute power over world affairs — have become scandalously ubiquitous."

Goldberg explains that "[t]he notion of the Jew as malevolently omnipotent is not a traditional Muslim notion." The Qur'an shows the Jews defeated and conquered. And for centuries, Jews lived among Muslims in the Middle East. "[I]t is true that their experience was generally healthier than that of their brethren in Christendom, but only so long as they knew their place; they were ruled and taxed as second-class citizens and were often debased by statute." But "no one believed that Jews were in control."

Kuntzel's book argues that the current strain of anti-Semitism among Muslims was "imported from Europe" as "an actual project of the Nazi Party, meant to turn Muslims against Jews and Zionism." It involved such actors as Haj Amin al-Husseini, the mufti of Jerusalem, who lived in Berlin during World War II in the service of the Nazis.

Less well known is Hassan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, who used German funds to distribute Arabic translations of *Mein Kampf* and the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* across the Arab world.

The effects of this campaign are still being felt today. For instance, as an outgrowth of the Brotherhood, Hamas, in its Charter, refers directly (in article 32) to the *Protocols* as "proof" that "Zionists" are bent on controlling the world. In other articles, Hamas calls Jews "warmongers" who are responsible for "most of the revolutions" on the planet, including the Russian Revolution and even the French Revolution!

If Goldberg has any criticism of Kuntzel's book, it's that it understates the extent to which "organic Muslim ideas as well as Nazi ideas... led to the spread of anti-Semitism in the Middle East."

Today, media, mosques and schools in Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia and Iran — and even those under the control of the Palestinian Authority — promote these noxious ideas to one degree or another.

But, equally disturbing, they are also widely disseminated in more progressive Muslim countries such as Turkey, which has close military and strategic ties to Israel and is visited by many Israeli tourists.

The Middle East Research Institute (MEMRI) is highly respected for the accuracy of its translations of Arab and Muslim media. Its online "Antisemitism Documentation Project" (www.memri.org/antisemitism.html) includes Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's rants against Zionists and the Holocaust, as well as tirades about Jews from Hezbollah and Hamas, and clerics and politicians throughout the Middle East.

At a time when much of the international media are focused on Israeli settlements as an "obstacle to peace," it's vital that attention be paid to the impact of widespread anti-Israel and anti-Jewish propaganda and indoctrination in the Middle East and beyond. Until and unless this stops, the genuine foundation for peace in the Middle East will remain a distant dream.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

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'This is an internal matter,' says BBI official

Continued from page 6

"You have literally a handful of people who don't want to abide by BBI's court ruling. I don't know why this is a story. To exploit this story may cause harm to the Jewish community and BBC," he said.

Dimant said BBI's court specifically issued a gag order and the members subject to discipline appear to have violated it. Although the letters to the members state they are subject to expulsion, Dimant suggested the remedy might fall short of that, though he would not say what other sanctions are available.

Crestohl, a former BBC president, said the executive committee and the disciplinary committee cited in Wilner's letter were created under a proposed constitution that was defeated by members at the 2005 AGM. As a result, neither of those bodies have any validity, he said.

However, Dimant said BBI's appeal court disposed of that concern.

The court's one-paragraph judgement is cited in the executive committee's decision to expel its members. Part of the decision states: "The amended constitution of BBC was duly passed at a legally constituted meeting of the organization within its governing body's full jurisdiction. No irregularity in the procedures followed by BBC has been made out that would invoke the jurisdiction of this court."

In an e-mail response to *CJN* queries on the controversy within BBC, Dennis Glick, chair of BBI's executive regarding member issues, said, "This is an internal matter. Due process was followed, and the case is closed."

Crestohl maintains that "the court apparently decided it was more important to maintain the status quo than render a proper... decision," while Wolfe, who has practised law for 49 years, said he had never seen a court render a "judgement so sparse" on an issue so important.

The court, Wolfe continued, ignored evidence from those who attended the AGM that the constitution did not pass. It also did not address a motion asking that one member of the court recuse himself because of a perceived conflict of interest.

Ronson, a member of *The CJN's* editorial advisory board, said he was in the front row at the 2005 AGM when the new constitution was proposed "and defeated by a wide margin. Two-thirds voted against the proposed constitution."

"What is required is for the lay leadership to get back control of the organization," he said.

When he received the expulsion notice, Ronson said, "I just laughed. They're being ridiculous. I'm 93 years old. How much longer am I going to be a member?"

"I have a long history with BBC and the Jewish community. No one can damage my reputation. It's too estab-

lished," he added.

Lindsay, a chartered accountant for 43 years, said he has been a vocal critic of constitutional procedures undertaken by BBC, particularly the officers' failure to provide audited financial statements at AGMs after 2001, contrary to Canadian corporate law and the organization's own by-laws.

He was also critical of procedures at the 2004 AGM, during which members were asked to approve audited financial statements without the statements being presented to the members. They were never approved.

"You want to talk about dysfunctional corporate governance," he said.

Gimpel said "there's a lot of talk among the lodges about what's going on."

Gimpel and Crestohl said they were prepared to fight the expulsions in the civil court system.

"I'm not going to take it lying down," Gimpel said. "I've already prepared to send letters to [BBC] donors I know of and explain exactly what is going on."



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Mr. Henry Gimpel



Disciplinary Committee Notice to Members

SENT BY REGISTERED MAIL

Dear Mr. Gimpel:

The Disciplinary Committee of B'nai Brith Canada has received a complaint regarding your conduct as part of a group calling itself the "Concerned Members of B'nai Brith Canada". A copy of the complaint is enclosed.

The complaint charges that your conduct is unbecoming a member of B'nai Brith Canada and contrary to the best interests of our organization. The remedy sought is an order of expulsion.

According to said section 26(e) of the Constitution, you have the right to a hearing before the Disciplinary Committee as the governing body considering this matter.

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Greater Toronto Area

Health scare on flight from Tel Aviv bungled: passengers

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Passengers on an Air Canada flight from Tel Aviv to Toronto are unhappy with the way airport, airline and medical authorities handled a potentially dangerous health scare.

On Jan. 9, eight passengers aboard Air Canada flight 085, who were participants of one of two birthright Israel groups on the same flight, became violently ill.

They were diagnosed with acute gastroenteritis, which is inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract. Their symptoms included nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Health officials who met with the passengers told reporters that three passengers were hospitalized and assessed.

"There were about eight people who started throwing up on the plane," said Diana Zaidlin, a passenger on the flight who was on her way home from a birthright Israel tour, but not a member of the group that fell ill.

"It seemed like they had food poisoning or something," she said, adding that some were getting sick in their seats.

"People were vomiting, and people were sleeping on the floor of the plane, in the aisles," said Adam Saporta, 26, who was also on the flight and was a member of Zaidlin's group.

Natalie Links, 18, another passenger and member of the same group, said that she had two of the ill passengers sitting behind her, but she had no idea there was a problem until she disembarked the plane.

"We got through customs, but people weren't allowed to go get their baggage. Everyone was wondering why, and some thought it was because we didn't claim everything," Links said.

Air Canada representative Angela Mah told reporters that it's "standard operating procedure to have health officials meet the aircraft on arrival in cases like this."

But Zaidlin said that airport authorities made numerous mistakes in handling the health scare.

"From what one of the officers told us, they weren't supposed to let us off the plane. But they did. It was an accident. They caught us at customs, and some people had already gone to get their bags and they caught them and brought them back," she said.

Saporta, who was sitting at the front of the plane and was one of the first ones off, had to be tracked down by airport authorities after he had already retrieved his luggage.

"I was actually waiting outside the baggage claim for a friend of mine who I was supposed to take home with me and he never came out, so when I went back in, they pulled me to the side and took me upstairs. What was interesting is that there were six or seven people on our trip who just left. They didn't find them, and they [the passengers] didn't even know what was going on," Saporta said.

Scott Armstrong, the manager of media and communications for the Greater Toronto Airport Authority (GTAA), denied that it was a mistake that some of the passengers were able to leave the airport before being assessed by the medical team.

"Based on the information that was available to the medical staff, they made a decision on the floor," he said, adding that five agencies were involved in this incident: the GTAA, the airline, customs, the Public Health Agency of Canada and ambulance services.

The authorities managed to round up about 75 of the 201 passengers, who landed at 9 p.m., and held them in a corner of the customs area of the airport.

"It was very disorganized. I felt very confused. They didn't inform anybody," Saporta said.

"For half an hour we sat in the corner of the big customs room, where all the booths were. They put us off to the side and just left us there," Zaidlin said.

Links said that when passengers of other flights were coming through the customs area, they complained that they were in such close proximity to people who could be contagious.

"They said, 'Why are all these people here if they're all supposedly sick?' Then they moved us to another room," Links said.

"They put us in a stuffy, hot room and gave us water, but no food, and we stayed there for three hours, Zaidlin said."

"They didn't tell us anything, they completely kept us



Natalie Links and Roman Levitin were quarantined at the airport after eight passengers on their flight from Tel Aviv to Toronto became violently ill.

in the dark, and it honestly seemed like they had no idea what they were doing. They weren't organized, and we asked them and they said this wasn't the first time this had happened. But you figure that if this isn't the first time that they quarantined people, shouldn't they know what they are doing? They really didn't."

Saporta said he was upset that about 75 people were forced to sit in a room with the ill without proper protection.

"We were all in the same room. In fact, I was sitting next to one of the girls who [had been] throwing up... She wasn't isolated from anyone else," he said.

"What if it was malaria or SARS or something? The whole plane would have gotten it. And not only that, everyone who left the airport and was not stuck in quarantine could have also infected the whole country."

Links said that it wasn't until one of the quarantined passengers announced that he had called the media that they were given masks and protective suits.

"Eventually, someone said that they called Citytv, so they were like, 'Well, now, we can't have a newspaper or a news company come and see that you guys aren't wearing suits,'" Link said.

In response to Saporta's complaint that he had been sitting next to a sick passenger in the isolation room for two hours before being given a mask and suit, Armstrong said, "It turns out that the protective gear wasn't required at all."

When asked if the gear should have been distributed right away, rather than two hours later, he said: "After any kind of an incident... we review the way that the procedure went... and we'll make adjustments based on what went well and what can be improved. But I'm not going to second guess every single decision that was made."

Zaidlin said that while she was being held by authorities, her waiting family was told that health officials were evaluating all the passengers.

"They told them they were taking all our temperatures and asking us all questions, which wasn't true. They weren't. They took a few people's temperatures, and they took those from the group who were sick and they took their temperatures."

Zaidlin, Links and Saporta said that their temperatures weren't taken before they were released, but they were asked if they had exhibited any of the symptoms on their way out of the holding room.

Saporta, who is in the process of writing a letter to Health Canada about his ordeal, feels that much improvement needs to be made in this area.

"There should have been someone on the plane right away giving masks and gowns... Something should have been done quicker. Thankfully, it wasn't anything major, but had it been something major, who knows?"

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Mizrachi honoree is 'in front and behind the scenes'

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Kurt Rothschild says he was very moved to learn that the World Mizrachi Organization is writing a Torah in his honour.

The Torah will be donated to a new community in the Halutzia region of the Negev, a cause near to Rothschild's heart.

The Toronto philanthropist and chair of the World Mizrachi organization, who spends about four months of the year in Israel, has been to the fledgling town many times. In 2005, he spearheaded a fund to help create new Jewish communities in the Negev for almost 10,000 evacuees from Gaza and the northern West Bank. He brought the idea to UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, which co-ordinated the fund, named for the former Netzarim settlement in Gaza.

In an interview last week at his decidedly non-upscale Toronto office, Rothschild said he was struck by the "courage" and "enterprise" of the former Netzarim residents who are building the town, and by "how much they've accomplished in such a short time."

Rabbi Meir Rosenberg, executive director of Mizrachi Canada, which is responsible for the Sefer Torah project in Toronto, said that a scribe in Israel has already begun the

project and it's expected to be completed this summer.

Any additional funds raised will support educational institutions and social welfare programs in Israel and elsewhere, Rabbi Rosenberg said.

The Torah project is one aspect of Mizrachi's celebration of Israel's 60th anniversary this year.

Rothschild, a great-grandfather who believes the Jewish community's greatest need is the education of its



Kurt Rothschild
(Frances Kraft photo)

young people, is being honoured for "his years of work on behalf of world Jewry," the rabbi said.

He is "in the front, and behind the scenes, in many areas in the community," Rabbi Rosenberg added.

Rothschild does not seek honour and "looks out for the benefit of each and every person within the wider Jewish community," he said.

"No matter how many projects he's currently involved in, the one he takes up at any given moment of the day is the one that has his full attention."

Rothschild's dedication to the Jewish community — he sold his national contracting business in 1987 to devote himself to it full-time — can be traced to his modern Orthodox upbringing in Cologne, Germany, and the effects of the Holocaust on his contemporaries and succeeding generations.

"I see in front of me the million Jewish children who were murdered and who would have been founding families and having children of their own and contributing to the future of the Jewish people," he said with quiet intensity.

After leaving Germany as a teenager, Rothschild completed his high school education in London, England, before going to work in an electrical shop there. He would later study electrical engineering at Queen's University.

In England, Rothschild was interned with several thousand other young German Jews and sent to Canada, where he spent two years in an internment camp near Fredericton.

Among the other internees was Rabbi Erwin Schild, rabbi emeritus of Adath Israel Congregation and a fellow native of Cologne, whom Rothschild still counts among his friends.

Although he has always identified as modern Orthodox, Rothschild said he feels "very much part of the total Jewish community."

"I feel it is most important that we should stick together, even if we sometimes disagree on matters of ideology."

Rothschild puts his words into practice, "straddling" — as he puts it — the different parts of the Orthodox community, which in recent years has seen some marked divisions between its modern Orthodox and haredi sectors.

He attributes them in some cases to "excessive language."

In an attempt to moderate the situation, he sometimes tries to "talk to both sides," he said. "I think it's essential there should be an interrelationship of some kind, without sacrificing your beliefs."

As well, he said he has "no problem" going into communal halls of non-Orthodox synagogues and relating to people there.

However, he is careful to explain that he does not condemn others who feel differently, and also that for Orthodox Jews separation of men and women during prayer is mandated so they can focus on relating to God. "I do pray in Orthodox synagogues," he clarified.

"People may not agree with what I say, but they do know that I talk with integrity and not trying to gain political points."

In addition to his involvement with Mizrachi, which dates back some 50 years, Rothschild has served on the boards of institutions including schools, yeshivot and hospitals both here and in Israel.

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'Programs are harder to sell than bricks'

Continued from page 3

A decision on the future of the Dr. Abraham Shore She'arim Hebrew Day School – which is having cash flow difficulties and is being jointly managed by the federation's Centre for Enhancement of Jewish Education – is expected later this month.

For those who wonder why large sums of money are going to federation projects such as the new Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in Vaughan and rebuilding the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre (BJCC) at a time when there is financial need in the Jewish education system, Koschitzky noted that the federation's Tomorrow project (which includes Lebovic and the BJCC) is run "completely separately," and that its funding does not come from the annual UJA campaign.

Federation funding encompasses a number of "circles" – capital projects, endowments, the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto, and the annual campaign – Koschitzky said. "Many times, donors have participated in two of these circles, but many times they are only in-

terested in one."

The Jewish community has "a number of donors who want to give money to capital projects, whether to an art museum or the opera house," he added. "What we're trying to do is be a switchboard to connect them to Jewish causes."

Speaking in general terms, Koschitzky said that "programs, in general, are a harder sell than capital projects... It's an easier sell to sell bricks and mortar."

He said that transparency is "very important to today's federation," and that the average donor is told where his or her money is going.

According to information available from the federation online at jewishtoronto.com, the organization's campaign expenses total just under 10 per cent of funds raised and are "among the lowest of any non-profit organization."

Federation spokesperson Howard English told *The C/N* that marketing expenses – including a \$20,000 campaign video that used, in part, professional actors – accounted for .004 per cent of the federation's \$157 million in revenue last year from all sources.



ISRAEL AT 60: Grade 3 students at United Synagogue Day School's Beth Tzedec campus proudly display a poster they created of the seas of Israel as part of their Israel at 60 study program. Pictured, from left, are Ze'ev Schlifer, Casey Levitt, Sydney Manis, Rachel Goldszmidt, Leah Kane and Brittany Lieberman.

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Greater Toronto Area

Kits help give abused women a new start

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Elisha Wagman is determined to help abused women get a new start.

For five years, Wagman, 37, co-founder of Compound, a youth-based marketing agency, has headed a project aimed at collecting household items for women moving out of women's shelters.

The seeds for the project were planted in 2002, she said, when she learned that North York Women's Shelter had an emergency situation.

"The manager of fundraising had suddenly left, and there was a number of women moving out. The staff had nothing to give them that would help ease their transition.

"They were in a bind, and I conceived the project to help them through the process."

Wagman, who has worked in fundraising for a number of non-profits, such as the Law Society of Ontario, said that colleagues at Compound, as well as thousands of volunteers, went to work collecting household items such as cutlery, shower curtains, towels, pots and pan dust bins, and brooms. The items – T-Fal donated a number of small appliances and Sleep Country donated some beds and had them delivered – were packed in laundry hampers or plastic storage bins.

"These were items the mothers could not afford. They're not luxury items – they are necessities. Some mothers had four children, so the small amount of money the government provides as a start-up fee does not go very far," Wagman said.

"I began to wonder that if it's like this here, isn't it like this at every shelter? I did some research and discovered that all shelters have a gap in services."

In December, she said, they spent two days packing the collected items, and the Ontario Provincial Police delivered them to the some 30 shelters in the city, and helped them load



Elisha Wagman, co-founder of Compound

and unload the kits.

Her ultimate goal for the project, Wagman said, is to teach staff at shelters to put together the kits themselves.

"Shelters are underfunded, and all their money goes towards programs and looking after the women," she said. "It's difficult, therefore, for them to assume the project, so we may have to do it until we get some trained volunteers."

She's always looking for volunteers to help out, she said,

"especially families. It's important for children to help shop for the items and help pack, because they learn an important lesson. We take so many things for granted. These women need items that we use without even thinking about it."

Wagman said she has received a number of "rewarding and heartbreaking" letters from women thanking her "for making sure they're not forgotten."

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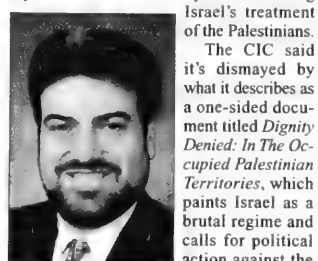


EVERY STEP OF THE WAY.

CIC 'disappointed' by Red Cross report on Israel

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

The Canada-Israel Committee is strongly criticizing the Geneva-based International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for a report it released late last year condemning



Moshe Ronen

Israel's treatment of the Palestinians. The CIC said it's dismayed by what it describes as a one-sided document titled *Dignity Denied: In The Occupied Palestinian Territories*, which paints Israel as a brutal regime and calls for political action against the Jewish state, despite the human-itarian organization's officially apolitical mandate.

Authorized by Red Cross observers "on the ground" in Israel and the Palestinian territories, each section of the eight-page text contains accounts taken exclusively from Palestinians, who all bemoan their living conditions. The text is accompanied by photos of Palestinian lands and people in various states of distress.

Chapters are headed by subject titles that castigate Israel. Page 1 reads "Occupied," page 2 "Trapped in the Gaza Strip," and page 7 "Harassment by Settlers," while the closing

page is titled "An appeal for a dignified life."

The latter section begins with an accusatory statement levelled at Israel.

"The dignity of the Palestinians is being trampled underfoot day after day, both in the West Bank and Gaza," it states.

The section closes by asking for "prompt, innovative and courageous political action [to] change the harsh reality of this longstanding occupation."

An earlier paragraph laments that "Gazans are often killed, wounded or arrested" when they approach fences surrounding their territory that were erected to prevent incursions by "militants" into Israel.

In response to the report, Moshe Ronen, national chair of the CIC, sent a letter to David Pratt, the Canadian Red Cross' adviser to the ICRC's secretary general and special ambassador to the humanitarian organization, in which Ronen reminded Pratt of remarks he made in Ottawa last November to the visiting families of captured Israeli soldiers about the Red Cross' inability to politically advocate for their return.

"Based on your statement to the [Eldad] Reggev and [Ehud] Goldwasser families that due to the ICRC official policy of neutrality in conflicts, the organization could not involve itself in any political action towards the release of the soldiers, I was surprised and disappointed at the [ICRC report],"

Ronen wrote.

On its website, the ICRC's mission statement says that it's "an impartial, neutral and independent organization whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of war and internal violence and to provide them with assistance."

In his letter, Ronen further calls the ICRC document "troubling" and a "monumental departure" from the Red Cross' traditional impartiality.

"Its condemnatory call to political action against Israel flies in the face of the principles you elucidated [to the soldiers' families] in Ottawa," Ronen wrote.

"[They] and the Canadian Jewish community will no doubt be left wondering why the ICRC refuses to intervene politically on their behalf when it so readily condemns the State of Israel."

Ronen ends by urging the Red Cross to "do everything in its power to safeguard the rights of the kidnapped soldiers, and all Israelis, without reference to a political agenda."

As of *The C/JN's* deadline, the CIC said it had not received a reply from Pratt, but the Canadian Red Cross said he was in the process of crafting a response.

Dorothea Krimitsas, the ICRC's media relations officer for the Middle East and North Africa, told *The C/JN* via e-mail last week that the report doesn't violate the organization's political neutrality.

"On Dec. 13, ICRC appealed for immediate political steps to be taken to improve the humanitarian situation in Gaza and the West Bank, because it came to the conclusion that humanitarian assistance alone cannot contain the deep humanitarian crisis there," she wrote.

"Calling for political action because humanitarian assistance is no longer enough to help solve the deep humanitarian crisis in the occupied territories does not mean that we are departing from our neutrality."

The ICRC published the Dec. 13 call to action in a statement on its website in which Béatrice Mégevand Roggo, the ICRC's head

of operations for the Middle East and North Africa, said her organization "calls on Israel to respect its obligations under international humanitarian law to ease restrictions on movement in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank and to lift the retaliatory measures that are paralyzing life in Gaza."

Mégevand

Roggo did not call on Hamas or the Palestinian Authority to crack down on attackers targeting Israel. Instead, she asked that the "Palestinian factions" stop endangering civilians.

A link to the *Dignity Denied* report followed Mégevand Roggo's statement.

Asked whether the ICRC felt its document was missing context as to why Israel needs to maintain its security measures, Krimitsas replied, "The ICRC, as a neutral humanitarian organization, never comments on the reasons and causes for conflict, and, therefore, would not comment on the reasons why Israel takes security measures to protect its civilians."

She added that the Red Cross has "acknowledged on several occasions, including publicly, Israel's right to protect its own civilian population [and that]... access to captured Israeli soldiers remains a priority for the ICRC."

In a statement last summer, ICRC president Jakob Kellenberger said his organization was doing everything it could to determine the condition of Israel's kidnapped soldiers.

"In Lebanon and in Gaza, we have repeatedly called on those holding the soldiers to treat them humanely and with full respect of international humanitarian law," he said at the time. "We spare no effort towards achieving this goal. We do not take 'no' for an answer and do not give up."

The Red Cross still has no news or updates on the status of the missing soldiers.



Dorothea Krimitsas

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Gerald Cromer is Professor of Criminology at Bar-Ilan University where he has published in the areas of political extremism, political violence and terrorism. Professor Cromer is a founding member of Kehillat Yedidya, a modern orthodox congregation that has a long history of a more active role for women in the ritual and organizational aspects of the community and is involved in other nascent liberal Orthodox groups in Israel. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the New Israel Fund and involved in the Fund's work in the area of pluralism.



For more information, please call 416-781-4322

Corrections

The Jan. 10 story "Foreign Affairs minister visits Middle East" erroneously identified Moshe Ronen as the CEO of the Canada-Israel Committee (CIC). Ronen is the national chair of the CIC. Quotes attributed to Ronen in the story should have been attributed to Shimon Fogel, the organization's CEO. The story also inadvertently identified Ehud Barak as the prime minister of Israel. In fact, he is defence minister. Ehud Olmert is prime minister. *The C/JN* regrets the errors.

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Torontonians help reclaim cemetery in Belarus

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

A town that was once home to little more than 3,000 Jews in prewar Russia now has its shtetl's cemetery back.

Thanks to the efforts of Toronto couple Celia Siegerman Denov and Robert Bell, the Jewish descendants of families from Sharashova, Belarus, now have a physical reminder of what was once the town's Jewish minority.

Siegerman Denov, a retired social worker, told *The CJN* her father and his family immigrated to Canada from Sharashova in 1905.

The restoration of the cemetery was officially completed in September 2007 at a ceremony that was attended by Sharashovans, local politicians and dignitaries.

Siegerman Denov first became interested in restoring the cemetery after a cousin, who was working in Moscow in 1990, visited Sharashova in the early days of glasnost — when Russia opened up for renewed tourism — and discovered there were still some Jews living in the town.

At the time, she said, "the cemetery had been completely abandoned and was in very poor condition. In fact, it was so overgrown the [headstones] had fallen into the ground."

But it was still not as desecrated as other Jewish cemeteries of the region had been, she said.

Siegerman Denov visited her ancestral home for the first time in 2000, while on a trip with her cousins.

"When I first got to the cemetery area, I couldn't find



Celia Siegerman Denov contemplates the new monument she helped erect at the Sharashova cemetery
(Robert Bell photo)

it. I was actually standing on it, but cows were grazing on it," she said.

On a return visit in 2005, Siegerman Denov had the good fortune to befriend Franklin Swartz, an American Jew living in Minsk, Belarus, who also happened to be the executive director of Voluntas: The East European Jewish Heritage Project — a charity that negotiates with the Belarus government to allow Jewish cemeteries to be listed as protected historic sites.

According to Siegerman Denov, Swartz quickly became an essential guide and interpreter and helped to obtain permits for the eventual restoration.

She also acknowledged the help and guidance of Michael Lozman, head of the charitable Eastern European Jewish Cemeteries Project Inc. in Albany, N.Y. (www.restorejcem.org), who also travelled to Sharashova with her.

The project, funded by the United Jewish Federation of Northeastern New York, collects contributions from the community to help "restore cemeteries... destroyed by the Nazis."

However, the cost of restoring the cemetery proved prohibitive until recently, when the Siegerman family was able to put nearly \$20,000 together to privately finance the construction of a new metal gate and perimeter fence — about 1,500 metres long — and the erection of a cenotaph commemorating the Jews buried there and those lost to the atrocities of the Holocaust.

Its inscription reads: "In loving memory of the once

vibrant Jewish community, with fervent hopes for a peaceful and just world for all. In memory of those who were deported to Auschwitz January 30 - February 2, 1943."

Though Bell and Siegerman Denov had to run all their wording and construction plans by a municipal "ideology monitor," they managed to get the work done by enlisting the help of the local townspeople.

Bell noted that Sharashova is still a small village in which many buildings are still without modern plumbing and people continue to use outhouses as the norm.

As such, the townsfolk relied on horse-drawn carriages to transport segments of the new fence to and fro and used scythes to clear the cemetery grounds of weeds.

"The local authorities advised us against using wood for the fence," Siegerman Denov said. "Because it could be taken down and used for fuel."

While on the trip, Lozman arranged for Siegerman Denov and Bell to meet with local high school students to talk about the Jewish community of Sharashova and ask them to write essays about what they knew of the Jews and the Holocaust.

"The elders in the village remember what happened to the Jews," Siegerman Denov said. "One boy wrote that his grandparents remembered the Jews. But the Jewish community was a bit of a mystery to them."

Still, when the cemetery was finally re-opened in early September, Siegerman Denov said she witnessed many of the town elders paying their respects and crying in front of the newly erected monument.

"Locals spoke and thanked us for doing this," Bell said. "Everyone in the village seemed happy we were there. Not just for giving them work, but for doing the right thing after all these years."

Bell noted that there wasn't time to raise all the headstones, and Siegerman Denov said she plans to return to Sharashova in the future to complete the work and add a Hebrew inscription to the cemetery's monument.

She called the endeavour "one of the most fulfilling and moving things I have done in my life."

Siegerman Denov and Bell also urged others wishing to restore cemeteries in eastern Europe to contact Lozman and Swartz, and to do so soon.

"There are so many abandoned Jewish cemeteries in eastern Europe. The time is right now, as governments are open to protecting [them] and urban development is imminent."

For more information, contact cdenov@aol.com.



The new gates and fence at Sharashova's Jewish cemetery
(Robert Bell photo)

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Doctors, family battle over issue of life support

By RHONDA SPIVAK

Special to the C/JN

WINNIPEG — The condition of an 84-year-old Orthodox Jew who is on life support is improving after doctors at Winnipeg's Grace Hospital tried to pull the plug on him more than a month ago, against his family's religious beliefs.

Minam Geller said her father, Sam Golubchuk, "is alert" and "his eyes are open."

According to Neil Kravetsky, the family's lawyer, it's only because the family went to court on Nov. 30 and obtained an



Arthur Shafer

ex parte injunction (without notice to the hospital) that doctors were prevented from removing Golubchuk's life support.

Kravetsky said that on Dec. 12, one day after a court hearing in the case, a notation in Golubchuk's hospital chart recorded some improvement in his neurological condition, including "some eye movement [in response] to voice," "more spontaneous eye opening" and "more spontaneous right arm movement."

On Dec. 17, the word "awake" was written in Golubchuk's hospital chart.

Kravetsky said that at the Dec. 11 hearing, Golubchuk's "entire chart was not presented by the hospital, only some parts of it." He asked for and received the chart from the hospital after the hearing.

Kravetsky sent the chart to Dr. Daniel Rosenblatt, a critical care physician in New Jersey, and Dr. Leon Zacharowicz, a pediatric neurologist in New York. Affidavits from both doctors were filed in court on Jan. 8.



Rabbi Avraham Altein

The affidavits won't be made public until Judge Perry Schulman rules on whether they are admissible as evidence.

Lawyers for the hospital and doctors have objected to the admissibility of the affidavits, saying it's not for the court to decide whether to prefer the opinion of one doctor over the other.

At a Jan. 11 hearing on the matter, a lawyer for Grace Hospital, Bill Olson, said that the "issue is whether the court through an injunction should be interfering in

the process of dying, but you don't have to prolong it... A person is considered a *goses* if they cannot possibly live for 72 hours, even by using whatever machines modern medicine has available," he said.

"This means that if Golubchuk were a *goses* and he wasn't on life support, we would not be required to put him on it. However, even when a person is a *goses*, if he is already on life support, then it cannot be withdrawn... In Golubchuk's case, it can't be said he is a *goses*."

Arthur Shafer, director of University of Manitoba's Centre for Professional and Applied Ethics, said there should be no moral difference between putting someone on life support and then taking them off as opposed to never putting them on in the first place.

"Otherwise, doctors will be a lot slower to plug people in, and some people may die who should have been plugged in."

Shafer said that if Golubchuk "is in an irreversible vegetative state, he could potentially be like this for a very long time... If so, would the Orthodox Jewish community want to see tens or hundreds of thousands of people in Canadian hospitals kept alive for decades by ventilators and other machines? Is that how they want us to spend our scarce medical resources?"

He added that former Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon, "who appears to be in an irreversible vegetative state, may be getting this kind of treatment, but if every Israeli got this kind of treatment, the whole state budget would be used up. Should every Jew really be kept alive like Ariel Sharon?"

doctors' medical decisions."

The hospital maintains that it's the right of the physicians treating Golubchuk to decide when to terminate life support, as opposed to his family or the courts.

At the Jan. 11 hearing, Kravetsky told Schulman that the affidavits of doctors Rosenblatt and Zacharowicz were highly relevant and referred to facts recorded in the hospital chart about Golubchuk's condition that had not been put before the court by the doctors or the hospital.

"This court should have [Golubchuk's] full hospital chart. We are talking about a man's life," Kravetsky said.

"The evidence is so important [that] justice requires that it be admitted," he added.

Olson said that even if the judge decides that the treating doctors have the right to make the decision to pull the plug, this may not happen, as the doctors would re-evaluate Golubchuk's condition to see if the action is still warranted.

Schulman was set to render a decision on the admissibility of the affidavits of Rosenblatt and Zacharowicz, or give some direction about them, by the end of this week.

"From a halachic standpoint, what is at issue is at what point a person is considered to be a *goses* [a person in the final stage of dying]," said Rabbi Avraham Altein, Winnipeg's senior Chabad Lubavitch rabbi.

"When a person is a *goses*, you are not allowed to hasten

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Anatshenu

U.S. judge rules that forced sale of Stern art was theft

BY JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — A Rhode Island federal court judge has made U.S. legal history in ruling that the forced sale of art by Jews in Nazi Germany is the equivalent of theft.

The decision is a posthumous victory for Max Stern of Montreal, owner of the landmark Dominion Gallery for over 40 years, and a major turning point in an international quest headed by Concordia University on behalf of his estate for the restitution of the hundreds of artworks the German-Jewish Stern sold under duress after the Nazis came to power.

On Dec. 27, U.S. District Court Judge Mary Lisi ordered an elderly German-born aristocrat living in Providence, R.I., to hand over to the Stern estate a painting she inherited. Her stepfather bought the work over 70 years ago at a Cologne auction, where Stern, then owner of a Dusseldorf gallery, was forced to liquidate his remaining inventory and private collection.

Clarence Epstein, who is heading the Stern art restitution project, said the judgment "sends a strong message to all possessors of property looted" from Stern.

From 1935 on, Stern was under pressure to get out of the art trade because of the Nuremberg laws and was directed by Nazi officials, namely the Reich Chamber for the

Fine Arts, to sell off his holdings. He is believed to have had to dispose of some 400 works between 1935 and 1937. The final sale was at the Lempertz auction house in Cologne in November 1937. The painting in question was one of more than 200 works that went under the gavel at that sale.

Lisi determined that the Stern estate is the rightful owner of *Girl From the Sabiner*

Mountains, a 19th-century oil by Franz Xaver Winterhalter, that it was "taken unlawfully" from Stern and that the defendant, Maria-Louise Bissonnette, an 83-year-old baroness, is in wrongful possession of the painting. Concordia, along with McGill University and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem are the main beneficiaries of the Stern estate.

Lisi concluded that although the painting

was paid for by her stepfather, Karl Wilharm, "It is clear that Dr. Stern's relinquishment of his property was anything but voluntary," Wilharm, she says, never had title to the painting and therefore neither does Bissonnette who inherited it from her mother in 1991, although she has had it in her possession since 1959. She has lived in the United States since 1956.

Sister encouraged by Bernier's comment on imprisoned brother

BY DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The sister of imprisoned Montrealer Saul Itzhayek was encouraged last Sunday by the report that Foreign Minister Maxime Bernier has asked Indian officials to have her brother's case "put in order as soon as possible."

But Sylvia Itzhayek also told *The CJA* that the family won't be satisfied until it sees some concrete action by the Indian government to free her brother, imprisoned for the last eight months and serving a three-year sentence in a remote Indian prison for crossing the border from Nepal with a lapsed visa.

Last Saturday, Foreign Affairs Canada issued a press release stating that Bernier had "discussed" the case with India's external affairs minister, Pranab Mukherjee, and industry and commerce minister, Kamal Nath.

Sylvia Itzhayek said she was initially discouraged by the vagueness of the statement, which did not elaborate on what "discussed" meant, but she was later buoyed by a subsequent report saying Bernier had conveyed the Canadian government's desire to see the case resolved expeditiously.

"It is an important case for us and we bring it up all the time," Bernier was quoted as telling reporters in Ramallah last weekend while on a visit to Israel and the West Bank.

The same report quoted Canadian parliamentary secretary Deepak Obhrai, who accompanied Bernier on the trip, as saying he was "hopeful that progress was being made" in the case.

Sylvia Itzhayek said she would like to see some sort of "timeline" that would give the family a clear sign that her brother would soon be headed home.

She said she spoke to her brother over the holidays, and he was very "depressed" over the lack of progress in the case. "He told me his 'heart hurt,' and I tried to encourage him as much as possible.

"We're pursuing all legal avenues in India, but he is very down."

She said Foreign Affairs has not been in regular touch with the family, except for about a month ago when her brother became ill from prison water. He is also reported to have lost 70 pounds.

Itzhayek, 42, was convicted and sentenced to three years in remote Motihari Prison on

charges that former justice minister Irwin Cotler described as "trumped up" (Itzhayek lives in Cotler's Mount Royal riding).

Itzhayek was in Nepal on business when his driver crossed the border to collect funds being wired to Itzhayek. However, at the border, the car was stopped and Itzhayek's travelling documents seized. Itzhayek says he was arrested — despite Indian authorities' promises of safe passage — when he crossed the border to retrieve his documents.

Cotler has been a leading advocate for Itzhayek, as have others such as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Helena Guergis, Secretary of State Jason Kenney, Liberal MP Dan McTeague, and others.

According to a Canadian Press story last week, Canadian government officials who are "close to the file" said Ottawa was "sensitive" about being perceived as interfering in another country's legal process, "but believe there are several provisions in India's legal code that allow for Itzhayek's release."

"It's in [India's] self-interest to [release Itzhayek]. It does not serve the purpose for anyone for him to remain in prison. He poses no threat. Never did," Cotler told CP.

Sylvia Itzhayek, for her part, understands the principle that Canada should not "get involved" in another country's judicial process.

But Foreign Affairs' official policy, she said, is also that it "must" intervene on behalf of a Canadian national who is "denied justice" or discriminated against.

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Kehilla program celebrates 25th anniversary

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Living in the Avenel, an apartment building near Avenue Road and Wilson Avenue sponsored by the Kehilla Residential Programme, has changed the life of Allen and his three children.

The 51-year-old single father of three teenagers who moved into the building about five years ago, said that after being diagnosed with cancer and then having a stroke, he was barely staying afloat.

"I did babysitting and some carpentry work, but when I had the stroke, I couldn't even go to the hospital because I had no one to care for the children."

Things began to turn around for him, he said, when he joined Temple Sinai. "They welcomed us with open arms. The kids started religious school and had b'nai mitzvot, and we've remained members. We've even had members put up my kids when I've been in the hospital."

When they joined the temple, he said, he was sleeping on a couch in a crowded apartment far from the Jewish community.

"It got to the point where I couldn't travel to synagogue," he said.

"We were fortunate, though, that with the help of JF&CS [now Jewish Family & Child], we got into this building. Now, we live on the bus line, and the synagogue is next door."

"As well, in this building, people look out for each other. It is a community within a community. I'm now living with dignity in the Jewish community, and I can work on other life issues."

Kehilla, which recently celebrated its 25th anniversary,

is the official non-profit housing agency of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. It promotes affordable housing initiatives in the Jewish community, and its mandates include education and awareness, project sponsorship, development consultation, research and property management.

Its properties include the Avenel, which has 111 units, divided among singles, couples, families, and offers suites for physically challenged tenants; Project Marc, a mutually assisted residential community on Bathurst Street in North York; Habayit Shelanu seniors residences on Kendal Avenue near Casa Loma; 2 Neptune Drive, which offers life lease housing for independent seniors; and the Elm Ridge Group Living Residence for seniors, which is run in partnership with Jewish Family & Child and operated by Baycrest.

Promotes affordable housing initiatives in Jewish community

Emerging projects include a Kehilla community residential building being planned to be part of the new Joseph & Wolf Lebovic Community Campus in York Region that will include a Reena community residence, and an affordable rent subsidy program in collaboration with UJA Federation and private landlords.

Lisa Lipowitz, Kehilla's director of community initiatives, was on the development team for the Avenel when it was built in 1992. She said that a lot of original tenants still live there.

"When the building was built, we could pick Jewish

clients, but with the demise of the [provincial] social housing program, we are not allowed to do that. We do have a lot of Jewish tenants, but the only thing that is Jewish about us is that we are in Jewish neighbourhoods."

She said that Kehilla started 25 years ago as a sub-committee of UJA Federation in order to look at housing for seniors. "It is now an affiliated agency of federation, and we are still facing the same issues. Lists are huge, and there is no movement. It is very frustrating."

Nancy Singer, Kehilla's executive director, said the agency is always looking for housing possibilities for the Jewish community.

"When federation purchased the property [in York Region for what is now the Lebovic Campus], we invited them to listen to us about our needs. Five years later, we've achieved some government funding, and we're about to build in collaboration with other Jewish agencies. [Our plans] are coming to fruition. It is a very exciting initiative."

She said that poverty levels in the Jewish community are only slightly below that of the general population.

Kehilla statistics note, among other things, that nearly one in seven elderly Jews in the GTA currently live below the poverty line; almost half of elderly Jewish women who live alone are poor; more than 4,000 Jewish working poor adults live below the poverty line in Toronto; and more than 4,000 Jews living in York Region live below the poverty line.

Singer said Kehilla has a history to be proud of. "Our name is not out there, but people do call us, and we give them leads."

Oren Levy, a Kehilla volunteer, said he works for the organization because he knows he is "helping Jewish families live with dignity."

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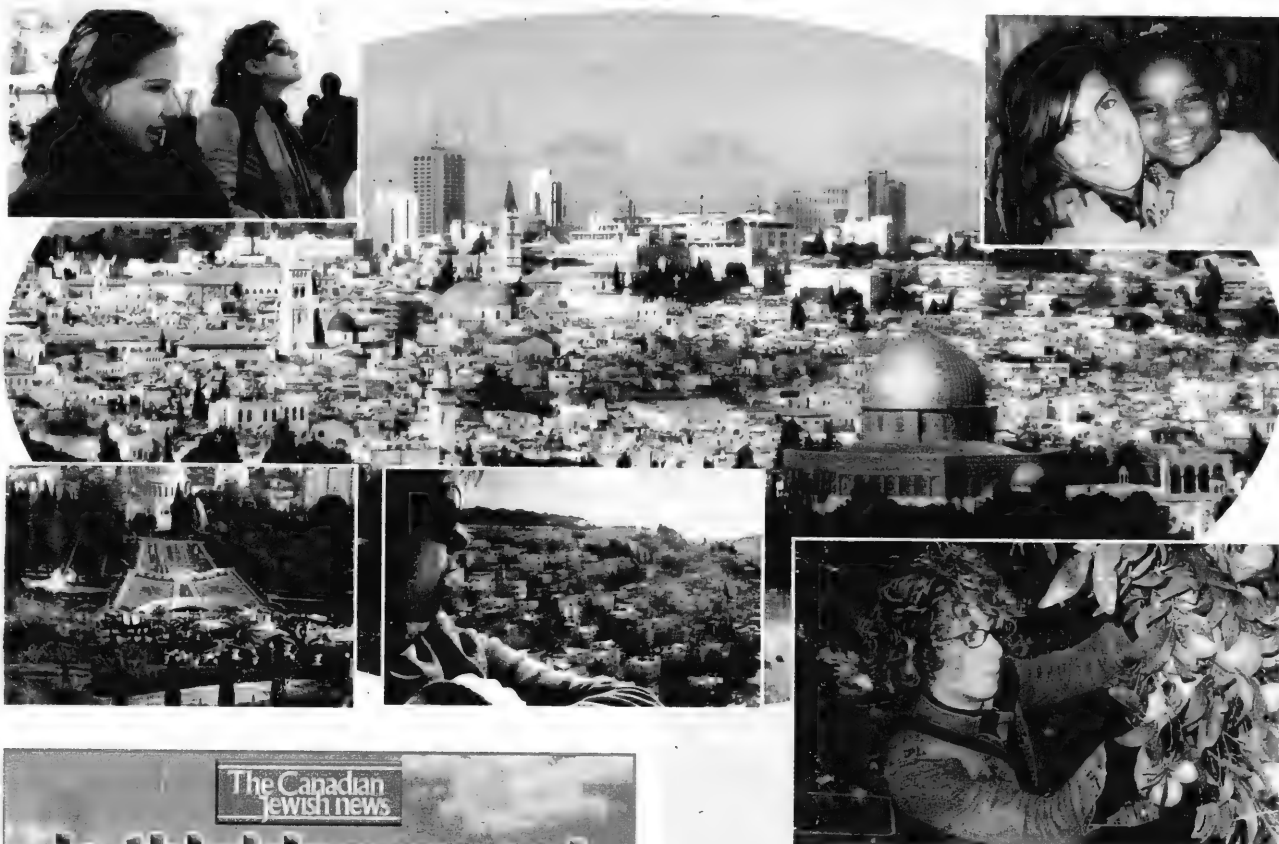
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On Campus



JUMPing into life in Israel

Earlier this month, 47 students and young professionals from the Greater Toronto Area travelled to Israel on the inaugural trip organized by the Jewish Urban Meeting Place (JUMP). This subsidized, 10-day, post-birthright program combined all aspects of the Holy Land – Zionism, religion, history, culture, tikkun olam and spirituality.

Alison Firestone, top left, got emotional during the group's visit to the Western Wall. The madrichah, Debbie Osiel, top right, gave a big hug to Notti, a heart patient who will get free life-saving surgery from an Israeli organization called Save a Child's Heart. A beautiful view of the Bahai Gardens in Haifa can be seen on the bottom left, and next to it is a photo of Linoy Hazan, who enjoyed the view of the Arab quarter in Jerusalem from a lookout point. Lauren Breslin picked sweet, ripe tangerines straight from the trees at Kibbutz Shiller near Rechovot for an organization called Table to Table that provides food for needy Israelis. At left, Lindsay Malet, inspired by her visit to the Kotel, sits to sketch her view of the Wall. And fittingly, at the centre of it all, is a breathtaking view of Jerusalem.

[Sheri Shefa photos]



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Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish News

Only paid Family Moments announcements can be guaranteed to appear in a specific issue, when received by deadline, 10 days prior to publication date. All other items will appear on a first come - first served basis as space allows.

Mazel tov announcements featured on onlaysia.com will appear once a month.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos and enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Please keep all announcements to 25 words, maximum. Send your photos to:

The CJN, Family Moments,
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or email to:
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Happy second birthday
Joshua Frank Wolgelerenter.
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Happy first birthday
Cole Danon, son of Rafael &
Andrea Danon. Grandson of
Eva & David Danon.



Happy 40th wedding
anniversary on Dec. 23 to
Elaine & Alan Rubinoff.
Love Fara, Michael, Jordyn,
Samantha, Joshua, Miles, Hayley,
Brooke, Ashley,
Naomi and Jeffrey.



Alana Blumfeld &
Aaron Kirsch were married
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What's New deadlines: Monday, Jan. 21, is the deadline for the Jan. 31 issue and Monday, Jan. 28, is the deadline for the Feb. 7 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Friday, Jan. 18

MUSICAL CELEBRATION

Temple Emanu-el celebrates Shabbat Shira and the temple's 50th anniversary with music by Canadian composers **Srul Glick** and **Ben Steinberg**. 8 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 19

SHABBAT SHIRA

Beth Tzedec Congregation Shabbat Shira service with **Cantor Simon Spiro** and the Beth Tzedec Singers will highlight chassidic music and its roots. Begins at 8:45 a.m. 416-781-3511

SHABBAT SERVICES

Shabbat morning services are held every week at Kensington Place Retirement Residence. 416-636-9555

SERVICE AND LUNCH

Chabad of Danforth-Beaches Shabbat morning services begin at 10 a.m. followed by kiddush luncheon in the home of **Rabbi Sholom Lezell** and family. 416-809-1365 or Rabbi@ChabadDB.com

Sunday, Jan. 20

YU KOLLEL YOM RISHON

Rabbi Ephraim Kanarfogel will discuss "The Ethics of Ha-

lachic Decision-Making in the Medieval Jewish World and its Implications for Modernity" at Yeshiva University's Sunday learning program. 9 a.m. at Shaarei Tefillah Synagogue. For information, www.yu.edu/kolleyomrison or 416-783-6960.

BREAKFAST AND TALK

Beth David Brotherhood presents **Dr. Corey Keeble**, curator of the Judaica Collection of the Royal Ontario Museum, speaking on Europe's great synagogues, past and present. 9:10 a.m. \$5. 416-633-5500

JEWISH VALUES

Dr. Elliott Malamet will lead a series of four classes examining how Jewish values align with the modern world. Today, "Judaism and the Family: An Introduction"; Jan. 27, "Can Modern Trends Actually

Enhance our Judaism?"; Feb. 17, "Judaism on Interpersonal Responsibility"; Feb. 24, "Love and Inter-marriage: The Current Challenge." Bagels and coffee 9:45 a.m., lecture 10:30 a.m. Series \$50, \$15/session, students \$5/session. Kehillat Shaarei Torah. reservations required, 416-229-2600, ext. 3.

JEWISH VIEW OF POLAND

Join Shaar Shalom Sisterhood as guests **Gordon and Bernice Starkman** and **Mark and Sheila Pinkus** present their "40 Minute Personal Journey to Warsaw, Kielce and the Surrounding shtetls of Krakow and Auschwitz." 10 a.m. All welcome. \$5 includes light breakfast. RSVP to arnac@hotmail.com.

LEARN & LUNCH

Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism presents **Prof.**

Eric Lawee on "Jews and Muslims in History: Facts, Myths, and Counter-myths." 11 a.m. Non-members \$20. RSVP and location, 416-385-3910 or robby@oraynu.org.

FUNDRAISING TEA

B'nai Brith Thornhill Lodge is holding a fundraising tea for the Alzheimer Society of York Region with guest speaker **Trevor O'Connor**. 2-4 p.m. at the Thornhill Community Centre, 7755 Bayview Ave. \$5. For information, call **Marilyn**, 905-731-9054.

JOURNEY THRU THE PALE

Friends of Yiddish present an illustrated lecture in Yiddish on "A Journey Through the Pale" by artist and historian **Vivian Felsen**. 2 p.m., 471 Lawrence Ave. W. Guests \$5.

Continued on page 31

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What's New

Continued from page 30

60 YEARS, 7 FILMS

The First Narayever film series in honour of Israel's 60th anniversary continues with the film *Under the Domim Tree*, about a group of teenage Holocaust survivors trying to create a new life while dealing with their traumatic past. Discussion following screening. Free. 3 p.m. 416-927-0546

KAYLA CONCERT

Kayla and Ralph the Dog perform at Beth Shalom Synagogue, 3:45 p.m. \$10, children under 3 free. Tickets and information, 416-783-6103.

Monday, Jan. 21

KING DAVID AND HIS WIVES

Rachel Adelman will lead a series of four classes examining "King David and His Wives," drawing on classical medieval commentary, Midrash, modern literary readings, art and poetry to study David's relationships with four women in his life: Avigail, Michal, Bathsheba and Avishag. Today through Feb. 11, 9:45-11 a.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. \$50. Register, 416-877-2050 or www.mekorot.ca.

TU B'SHVAT SEDER

The First Narayever Congregation hosts a seder and dinner, songs and discussion. 6:30 p.m. \$25, children 13 and under \$15, family maximum \$60. Call Dawn or Marsha to reserve, 416-927-0546.

MIDRASHIM ON VAYIKRA

Shayna Kravetz will lead a 4-week class, "Four Midrashim on Sefer Vayikra" today through Feb. 11, 8-9 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. 416-789-3213

RELIGION 101

Rabbi Wayne Allen discusses what Jews should know about Buddhism. 8 p.m. at Beth Tikvah Synagogue.

Tuesday, Jan. 22

HEALING GROUP

The Toronto Healing Project holds a 6-week group for those coping with physical illness and/or emotional despair. To Feb. 26, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Information and registration, 416-944-3359.

TUESDAYS AT THE MOVIES

Beth Tikvah Synagogue movie series with Larry Ankiewicz presents *Ushpizin*, about an Orthodox couple whose faith is tested. 2 p.m. \$5. 416-221-3434

HALF OF A YELLOW SUN

Adath Israel Sisterhood Book and Film Review series with Heather Cassel will discuss the novel *Half of a Yellow Sun* by C. N. Adichie. 8 p.m. \$10, non-members \$15. 416-635-5340

Wednesday, Jan. 23

KEEPING A DISTANCE

Beth Tzedec Congregation presents "Keeping a Distance: The Perennial Fear of the Jews" with Prof. Kenneth Stow, professor emeritus of Jewish History, University of Haifa. 7:30 p.m. 416-781-3511

SUPPORT GROUP

Parents and relatives of a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered (LGBT) person meet and discuss the new directions in their lives tonight and the third Wednesday of each month. 7:30 p.m. at Beth David Synagogue reference library. Call Noreen, 416-633-5500.

MISSIONARY SURVIVAL

Join Jews for Judaism's Counter Missionary Survival Seminar with Rabbi Michael Skobac. Gain an understanding of missionary movements and learn how to respond to the challenges they pose. Tonight through Feb. 20, 8 p.m. at the Markham Street Shul. Free, register, 905-761-0040.

THE JOYFUL SOUL

Aish Toronto presents "The Joyful Soul," a chassidic perspective on joyful spirituality in daily life with Rabbi Mitch Mandel. Tonight through March 5, 8 p.m. 949 Clark Ave. W. Series \$25, \$5/session.

Other News

TU B'SHVAT SEDER

Israel Forum hosts Tu b'Shvat seder with dinner and entertainment in English and Hebrew. \$25. Thursday, Jan. 24, 7 p.m. at Lipa Green Building. Reserve, 647-896-6365.

SHABBAT DINNER

Shaarei Shomayim Congregation hosts Friday night dinner for singles and young couples with Susan Jackson, executive director, Centre for Jewish Knowledge and Heritage. Friday, Jan. 25, 6:15 p.m. \$18, non-members \$20. RSVP by Jan. 22, 416-789-3213.

KULANU SHABBAT DINNER

Kulanu hosts Shabbat dinner for Jewish LGBTQ students and friends. Friday, Jan. 25, 7 p.m. at the Wolford Centre. RSVP, kulanutoronto@yahoo.ca.

ONEG SHABBAT

Oraynu Congregation for Hu-

manistic Judaism hosts an oneg Shabbat Tu b'Shvat Seder. Friday, Jan. 25, 7:30 p.m. \$10. RSVP, 416-385-3910 or roby@oraynu.org.

WOODWIND QUINTET

The Notus Woodwind Quintet will perform a community concert Saturday, Jan. 26, 8 p.m. at B'nai Torah Synagogue. \$12 advance reservation, \$15 at the door. Reserve, 416-226-3700.

THE SHIDDUCH CRISIS

Sasson V'Simcha presents Dr. Lisa Aiken on "The Shidduch Crisis: Root causes and remedies," followed by a panel discussion. Saturday, Jan. 26, 8 p.m. at Shaarei Tefillah Congregation. 416-256-4497

BAR/BAT MITZVAH

Downtown Jewish Community School hosts "Bar/Bat Mitzvah: All in the Family," the history and the meaning of bar/bat mitzvah with questions answered by Stuart Schoenfeld, chair of the Sociology Department, Glendon College. Sunday, Jan. 27, 10:15-11:30 a.m. All welcome. For information, call Joan, 416-924-6211, ext. 112.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child. 4600 Bathurst St. For information/registration, call Shawna 416-638-7800, ext. 215, or go to www.jfandcs.com.

How to Talk to Your "Ex" So That You Get What You Need. A 2-session workshop to learn effective communication and listening skills to better deal with ex-spouses and issues around parenting. Begins Tuesday, Jan. 22, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Promenade Mall, #313.

When You're About to Separate: What to Tell The Kids, a workshop for parents about to separate or in the early stages of separation on how to best meet your child's needs.

Tuesday, Jan. 29, 9:30 a.m.-noon at The Promenade Mall, #313.

FOR SENIORS

Chai Shalom Social Club presents Nina Shapilsky, Sunday, Jan. 20, 1:30 p.m. at Beth Emeth Synagogue. Information, 416-633-3838.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Casino Rama. Thursday, Jan. 31. Mah-jong, Tuesdays, Jan. 1 p.m.; Duplicate bridge, Wednesdays, 12:30-3 p.m.; Bridge, Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m. Information; Tues.-Thurs. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 416-395-7881.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

"Living Jewish in China," a lecture by Dolly Beil. Tuesday, Jan. 22, 10 a.m. \$2, non-members \$4. Israeli Club, Tu b'Shvat party. Tuesday, Jan. 22, 7 p.m. Call Dvorah, 905-763-2778.

WAGMAN CENTRE

55 Ameer Ave. 416-785-2500. Smile Theatre presents *The Great Farini*. Tuesday, Jan. 22, 7 p.m.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

Tu b'Shvat seder with Baruch Sienna, Monday, Jan. 21, 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$10, children \$5, family maximum \$18. By pre-registration only, ext. 235.

The Family Resource Centre drop-in for children 0-5 with parents/caregivers includes music circle, crafts, kosher snacks and weekly Shabbat celebration. Register for "Boogie Babies & Jammin Tots" with singer Deborah Maes, drumming fun and "Artsy Crafts,"

crafts, games and stories for pre-school aged children. For information, call 905-882-8509 or visit www.thefamilyresourcecentre.ca.

Kolel's winter and spring courses and one-night events offering learning opportunities run February through June. Register at ext. 255 or visit www.kolel.org.

School and daycare registration is now open for the 2008-09 school year. Morning, full-day options. For information, call ext. 248.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www.mnjcc.org.

"Don't Get Me Started!" with New Zealand's only Jewish comic, Deb Filler, Jan. 19, 8 p.m. and Jan. 20, 3 p.m. at the Al Green Theatre. \$25. Information 416-535-4556.

"Great Jewish Composers Music Lecture: Jews and Opera" with Samantha Clarke. Sunday, Jan. 20, 2-5 p.m. \$9 includes bagels and coffee. Information, ext. 0.

"Virtual Family Tree Workshop" with Bill Gladstone. \$50, \$75 per couple. Register, 416-635-2883, ext. 170.

Toronto Jewish Film Society begins its 30th season on Sunday, Jan. 27 with the screening of *Nina's Home*, a drama about the "houses of hope" established by the French government to shelter Jewish children during the Holocaust. 4 and 7:30 p.m. \$15 rush seats on sale 15 minutes before screenings. Information, ext. 606.

Register for Jewish life courses including Hebrew, Aramaic, Jewish Meditation.

Klezmer Players Workshop, a 10-week ensemble with Eric Stein, Tuesdays, 7:30-9:30 p.m.

Adult pottery, Wednesdays, 7-10 p.m. Registration, ext. 0.

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OBITUARIES and Related Notices

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Alan Clairman	Dec 28/07	3000 Dufferin Street
Ruth Caplan	Dec 29/07	3560 Bathurst Street
A. Robert Donn	Dec 30/07	277 Elmwood Avenue
Bernie Prusznowski	Dec 31/07	49 Bowring Walk
Syma Fraidenraich	Jan 1/08	3815 Corey Road
Ben Rose	Jan 2/08	10 Senlac Road
Arthur Friedman	Jan 3/08	429 Walmer Road
Denise Jenah	Jan 4/08	10 Torresdale Avenue
Ida Orliffe	Jan 4/08	55 Ameer Avenue
Charles Katz	Jan 5/08	570 Sherbourne Street

Steeles Memorial Chapel

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Salzman, Annette Ida	Jan. 1/08	Private
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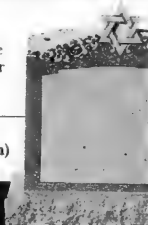
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Abe Zipursky מרים

Abe Zipursky passed away peacefully on December 7, 2007
with his family by his side.

Abe was born on September 12, 1920 in Winnipeg. He is
survived by his beloved wife Belle Butovsky Zipursky of 65
years and by his children Sheldon (Judy), Gerry (Nancy),
Debby (Ken), and Arnie (Fern) and grandchildren Mande
(Jason), Josh, Sam, Simona, Michael, Max, Sharla, Bonnie,
Dayna & Farah. Abe was predeceased by his parents Max
and Fanny Zipursky and sister Eleanor Fayerman.

For 45 years, he worked and carried on with pride the
tradition of the three generation kosher butcher shop
business, Zipursky's Kosher Meat Market in Winnipeg. He
also served the Jewish Community in a voluntary capacity
as a member of the Hebrew Sick Benefit Association
including the position as President of the men's social club.
Upon retirement in 1987, he and his wife Belle moved to
Richmond, BC and then in 2005 moved to the Weinberg
Residence in Vancouver. For Abe, known to his many
friends as "Zip", his greatest joy was family and spending
time with his children and grandchildren. The memory of
his mild manner and wonderful sense of humor with his one-
liners, will always bring a smile to the faces of his family
and friends.

Donations can be made to the Abe Zipursky Memorial Fund
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Coast to Coast

Ben Rose was 'a fine journalistic role model'

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

Journalist Ben Rose died earlier this month after what his children referred to as a long period of declining health. He was 86.

Obituary

His association with *The C.J.N.* as a reporter spanned more than 25 years, during which he concentrated on theatre, films and music, as well as general assignments.

C.J.N. editor Mordechai Ben-Dat said that Rose "was an invaluable, veteran writer on the staff of *The C.J.N.* His experience in the field dating back to World War II and his innate sense of what comprised the essence of a news story brought great credit to the paper. Ben was a friend and an adviser, and a fine journalistic role model to his younger colleagues."

Rose was born in Ottawa. His father was a pedlar who sold dry goods, chickens, eggs and apples to farms around the province. The family moved with him to Hull, Ont.; Bowmanville, Ont.; and later Toronto, where Rose attended Central High School of Commerce.

It was there that a supportive teacher inspired him to go into journalism, his daughter Ruth Hall said.

In Bowmanville, the family had a makeshift tennis court, where Rose learned to play. He continued to play tennis with great enthusiasm for many years.

In 1961, he won the Sloan Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship in Science, at Columbia University, and he, his wife Fanny and their two oldest children, Ruth and Henry, spent a year in New York.

He began his journalism career at the *Ottawa Journal*. While there, he twice

won the Ottawa Press Club Award.

In 1944, he joined the *Toronto Star*, where he worked for 21 years, concentrating on science and medical stories.

Together with fellow journalist Dennis Braithwaite, he founded the Newspaper Guild, a union for reporters. "It didn't make him terribly popular with the editors and publishers," Hall said.

However, she added, "he believed in standing up for what was right, even if it wasn't the most popular opinion."

For several years, he was an information officer for the Toronto Board of Education. From 1969 to 1972, he served as a trustee in Ward 6.

After that, he taught journalism at Sheridan College in Oakville, becoming co-ordinator of the course.

C.J.N. news editor Jeff Rosen was a student of Rose's at Sheridan College. He described him as "demanding — he expected nothing but the best."

Later, when he came to work at *The C.J.N.*, even though he had been a professor and Rosen a student, "he didn't put on airs," Rosen said.

"I learned a lot from him. He will be greatly missed."

Hall remembered that he not only enjoyed theatre but even directed some plays, one of which included her.

His wife, Fanny, she said, "played a big part in his life." Together, they loved to travel, explore and meet new people. When they got older, she said they went on several Elderhostel tours.

He was very close to his children and grandchildren, Hall said.

Rose was predeceased by his brother Maurice and sister Lilian. He is survived by his wife Fanny; his daughter Ruth Hall and her husband Terry; his son Henry and his wife Anne; and his son Paul and his wife Janice, as well as grandchildren Jeremy, Grant, Josh, Alicia, Nathaniel, Sarah, Houston and Adam.



Ben Rose

Creating a Jewish family tree

The Ontario Jewish Archives, part of the Latner Centre for Jewish Knowledge and Heritage and a department of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, is offering half-day workshops on how to create a Jewish family tree.

The workshops, given by Bill Gladstone, *C.J.N.* writer and avid genealogist, will provide an overview of many Jewish genealogical sites on the Internet.

Participants will learn how to use Family Tree Maker software, and by the end of the workshop, they will be able to locate family information on the Internet

and create their own family trees. Funding for the Virtual Family Tree Workshops is made possible through the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto.

Workshops will run from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Jan. 20 at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre and on March 16 at the Lipa Green Building.

To register, contact the Ontario Jewish Archives at 416-635-2883, ext. 170. Fee is \$50 per person or \$75 per couple.

For more information, e-mail ojal@ujafed.org or visit www.ontario-jewisharchives.org.

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RAYMOND JAMES

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Luscious lemon recipes

By SUE EPSTEIN
Special to The CJN

I recently returned from a three-day "gal pal" trip to the Northern Galilee area of Israel with two friends. It was heavenly. We had perfect weather, a leisurely drive, a lot of laughter, panoramic views of the crashing Tanur waterfalls, gorgeous wildflowers everywhere we looked, a pristine bird sanctuary and the Tel Dan Reserve, which is like stepping into a wonderland with scores of bubbling brooks feeding into a running river, and tall treetsops that reach for the sky and make it refreshingly cool.

We lodged in a charming cabin complete with a Jacuzzi in a small picturesque village not far from the northern border of Israel.

Now, you might ask, is this a travelogue or a food column? The grounds and gardens of the place where we stayed were a paradise of trees and flowers—a grove of pecan trees that was so beautiful that Motti, the owner, said his son's wedding was held there.

In the afternoon, while we lounged in the garden, Motti was pruning his fruit trees and we became the recipients of his hard

work. When we left Gan Yerok (Green Garden) our car was so laden with bags of clementines, pomelos and lemons there was hardly room for our luggage.

What do you do with almost 100 lemons? You go through all your recipes to find every lemon recipe you ever made and liked. I wish I could share these lovely lemons with you, but at least I can share the recipes.

LEMON AND GARLIC CHICKEN

I don't remember where I got this recipe from although it originated with someone's housekeeper who cooked for parties. It's a dish that you'll make time and time again.

The quantity of this recipe can easily be varied. It should be served with rice.

8 chicken thighs, skinless or not*
salt and pepper to taste
olive oil

1 part fresh squeezed lemon juice
2 parts dry white wine

2 whole heads garlic, peeled or not

*Your choice: My favourite is thighs, but other parts may be substituted. If you use breasts, cut them in half so the pieces are not too big. I wouldn't use all breast. You need the flavour from the thighs.

Preheat oven to 325. Salt and pepper the chicken to taste. You want it pretty salty.

Heat oil in a pan and brown the chicken over medium to medium high heat. Add 1 cup lemon juice and 2 cups white wine. The sauce should pretty much cover the chicken. If it doesn't (depending upon the size of the chicken pieces), just make up a little more and add.

Add 20 or more garlic cloves. Sometimes I don't bother with all of that garlic peeling. Just cut the whole heads of garlic in half. You can pick out the husks later.

Put the uncovered pan into the preheated oven. Bake and turn the chicken about every 20 minutes. A bulb baster is great for this. This will take an hour or more. When the chicken is falling off the bone tender and the sauce has reduced a bit, it is ready.

Notes: For really large quantities, you can skip the browning and cook at a lower temperature for a longer time and some browning will happen. I think that is what she did for the big crowds. For

variations, you can add herbs of choice, diced preserved lemon, capers, or olives. Makes 8 servings.

LEMON UPSIDE-DOWN CAKE

This is definitely not low caloric, but it's divine. Select small lemons for this cake; they're the ideal size. When the cake is done, it's inverted onto a serving plate and the top magically displays a lovely arrangement of caramelized lemon slices.

4 small lemons
1 cup plus 2 tbsp. butter (2 1/2 sticks), divided
1/4 cup packed light brown sugar
1 1/2 cups flour
1 1/2 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp. salt
2 tsp. vanilla extract or paste
1/4 cup sugar
2 eggs
1/2 cup milk, soy milk or water

Cut 3 of the lemons into 1/8-in. thick slices. Remove seeds and set aside. You will have about 30 lemon slices. Grate 1 teaspoon lemon peel from the remaining lemon. Set aside the grated peel; save the lemon for another use.

Heat 4 tbsp. of the butter in a 10-in. cast iron skillet or an ovenproof 10-in. saute pan until melted. Brush the sides of skillet with a little of the melted butter. Add the brown sugar, stir until it is moistened with the butter and spread it into an even layer. Arrange the lemon slices, slightly overlapping, to cover the bottom of the skillet. Set aside.

Heat the oven to 350. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt in a bowl and set aside.

Cut the remaining 6 tbsp. butter into a mixing bowl. Add vanilla extract or paste. Using an electric mixer, beat the butter, scraping down the sides of the bowl, until creamy. Add the sugar and grated lemon peel and beat until light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs one at a time.

Add half the flour mixture and beat until blended. Add milk or other liquid and beat until combined, then add the remaining flour mixture and beat until blended.

Spread the batter over the lemons in the skillet to cover evenly. Bake 30 to 35 minutes, or until the cake is golden and the centre tests done. Let the cake stand 5 minutes, then invert the skillet onto a platter. To serve, slice into wedges with a sharp knife. Makes 8 servings.

LEMON BISCOTTI WITH SOUR LEMON DRIZZLE

A real treat for lemon lovers and light in calories. If you make enough to freeze, store them in the freezer without the drizzle, then make and add it before serving.

2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1 cup sugar
2 tsp. baking powder
1 tbsp. grated lemon rind
2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice, divided
1 tsp. lemon extract
1 tsp. vegetable oil
3 large eggs
cooking spray
1/2 cup powdered sugar

Preheat oven to 350. Lightly spoon flour into dry measuring cups; level with a knife. Combine flour, sugar and baking powder in a large bowl. Combine rind, 1 tsp. lemon juice, extract, oil and eggs, and add to flour mixture, stirring until well-blended (dough will be dry and crumbly). Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface; knead lightly 7 to 8 turns. Divide dough in half. Shape each portion into an 8-in.-long roll. Place rolls 6 inches apart on a baking sheet coated with cooking spray; flatten each roll to 1-in. thickness.

Bake at 350 for 30 minutes. Remove the rolls from baking sheet; cool for 10 minutes on a wire rack. Cut each roll diagonally into 15 (1/2-in.) slices. Place the slices, cut sides down, on baking sheet. Reduce oven temperature to 325; bake for 10 minutes. Turn cookies over; bake an additional 10 minutes (the cookies will be slightly soft in the centre but will harden as they cool). Remove from baking sheet, and cool completely on wire rack.

Combine 1 tbsp. lemon juice and powdered sugar, and drizzle over the biscotti. Makes about 36.

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Food, Scrumptious Food

Chef seasons his cuisine with food history

By ROSIE SCHWARTZ
Special to The CJN

Eucalyptus is back. Famed chef Moshe Basson has finally reopened this long-time Jerusalem institution, much to the delight of locals and tourists alike. The return of his restaurant, where he serves biblical cuisine, is very welcome in this ancient city.

But while the restaurant may have been closed for a few years, Basson was still delighting food lovers all over the world. He has been a sought-after guest chef for fundraising cooking demonstrations in Jewish communities across the United States. He's cooked at Israeli embassies for events in all corners of the world, from South America to Asia.

He recently prepared meals at the Balsamico festival in Modena, Italy, as part of his Chefs for Peace program. There, together with fellow Palestinian chef Odeah Abu Elhawa, he cooked his biblical cuisine for a festive dinner in the spectacular Ducal Palace. He has won a Slow Food Couscous competition in Sicily, beating out rivals from a host

of Middle Eastern countries. And his son, Ronny, who seems to be following in his father's footsteps, recently triumphed together with another Israeli chef at the latest world couscous championship 2007 in San Vito Lo Capo in Sicily.

The original Eucalyptus, opened in 1988, was built at the site where a Eucalyptus tree was planted by Basson one Tu b'Shvat in the Talpiot neighbourhood of Jerusalem. He then moved the eatery to a more central location on Horkanos Street in the Russian Compound. It was after a move to Safra Square – the location of the new City Hall – that the second intifadah began and, like so many other businesses, Eucalyptus had to close its doors. But now it's back on Horkanos Street. This is where I first met the man with an endless knowledge of Israel's natural bounty and its history – both recent and ancient.

For Basson, herbs and spices are not something to purchase, but instead, something to gather or forage. The country is like his personal garden. Mention a place in Israel and a local may tell you of a scenic or historic attraction. Basson will tell you what is indigenous to the area. He knows what

grows wild and when it is available. At the same time, he knows the history of each plant and how it was used in the cuisine of thousands of years ago. While archeologists may have details about various sites around the country or historians about battles, Basson knows what was used in meals from biblical times and how things were prepared. But he also tells of the *khubeiza*, the wild green that sustained Jews during the siege of Jerusalem in 1948. And as fascinating as his explanations of his various preparations are, the stories are definitely matched by the mouth-watering tastes.

At a recent dinner at Eucalyptus, we feasted on Basson's specialties. His tasting menu, *Shir Hashirim* – or Song of Songs – began with a trio of soups. The tomato mint, Jerusalem artichoke and biblical lentil have all been on the menu as Eucalyptus staples. Picking a favourite was next to impossible.

Then came a delicious variety of *mezze*. Pickled green almonds, currently a hot ingredient for California chefs, marinated black olives, hummus and eggplant salad tasted like no other we had sampled before. It was tempting to finish it all off, but then we saw

that we needed to pace ourselves. A plate that looked like mashed potatoes was anything but ordinary. Seven herbs including thyme, hyssop, mint, parsley and a sage-scented olive oil, made for a dish to savour.

Purslane, a wild green and wild spinach followed. A smoky eggplant dish with *technah* made us want to lick the plate. The offerings continued with a green smoked wheat salad – along with its history – stuffed grape and sage leaves, tamarind-sauced figs stuffed with chicken and then a pie filled with lamb and vegetables. The *ma'aluba*, a chicken and rice casserole flavoured with spices like cinnamon and allspice, comes out of the kitchen with great fanfare. By then, it wasn't just the vegetables and fruit that were stuffed. But we couldn't resist another of Basson's signature dishes – his Middle Eastern version of peanut butter and jam – date syrup and *technah* with fresh figs.

There's no doubt that Basson's cuisine is as unique as it is mouth watering. At the same time, he continues to delve into the origins of what he serves. His latest quest is to research whether couscous really originated at the time

Continued on page 36



Israeli chef Moshe Basson shows the technique of stuffing figs. [Earl Schwartz photo]



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און אנגעהויבן האבן זיי מיט

שלמה מיכאעלסן

(צו דער 60סטער יארצייט פון נרתיס קינסטלער)

פון אלעק סילווער

ווען איך שרייב אויבן זיי, גלויב איך, אז איך פארשטייט וועגן וועמען איך רעד. זיי - יאזעף סטאלין מיט זיין דיקטאטארישן, אַנטיסעמיטישן רעזשים, האָבן אַרײַנגעגעבן דעם אורטייל, אַז אַ קאַלטער, אַרײַנ-שער נאַכט, דעם 13טן יאַנואַר פֿון 1948, האָט מען אױף די דוּרבות פֿון מינסקער געטאָ געפֿונען דעם רוצח־צוּרגעטן קערפּער פֿון שלמה מיכאעלסן.

עס איז געווען אַן אױטאָמאָביל־קאַטאַסטראָפֿע האָט דאָס אַפּאַרטירט די אָפּציעלע ווערסיע פֿון דער רע-גירונג. אזוי האָט סטאלין באַפֿוילן און אזוי איז עס פֿאַרשפּרייט געוואָרן. אָבער קיינער האָט עס נישט געגלויבט. נישט די אַרײַנשטע פֿרעסע און נישט די אַרײַלענד־ישע. יעדער האָט פֿאַרשטאַנען, אַז עס איז געווען אַ שוידערלעכער אַטענטאַט אױף דעם ייִדישן קינסטלער. ווי עס איז שפּעטער באַקאַנט געוואָרן איז מיכאעלסן, ווי דער פֿאַרזיכער פֿון קאַמיטעט פֿאַר די סטאַלין־פֿרעמדע, אַרײַנגערופן געוואָרן פֿון מיניס-טאַרדראַט פֿון ווייט־רוסלאַנד, צו געבן זיין מינונג וועגן עטלעכע טעאָטראַלע פֿאַרשטעלונגען. דאָס אַליין איז שוין געווען פֿאַרדעכטיק. אָבער מיכאעלסן, ווי אַ געהאַראַמער מיטגליד פֿון דער פֿאַרטיי, איז געפֿאַרן און מער נישט צוריקגעקומען.

אַ מורא איז באַפֿאַלן די שרייבער, קינסטלער און פֿירנדיקע פֿערזענלעכקייטן פֿון דער ייִדישער קולטור איז אַרײַנגעפֿאַרבאַנד. טראָץ דעם, וואָס די ייִדישע שרייבער־מאַטריער זיינען אומגעבראַכט געוואָרן מיט 4 יאָר שפּעטער, איז באַלד נאָך דעם אַטענטאַט אױף איז שוין געווען אַ שרעק און אַ פֿאַרגעפֿיל, ווי אַ קומען אַן שלעכטע צייטן פֿאַר דער ייִדישער קולטור און פֿאַר ייִדן בכלל איז דעם אַרײַנגעפֿאַרבאַנד.

איז דאָך שלמה מיכאעלסן געווען צו יענער צייט דער פֿירער פֿון ייִדישן געזעלשאַפֿטלעכן לעבן. ער איז געשטאַנען בראַש פֿון ייִדישן אַנטי־פּאַשיסטישן קאַמי-טעט און אַן אַנגעזעענע אַרײַנפֿירער פֿון ייִדישע האָט געזאָגט צו טאָן מיט קינסטלערישער שפּעציער-קייט - ייִדישע און נישט־ייִדישע. ער איז געווען, וועמען עס איז ענדלעך געלונגען, נאָך צענדליקער יאָרן פֿון געזונטגענער אָפּגעזונדערטקייט, אַינצושטעלן אַ בריק צווישן דעם אַרײַנפֿירער און וועלט־ייִדנטום.

זיינע דערגרייכונגען איז דעם ייִדישן טעאָטער זיינען לעגענדאַריש. ער איז געווען אַ ווענדערבאַרער שווישילער, דירעקטאָר און אַנטערשטענער פֿון יונגע ייִדישע טאַלאַנטן. זיינע אַרײַנפֿירן האָבן יעדעס מאל אַרײַנגעברענגט די בעסטע אַפּוּרפֿן פֿון טעאָטער־קייט - טיקער און נישט בלויז איז מאַקסווע. די גאַלעריע פֿון געשטאַלטן, וואָס ער האָט פֿאַרגעשטעלט אױף דער בינע איז אַ לאַנגע. פֿון בימיני השלישי צו טוביה דעם מליכין, פֿון אַרײַא אַקאַטאָ ביז שײַמלע סאַראַקער און ספּעציעל איז ער געלויבט געוואָרן פֿאַר זיין אי-בערזעצונג און שפּילן קעניג ליר פֿון שפּעקטאָר.

צום 60סטן יאַרצייט האָט דער דיכטער פֿינע פֿלאַסקין געשריבן איז זיין ליד. שלמה מיכאעלסן: לעבן קבר זיינעם שטיל אַ ביים וך שפּאַקלע, אַ סטענעקע צו אים מירט סילווער און אַ שווער מנחם מענדל... שײַמלע סאַראַקער... טוביה... און אַרײַא קעניג ליר.

איך די ייִדישע אַנאָל איז דאָס פֿון מאַרד איבער שלמה מיכאעלסן פֿאַרשריבן מיט בלוטיקע אותיות. עס איז שוין איצט גוט באַווסט, וואָס עס איז געשען ווי-טער. זאָלן מיניע ווערטער דינען ווי אַ יאַרצייט־ליכט.

Food, Scrumptious Food

An old country Shabbat

By ADAM MENCELES

Special to The CJN

In all areas of the Jewish religion, grandparents love to tell stories to their grandkids. Whether it's a tall tale or something they genuinely lived through, these stories stick with us until we tell them to our children and they, in turn, pass them on to theirs.

The following story has to do with food, but not just any food. I'm talking cholent. Cholent is an enigma. It's the basis of all comfort and it encompasses everything that is right in this world. Think of the history behind cholent as a rite of passage into the understanding of Judaism.

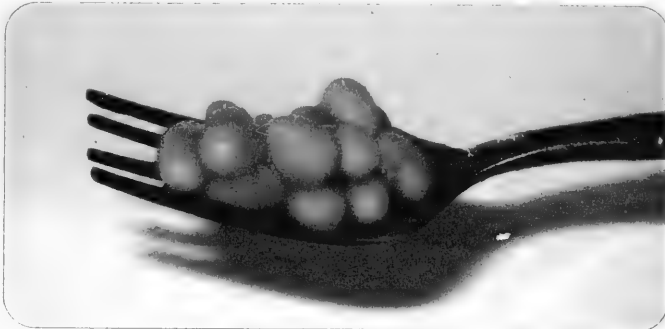
Cholent is, in its simplest form, beans baked with smoked meat, kishka and other personally or culturally preferred ingredients.

Back in Eastern Europe, Jews led a fairly modest existence when it came to food. Families tended to be large and there was a need to feed many hungry children.

When Shabbat came along, cooking was forbidden. You needed something nice and heavy that could fill your children's stomachs, which at the same time, would not empty your pockets. Even if you made something ahead of time, how would you go about cooking it?

Since some towns were fairly small and people knew each other quite well, there was a trust that was shared between villagers. These people needed a dish that would basically cook itself. They had to think of something that was cheap and could be made ahead of time.

Beans were the answer. How would you cook these beans? Slowly, in the local baker's bread oven overnight.



Everyone had a casserole pot that held the heat well. Before Shabbat, people would make the cholent and give it to the baker on Friday evening. By the time shul ended on Saturday afternoon, all they had to do was pass by the bakery on their way home and pick up their pot of cholent for lunch.

Then, after Shabbat was over, there was leftover chicken fat from the soup trimmings. What did people do with leftover chicken fat? They tried it to make an additional treat. Jews were cutting the fat off of the chickens and saving it for a rainy day. These chicken cracklings made a nice, although somewhat sinful, snack.

Jerusalem chef reopens eatery

Continued from page 35

of the first Temple to be used in sacrificial rites, rather than from the Arabic world - definitely food for thought.

If you can't visit Eucalyptus in person, here are a few samplings you can try at home.

JERUSALEM ARTICHOKE SOUP

- 1 lb. Jerusalem artichokes, peeled
- 1 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 2 medium onions, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- pinch saffron
- 6 cups homemade or sodium-reduced chicken or vegetable broth
- 12 blanched almonds
- 3 tbsp. water
- 3 tbsp. chopped fresh parsley
- salt and freshly ground pepper

Prepare Jerusalem artichokes by cutting larger ones into quarters and smaller ones into halves. Set aside. Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat; add onion and garlic and sauté until soft, about 10 minutes. Add Jerusalem artichokes and sauté another 4-5 minutes. Add saffron and broth and bring to a boil. Simmer covered for about 25-30 minutes. In the meantime, grind almonds finely in a spice

grinder or food processor. Mix together with water in a small bowl. Add to soup with parsley. Season with salt and freshly ground pepper and serve hot. Makes 6 servings.

TAHINI AND DATE DIP

This dessert from Moshe Basson is as simple and tasty as you can get. Fresh fruit slices - bananas are super - or warm pita bread can be used for dipping. Vary the quantities according to the size of your plate and the number of people you are serving. This amount is perfect for a 6-inch plate. Date syrup is available at Middle Eastern or specialty food stores.

- 4 tbsp. techninah
- 2 tbsp. date syrup

Spread the techninah evenly over a plate. Drizzle the date syrup into a circle about an inch from the edge of the plate. Repeat twice more making smaller circles inside each other moving closer towards the centre. To complete the decorative effect, using a toothpick, make lines as if dividing the spread into quarters and then divide each quarter into halves. When you do this, the date mixture will blend slightly with the techninah. Makes 4 servings

Rosie Schwartz is a Toronto-based freelance writer who will be leading a food and wine tour to Israel.

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BARRISTERS/SOLICITORS

Military option against Iran 'still on the table'

By **LESLIE SUSSER**
JTA

Neither Israel nor the United States has eliminated the military option against Iran, according to a senior Israeli official.

Briefing journalists Thursday on U.S. President George W. Bush's talks in Jerusalem, the official said that while both countries preferred diplomatic and economic measures, they did not "remove any option from the table."

"I don't want to speak for the president, but when we say all options are on the table, this is not just words," the Israeli official declared, underlining his country's seriousness.

The official said that Bush had acknowledged both in public and in private the danger posed by the Iranian nuclear weapons' program.

"Iran was a threat, Iran is a threat and Iran will be a threat if the international community does not come together and prevent that nation from the development of

the know-how to build a nuclear weapon," Bush declared at a joint news conference last Wednesday with Prime Minister Ehud Olmert.

Tehran is high on the agenda for Israel and the United States

While Bush's meetings with Olmert and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas have focused mostly on the Israeli-Palestinian issue, Iran is high on the agenda for Israel and the United States.

Bush began his mission to the Middle East in Jerusalem on Wednesday. After meetings with Israeli and Palestinian officials, he will be heading to the Persian Gulf states, Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

Asked whether Israel had shown the president any intelligence contradicting the U.S. National Intelligence

Estimate that Iran had stopped its clandestine military nuclear program in 2003, the official said: "This is one of the areas our countries and establishments, including the intelligence establishment, are working in very close co-operation. We don't wait for any special event before passing on information. I assume that the president knows whatever we do."

Bush's upcoming visit to the Gulf region, Saudi Arabia and Egypt would be very significant, the official said, as it could help strengthen the moderate Arab coalition against Iran. He said pressure from the moderates "will hopefully turn into meaningful influence on Iran's calculations regarding its nuclear program."

The official confirmed that Israel and the United States had discussed the ongoing rocket attacks on southern Israel from Hamas-controlled Gaza, and said the Americans recognized Israel's need to take military action in response.

The United States "understands Israel has the right, and that sometimes it has no choice but to take action to defend itself," he said.

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Israel & the Jewish World

Substance and symbolism: parsing Bush's words

By RON KAMPEAS

JTA

Picking apart U.S. President George W. Bush's summarizing of his Palestinian-Israeli peace brokering is a little like reading the fine print in the nutritional information on comfort food: There is empty puffery, to be sure, but there are also nuggets of substance.

Bush, speaking last Thursday at Jerusalem's King David Hotel, was summing up two days of working meetings with the leaders of the Israeli and Palestinian governments, his first presidential

visit to the region.

Much of what Bush put forward was not new or was symbolic, but there were a few ground-breaking items, including his clear-cut call yet to the Israelis to freeze settlement expansion and a call for compensation for Palestinians dispersed after the creation of Israel in 1948.

Commentary

Bush opened by reaffirming four old commitments. They are to the internationally sponsored "road map" peace plan, the vision of Palestinian statehood and an end to his approval of the Arab League peace plan of the same year, to his call last year for institution building to bolster the government of Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian Authority president Bush believes to be the best chance for peace, and to the peace process that was relaunched this past November in Annapolis, Md., where Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert agreed to meet regularly to resolve impasses in talks.

If anything was different here, it was Bush's insistence on routine meetings. Abbas and Olmert have met just twice since the end of November, most recently last Tuesday, the day before Bush arrived.

"I called upon both leaders to make sure their teams negotiate seriously, starting right now," the president said. "I strongly supported the decision of the two leaders to continue their regular summit meetings because they are the ones who can, and must, and I am convinced, will lead."

Bush also reiterated his support for Israel as a Jewish state and called again on Arab states to begin the process of recognizing Israel.

"I call upon the Arab countries to reach out to Israel, a step that is long overdue," he said. "The agreement must establish Palestine as a homeland for the Palestinian people, just as Israel is a homeland for the Jewish people."

On the record, Israel and pro-Israel Jewish groups insist the points Bush made in his statements are critical to getting Arabs to understand that Israel is here to stay. But off the record, Israeli officials say that earlier Palestinian recognition of Israel already affirms their acknowledgment of its Jewish character.

The same officials say that burgeoning trade relations with the Arab world are a harbinger of full relations sooner rather than later.

Bush emphasized that terrorism must stop and expressed "America's steadfast commitment to Israel's security," a commitment Israelis already appreciate in the form of \$3 billion in annual defence assistance.

Within the space of a couple of sentences, Bush appeared to contradict himself by invoking two years with very different meanings to both peoples: 1949 and 1967.

"The point of departure for permanent-status negotiations to realize this vision seems clear — there should be an end to the occupation that began in 1967," he said.

But then Bush added: "While territory is an issue for both parties to decide, I believe that any peace agreement between them will require mutually agreed adjustments to the armistice lines of 1949 to reflect current realities and to ensure that the Palestinian state is viable and contiguous."

How does one honour 1967 lines while adjusting 1949 lines when they are essentially the same thing?

This speaks to each people's most vulnerable sensibilities: Palestinians who now accept Israel's existence as it was established in 1948, grudgingly or not, are loath to extend such recognition to the territories it won in the 1967 Six Day War. For Israel, 1949 evokes a vulnerable, slimy state in perpetual existential anxiety.

An "end to the occupation that began in 1967" acknowledges the Palestinians' sense that relinquishing parts of the West Bank goes too far.

But it does not count out land swaps that recognize the reality of major settlements abutting the "Green Line," the pre-1967 borders of Israel, and that protect Olmert from the prospect of evacuating hundreds of thousands of settlers instead of the tens of thousands that he has suggested he is ready to undertake.

Here, in fact, Bush moved beyond his April 14, 2004, letter to then-Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, the first time Bush effectively recognized the major settlements. In the 2004 letter, he said such recognition is "realistic"; here he says it is "required."

Still, it may be hard to reconcile the two visions. Within minutes of Bush's statement, his national security adviser, Stephen Hadley, was having trouble with it in a roomful of reporters.

"What that's actually going to look like — how much territory, is it all going to go back, is it less than all, how much? — all that's going

to have to be negotiated," Hadley said. "But it is important to have some principles and concepts, and to get some narrowing of the parties' understanding and emerging agreement on those principles when you go into a negotiation to do the details."

Bush on Thursday also made his first foray into the toughest issue involved in any permanent-status negotiations: Jerusalem. But he did so without advancing any substantive proposals like those laid out by former U.S. president Bill Clinton in his own final year in office.

"I know Jerusalem is a tough issue," Bush said. "Both sides have deeply felt political and religious concerns. I fully understand that finding a solution to this issue will be one of the most difficult challenges on the road to peace, but that is the road we have chosen to walk."

The most substantive shift in Bush's statement dealt with the issue of settlements and refugees.

Bush's earlier road map called on Israel to freeze settlements, but almost as an afterthought at the end of the section describing the first phase; most of the section addressed Palestinian security requirements. The 2004 letter did not mention such a freeze. That reinforced Sharon's contention that the first phase was sequential: end terrorism, and then deal with settlements.

Bush's statement Thursday gave each aspect equal weight.

"Neither party should undertake any activity that contravenes road map obligations or prejudices the final-status negotiations," he said. "On the Israeli side, that includes ending settlement expansion and removing unauthorized outposts. On the Palestinian side, that includes confronting terrorists and dismantling terrorist infrastructure."

Bush also for the first time anticipated compensation for Palestinian refugees. The so-called right of return for Palestinians who fled or were chased from their homes upon Israel's creation has been another thorny issue that Israelis see as a non-starter and a threat to its existence.

"I believe we need to look to the establishment of a Palestinian state and new international mechanisms, including compensation, to resolve the refugee issue," he said.

In his 2004 letter, he spoke only of their return to a Palestinian state.

If the substance of the statement seemed weighted to the Palestinians, Bush could get away with it because of his record of friendship with the Israelis — a point Hadley had put forward in a pre-trip briefing when he said the president's pro-Israel record "built an enormous confidence in the Israeli government in the president."

Indeed, Bush stressed his commitment to Israel's security several times.

"Security is fundamental. No agreement and no Palestinian state will be born of terror," he said. "I reaffirm America's steadfast commitment to Israel's security."

Left unmentioned in the statement was the status of the Gaza Strip, currently controlled by Hamas, the terrorist group that continues to enable the shelling of southern Israel.

At other points in his tour, Bush said he sees a deal coming before statehood. That way, he reasons, a deal negotiated by Abbas — who rejects Hamas as a usurper — could be put to the Gazans.

Bush says he is "confident" the Gazans would accept a negotiated settlement, although that is far from certain. Loyalties to Hamas fluctuate in Gaza, and it is not clear that Hamas would allow a referendum or new elections to take place in any case.

Olmert acknowledged that commitment in a joint appearance with Bush last Wednesday, agreeing that the time to deal with the settlements issue was the present.

"Thank God we can conduct political negotiations when the largest and most important power in the world, and the most important for us, is headed by such an important friend of Israel," Olmert said. "We have no interest in delaying matters."

After Bush's summary statement on Thursday, Israeli officials welcomed it as "consistent with understandings between us and the administration."

For his part, Abbas was clearly pleased with the visit, saying in a joint appearance with Bush, "All the issues are in agreement. We are agreed on all topics. All topics are clear."

One outcome of Annapolis was that Bush persuaded both sides to make the United States the arbiter of an agreement. And with his visit last week, the president made clear he expects such an agreement within a year.

Authors & Poets

The CJN is pleased to announce its

Annual Passover Literary Supplement

We invite our readers to submit unpublished, original works of fiction or poetry that explore Jewish themes. They should not exceed 2,000 words.

We must receive your submissions no later than Friday, March 14. E-mail submissions are preferred, but works can also be sent by mail or brought to our office.

E-mail: info@cjnews.com. Mail: 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4.

Submissions will not be returned. The CJN will not enter into any correspondence with participants.

CJN Purim Art Contest

It's time again for our annual Purim Art Contest.

Who can enter: Children in grades 1 to 6 inclusive are eligible. The children of CJN employees are not eligible.

Prizes: The judges will choose one drawing from two different students in each grade. These "winning" drawings will be published in The CJN's 2008 Purim Poster. In addition, each of the 12 children whose drawings have been selected will receive a cheque for \$25.

How to enter: You may submit as many drawings as you want. However, they should not be too small nor too large. Please paint or draw bright, bold, colourful pictures. You may use markers, crayons, paint or pencils. Please send us your name, address, phone number, age and grade along with your drawings.

You may mail or deliver your drawings to: CJN Community Contests, The Canadian Jewish News, 1500 Don Mills Road, Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4. If you want us to return the pictures to you, please provide a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Otherwise, we will be unable to do so.

The contest closes at 3 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 29, 2008. We will undoubtedly receive many wonderful submissions from children all across the country. But only 12 of the drawings will be chosen as the "winners." The judges will base their decisions on a number of factors such as: the use of colour, the imaginative quality of the drawing and the way it tells an aspect of the story of Purim. The judges' decisions will be final. The chances of winning depend upon the number and quality of submissions received.

How the winner will be announced: The children whose pictures are chosen will be notified by telephone before the start of Shabbat on Friday, March 7, 2008.

When the prizes will be awarded: The "winning" pictures will be published in The CJN of March 20, 2008. Have fun and good luck.

Any litigation respecting the conduct and awarding of a prize in this contest may be submitted to the Régie des Loteries et courses du Québec.

Kenya crisis puts Jews on alert

BY JACOB BERKMAN
JTA

NEW YORK — While the Jews of Kenya seem unscathed by the country's political crisis, Jewish nongovernmental agencies that work there and elsewhere in Africa are bracing for the long-term effects of the sudden outbreak of violence.

Interethnic violence erupted Dec. 27 after the incumbent president, Mwai Kibaki, declared himself the winner of the country's presidential election amid evidence of widespread fraud. Opposition leader Raila Odinga maintains he won the election.

An estimated 500 to 1,000 people have been killed and more than 250,000 left homeless as a result of rioting and pitched battles between members of minority tribes, including Odinga's Luo tribe, and members of the Kikuyu tribe, the elite clan that has controlled Kenyan politics since the country gained independence in 1963.

The unrest has shaken the nongovernmental organizations that work in eastern and central Africa. Rioting and roadblocks set up by vigilante groups have made travel impossible, and the violence has endangered workers.

Though the violence has eased somewhat this week, Jewish groups are on alert.

"People are afraid about the violence and are staying home and out of the street, and it is very difficult to reach people," said Julia Greenberg, the director of grants for the American Jewish World Service, which funds the relief work of 14 organizations in Kenya.

The AJWS works mostly with groups in the slums of Nairobi, including Kibera, and in western Kenya, where the fiercest violence has occurred.

It wasn't until Jan. 7 that the AJWS was able to regain contact with the groups it funds, according to Maitri Morarji, the program officer who oversees East Africa for the organization. The AJWS is assessing the needs of the groups it funds and may distribute small emergency grants to help feed people, Morarji said.

"Everyone is looking at security issues, and everyone is holding back new projects," Will Recant, the assistant executive vice-president of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, told JTA.

Recant oversees the JDC's international and nonsectarian projects, including the construction of the Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village in Rwanda, which the JDC is building to house orphans of that country's 1994 genocide.

A spike in gas prices over the past week resulting from the violence already has made the use of cars and buses difficult, Morarji said. Recant said he is concerned that the instability in Kenya will spark across-the-board price hikes.

Meanwhile, Kenya's small Jewish community seems unscathed by the violence.

Nairobi has 400 to 500 Jews — mostly British, Australian, Canadian and American expatriates. The community has a synagogue

congregation that meets weekly, according to the director of Chabad of Central Africa, Rabbi Shlomo Bentolila.

Bentolila is stationed in the Democratic Republic of Congo, about a three-hour flight from Nairobi, but he arranges for Chabad rabbis to serve Nairobi's Jewish community on holidays. He said he has been in contact with Jews in Nairobi and in Mombasa, a resort town on Kenya's coast, where a dozen or so Jews live.

"There is some high tension," Bentolila said. "Kenya is a country which has always been stable. It's a country where there are no revolutions. It is a noble country where people go to work every day and come home at night. They are not used to revolutions."

"For the last few days, the country has been upside down, but in Nairobi it was only in the slums," he said.

In the residential part of town, where the Jews live, Bentolila said the streets were empty last week, but as the violence ebbed this week people began to return to their lives and livelihoods.

But, he cautioned, "They know things can turn in an instant."

During the height of the violence, the key to remaining safe was staying vigilant and trying to avoid hot spots, said Daniel Pollack, a 21-year-old senior at Queens College in New York, who was in Nairobi when the violence broke out.

Pollack, who had gone to distribute money he raised to help repair a school in Kibera, left Jan. 6 for Egypt. He said the U.S. Embassy told him to expect a war in Kenya.

"The embassy had called me and said stock up on food," Pollack told JTA.

"I saw a lot of destruction. I saw minivans burned out in the middle of the road, hundreds of shops burned and destroyed. When I would come home from Kibera, I would have to pick glass out of my shoes," he said.

Pollack said he did not feel threatened immediately, even though he was within a 10-minute walk of the violence, "but you had to be aware."

"I felt safe because I didn't put myself in harm's way," he said, "but I could have easily gotten killed."

Kenya has a history of calm in a volatile continent, with the country relatively immune to the tribal warfare that has torn apart other African nations. NGOs have used Nairobi, Kenya's capital, as a safe hub from which to dispatch aid workers and materials into nearby countries.

In one example of the ripple effect of the unrest in Kenya, contractors seeking to transport goods through the country to landlocked Rwanda say they may need to find alternate, and longer, routes for their goods. The price of concrete already has risen as a result.

"We have heard from our contractor that we should expect a rise in cost," Recant said. "If one pipeline breaks down, it has a ripple effect and everything is affected."

Recant said the JDC would not abandon the Agahozo-Shalom project, but it may have to scale it back because of rising costs.

"We might not have a library," he said.

Bush praises IDF strike

U.S. President George W. Bush was quoted as saying Israel's air strike in Syria last year was an "important preventive action." During his visit to Israel last week, Bush and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert discussed the Sept. 6 attack in northern Syria, *Defense News* reported Monday, citing a Jerusalem official who was briefed on the talks. The president said the mission, which many independent analysts believe targeted a nascent nuclear reactor, "was an important preventive action," according to the American magazine. Jerusalem and Washington have not given details on the bombing. Syria has denied having any secret nuclear facilities. *Defense News* reported that Israeli intelligence found no links between the alleged Syrian reactor and Iran.

Israel Briefs

progress toward peace, a Yediot Achronot poll found.

Seventy-seven per cent of Israelis do not believe Bush will bring diplomatic progress, as compared to 21 per cent who do, the poll found. Fifty-nine per cent of respondents said the visit would have no effect on Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's prospects ahead of the publication of a commission of inquiry's final report on the failings of the Second Lebanon War; 38 per cent said it would bolster the Israeli leader; and three per cent said it would weaken him. The poll had 500 respondents and a 4.5 per cent margin of error.

Diamond dealers killed

Five Israeli diamond dealers were killed in a plane crash in Namibia. Officials in Windhoek said Sunday that a light plane that crashed upon takeoff over the weekend was carrying five Israeli employees of the international diamond firm Lazare Kaplan International. The pilot also died. The Israeli Embassy in neighbouring

South Africa sent a team to help recover and identify the remains.

U.S. erred

The United States erred in not bombing Auschwitz during the Holocaust, U.S. President George W. Bush said. Bush made the comment to U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice while viewing an exhibit at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem of U.S. aerial photographs of the Nazi concentration camps, according to the memorial's chairman, Avner Shalev. Shalev took Bush on an hour-long tour of the museum Friday; it was Bush's second visit to Yad Vashem. Avner reported that the president's eyes welled up with tears twice during the tour. "I wish as many people as possible would come to this place. It is a sobering reminder that evil exists, and a call that when evil exists we must resist it," Bush said. Bush laid a red, white and blue wreath at the centre's main memorial — a stone slab that covers ashes of Holocaust victims taken from six Nazi extermination camps.

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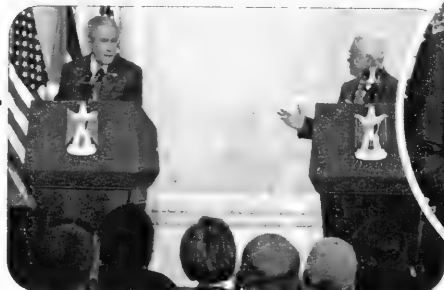
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Israel & the Jewish World

President George W. Bush visits Israel



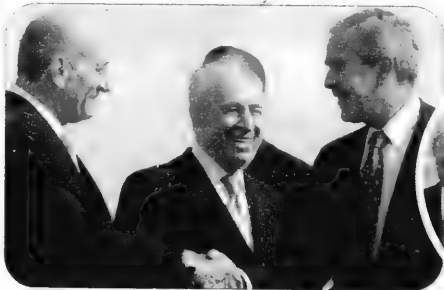
Top row: U.S. President George W. Bush visits the Yad Vashem Holocaust museum, accompanied by U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and President Shimon Peres.



Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and gestures to U.S. President George W. Bush during a press conference in Ramallah.



U.S. President George W. Bush, above and left, is greeted by several dozen schoolchildren wearing white shirts and waving Israeli and U.S. flags at Israeli President Shimon Peres' residence in Jerusalem.



At an official welcoming reception at Ben-Gurion Airport, U.S. President George W. Bush is greeted by Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, left, and President Shimon Peres.



U.S. President George W. Bush meets with Jerusalem Mayor Uri Lupolianski at Jerusalem's King David Hotel.



U.S. President George W. Bush lays a wreath at the Yad Vashem Holocaust museum. [Israel Sun photos and Isranet photos]

Israel & the Jewish World

Sderot families sue Egypt

SDEROT — Ten families of Sderot residents whose relatives have been killed or seriously injured by Qassam rockets fired from Gaza have filed a lawsuit against the Egyptian government in Be'er Sheva District Court.

The complaint accuses Egypt of helping Palestinian terror groups to smuggle explosives and weapons into the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip.

The plaintiffs say the explosives are being used by terror groups to make the Qassam rockets being launched against the southern Israeli town of Sderot.

Since Israel's pullout from Gaza in 2005, Sderot has lived under continuous Qassam attacks. The plaintiffs contend that Egypt is helping Hamas, Fatah and Islamic Jihad to terrorize the entire Negev.

The plaintiffs say Cairo assists the terror

groups by authorizing the smuggling of tons of explosives and thousands of weapons into Gaza. They also say Egypt allows group members to cross back and forth from Sinai into Gaza, giving them an open route to and from training bases in states such as Iran, Lebanon and Syria.

As well, they say Egypt assists the terrorist with their training in these countries, and that Egypt helps to smuggle tens of millions dollars from Iran into Gaza that's being used to finance terror attacks and to strengthen Hamas' control of the coastal territory.

The plaintiffs are being represented by attorney Nitsana Darshan-Leitner and are seeking \$65 million (US) in compensation.

The lawsuit comes in the wake of increasing tension between Israel and Egypt regarding Egypt's role in assisting the terrorists' smuggling operations.

In recent weeks, Jerusalem and Cairo have exchanged public accusations. According to Israel, although Egypt is technically at peace with the Jewish state, it continues to try to weaken Israel and strengthen terror groups in Gaza.

After Israel withdrew from Gaza, Egypt agreed to police its border with Gaza. Its obligations include preventing hostile activity against Israel, including stopping smuggling operations.

Despite this, critics charge that Egypt is intentionally breaching the agreement and giving terror groups free passage to and from its territory.

The plaintiffs thus argue that there's no difference between the Egyptian government and the terror groups launching the Qassams, and that both are equally responsible for casualties in Sderot.

Information importante / Important Information



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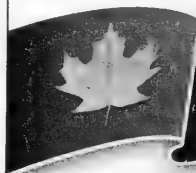
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Canada

Austrian Jewish journalist wins legal victory

By SHELTON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Karl Pfeifer, a Jewish journalist who brought the wrath of Austria's right-wing forces upon himself after accusing an Austrian professor of defaming Jews, has won a legal victory in a celebrated case turning on anti-Semitism, freedom of expression and libel.

The European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, France, recently acquitted him of causing the suicide of Prof. Werner Pfeifenberger.

"I feel vindicated," Pfeifer said in an interview last week. "I was optimistic. I expected the judges in Strasbourg to be fair."

But Pfeifer, who was editor of a Jewish community monthly magazine in Vienna when he challenged Pfeifenberger, admitted that the controversy took an emotional toll on him.

"It is important to fight anti-Semitism, even if one has many sleepless nights. Yet I am a standing rebuke to Austrians who are anti-Semites or those who tolerate anti-Semitism."

The case began in 1995, when Pfeifenberger, a political scientist who had taught at the University of Muenster in Germany, wrote an article for the yearbook of the far right-wing Austrian Freedom party. In it, he claimed that Jews had declared war on Germany in 1933 after Adolf Hitler was appointed chancellor.

Pfeifenberger also alleged that Jews had played a manipulative role in European history. In describing Jews as "the internationalists," Pfeifer noted, he resorted to "anti-Semitic jargon."

In Pfeifer's view, Pfeifenberger added insult to injury by claiming that Jews fomented a number of decisive historical events, including the 1789 French Revolution.

Irked by Pfeifenberger's claims, Pfeifer launched an attack on him in the pages of *Die Gemeinde*, a publication he edited from 1982 until his retirement in 1995.

Pfeifer, born in Baden bei Wien in 1928, fled Austria with his parents in 1938, following its annexation by Germany.

The Pfeifers then made their way to Palestine via Switzerland, Italy, Yugoslavia and Hungary. They were relatively fortunate, having lost 36 close relatives during the Holocaust.

Pfeifer fought with the Palmach during Israel's War of Independence. He left Israel in 1951 and returned to Austria, where he worked in the hotel business.

In 1979, he became a freelance journalist, writing mainly on human rights. After Pfeifer's piece in *Die Gemeinde* was published, Pfeifenberger sued him for libel and demanded the equivalent of \$20,000 (US) in damages.

But in 1997 and 1998, two lower appeals courts and one high appeals court rejected Pfeifenberger's lawsuit.

On Feb. 15, 2000, after the Freedom party formed a coalition government with the People's party, Austria's attorney general opened criminal proceedings against Pfeifenberger, saying he had violated a law prohibiting Nazi activity.

Less than three months later, he committed suicide.

Shortly afterward, a weekly, *Zur Zeit* — which Pfeifer describes as an "anti-Semitic rag" — condemned the "Jewish journalist Karl Pfeifer" and claimed that the "manhunt" he conducted against Pfeifenberger had prompted him to take his life.

Subsequently, Pfeifer sued *Zur Zeit* for libel and its editor, Andreas Moeltzer, for slander and defamation of character. Pfeifer triumphed, but an appeals court judge ruled that Pfeifer had "moral" responsibility for Pfeifenberger's self-inflicted death.

In response, Pfeifer appealed to the European Court of Human Rights.

Late last year, it acquitted Pfeifer of complicity in Pfeifenberger's suicide and ordered the Austrian government to pay Pfeifer 5,000 euros in damages and 10,000 euros in court costs.

The ruling will become official next month, on Feb. 15, if there are no objections from any of the concerned parties.

Looking back, Pfeifer regrets that Pfeifenberger committed suicide. "Yes, of course," he said.

But he contends there was "no causal link" between his article and Pfeifenberger's death. "The European court decided I was right."

And while Pfeifer doesn't believe Pfeifenberger was a neo-Nazi, he suggests that he was a conspiracy theorist when it came to Jews.

Pfeifer is thankful that the Social Democrat party and the Greens supported him during his travails, and that the Jewish community rallied behind him in moral and material terms.



Karl Pfeifer

Hannah Lessing, who heads two Austrian government Holocaust restitution funds, is not surprised by Pfeifer's grit.

"He is a very credible man, a real fighter," she said in an interview from Vienna. "He has been threatened by right-wing extremists and still doesn't lie low. He is a real anti-fascist."

Florida Jews key after N.H. results

By BEN HARRIS
JTA

NASHUA, N.H. — New Hampshire voters confirmed their reputation for independence last week, defying polls predicting a resounding defeat for the presidential candidate most favoured by U.S. Jews — and making Florida Jews key players in the races for both major parties.

New York Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, who earned top favorability marks in a recent survey of American Jewish opinion, had gradually been overtaken in the polls by Illinois Senator Barack Obama in the days after his stunning victory in the Iowa Democratic caucuses, with some predicting a double-digit defeat that would have left her presidential prospects in peril. But last week, she edged Obama in a race so close that both campaigns were exuding confidence and promising to continue into the South and West, and on to states with significant Jewish populations.

On the Republican side, the victory by Arizona Senator John McCain ratcheted up the pressure on another Jewish favourite, former New York City mayor Rudy Giuliani, whose hopes now hinge on the Florida primary Jan. 29.

With Democrats and Republicans both picking different winners in Iowa and New Hampshire, it seems increasingly likely that the nation could again end up turning its collective eye to Jewish voters in South Florida.

The Sunshine State, which boasts the country's third-largest Jewish population, behind New York and California, is poised to provide a major momentum boost as the only state scheduled to hold a primary on Jan. 29, as well as the last to vote before Super Tuesday a week later.

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HEEBONICS

Diving instructor submerges himself in Jewish education

By LAURA STRICKER
Special to The CJN

At the age of 22, Jonathan Moneta is already the president of his own company.

The company, Chai Divers, offers scuba-diving courses that take place in Canada and Israel, and can easily be completed at the end of birthright Israel trips. The courses include lessons about Israeli naval and environmental history and incorporate Jewish themes and texts relevant to scuba diving.

Moneta started scuba diving with his father and brother when he was 12 and received his PADI [Professional Association of Diving Instructors] open water certification when he was 13. He said what he loves most about the sport is teaching it and interacting in an underwater atmosphere.

"You are in a whole different environment underwater," he said. "You can interact with life and objects underwater that you cannot interact with above water."

"[It causes] a feeling of physical weightlessness - almost like you're flying."

Another thing Moneta enjoys is that everyone is equal underwater, regardless of language or culture.

"It's a whole different way of interacting," he said. "It strengthens friendship and bonds. Scuba diving is a different way of communicating - everyone speaks the same language underwater."

Moneta, who is studying theatre in his final year at York University, recently spent a year on exchange at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. In his free time, he would visit Eilat and spend a lot of time scuba diving there. It was in Israel that he decided to become a certified dive instructor.

"In Eilat, there was always scuba diving going on somewhere. When I got back to Toronto, there was hardly anything. It was really depressing," he said.

Inspired by his participation in the August 2007 Conference on Alternatives in Jewish Education, Moneta saw the conference as an opportunity to get Chai Divers off the ground and get children and adults excited about learning about Judaism.

"Parents are not as involved in Jewish education as their kids," he said. "They have little communication with the teachers."

"Jewish education is more effective if there is interest in it in the home. Scuba diving is not only exciting for kids, but for parents as well."

"Everyone is a kid when they get underwater," he added.

Moneta, a Toronto native, attended Leo Baeck Day School and Associated Hebrew School. Growing up, he went to shul with his family on High Holy Days and Shabbat and was a member of the Temple

Har Zion choir. Since returning from Israel, he makes an effort to attend synagogue on a regular basis.

Moneta said that while he is sometimes envious of people who know what their exact direction in life will be, he is content with what he is doing now.

"I really enjoy Chai Divers," he said. "It speaks to me spiritually."

When he is not keeping busy with Chai Divers, Moneta has many other interests that occupy his time. He has played the flute since he was in Grade 2 and is very involved with theatre, and pursuing acting. While at Hebrew University, he played the role of Tony in the Hillel production of *West Side Story*.

In Toronto, Moneta is involved with Vanier College Productions at York University.

Other passions of his include an interest in Jewish education and non-profit business management, two fields he is considering studying in graduate school.

Moneta's entrepreneurial spirit is evident in everything he does. He was the president of another company for three years, Student Solutions, a window and eavestrough cleaning company.

"I've always loved being in business, employing friends and dealing personally with customers and staff," he said.

In spite of the wide variety of activities Moneta partici-

pates in, what he enjoys most are the endeavours that keep him in touch with the Jewish community.

"Whatever I'm doing, I find that I enjoy my Jewish activities the most. My Jewish involvements always seem the most powerful in building relationships with friends and family," he said.

Those Jewish activities include assisting in organizing the volunteer-run 2008 Limmud Toronto festival - a one-day event of Jewish learning that includes topics such as Israel, history, spirituality and the arts.

In spite of his hectic schedule, Moneta manages



Jonathan Moneta, left, instructs Aimee Wiess, on her very first dive off of Eilat's Coral Reef.

to stay motivated, thanks in part to the support he gets from everyone involved with Chai Divers.

"As I continue to consult with Jewish educators about Chai Divers, I'm always met with excitement and encouragement - this has been key in motivating me," he said.

Also keeping him motivated are the educational features of his company.

"As I develop programs, I'm learning that experiential Jewish education can be powerful, not just for Jewish groups who seek an exciting day activity together, but for families looking to do something fun and Jewish," he said.

Moneta has big plans for expanding Chai Divers that he hopes to put in motion sooner rather than later.

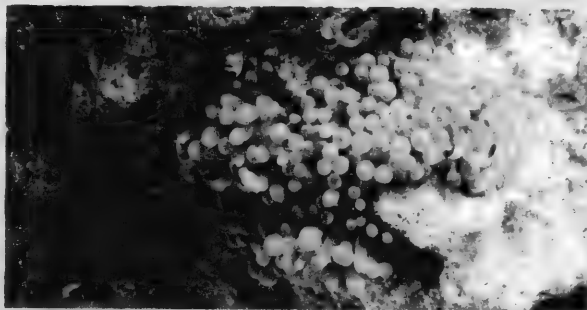
"I would love to see Chai Divers develop long-term Jewish learning and dive training programs that meet biweekly or more frequently. I'm also working to make sure that, in addition to our local programs, our Israel training programs are well-known opportunities for everyone going to Israel," he said.

While he has many prospects for the future, one thing Moneta is sure of is that he wants Chai Divers to be a long-term initiative.

"Scuba diving is my lifelong passion and I hope it continues to be," he said.



Jonathan Moneta, left, and Ilan Hadar, are Moneta's counterpart in Israel for Chai Divers.



The coral reefs near Eilat

[Jonathan Moneta photo]

Arts & Travel

Screenwriter influenced by her superstitious grandmother

By KATHRYN KATES
Special to The CJN

Watching *Love and Other Dilemmas*, it is clear that screenwriter Deborah Peraya was influenced not only by the classic movies she watched growing up but also by the zaniness of her Jewish family.

Peraya's Russian grandparents, Sarah and Abe Bialowsky, came to Vancouver after the war. Peraya, 37, still

lives in Vancouver. Her mother, Fay, was born in a refugee camp in Germany and delivered by an ex-Nazi doctor.

"My grandmother was larger than life," Peraya said. "She was also very superstitious, and I think that came out of growing up in Communist Russia. I was raised with all these superstitions like you never tell anyone what plane you are going on or you never kiss anyone goodbye in a doorway."

Love and Other Dilemmas, Peraya's first film, is about

Ginger Shapiro's wedding day. She's nine months pregnant, and she's been robbed, kidnapped, thinks her fiancé is dead and has until 5 p.m. to get married and break her family curse.

"It wasn't autobiographical, but I think the underlying themes came out of autobiographical issues that were going on for me at the time," Peraya says. "I was actually pregnant when I wrote this feature." Her daughter, Chiara, is now 6.

Peraya makes her living writing screenplays and scripts for television shows, including CTV's *Robson Arms*.

Many of the characters in *Love and Other Dilemmas* are Jewish.

Directed by Peraya's husband, Loreto Di Stefano, 38, the film's cast includes Gabrielle Miller, John Cassini, Stephen Lobo, Fred Ewanuick and Janet Wright.

"I wrote for *Robson Arms* on season one. I had seen Gabe (Miller) and Fred (Ewanuick) on set. We wanted to have a read-through so I could hear how the draft sounded, and we asked Gabe to be Ginger," Peraya says. "As soon as we heard her, it was never a question after that point that Gabrielle was Ginger for us. Fred was so brilliantly funny — he plays Emmett, the guy who kidnaps Ginger on her wedding night."

Peraya wanted her film to have a screwball sensibility, reminiscent of the classic comedies she had watched with her family. It was also important to her that the couple in her film be Jewish because in the movies she saw as a child everybody got married in churches, and that wasn't the reality of the weddings she went to. She wondered why a couple in a movie couldn't get married in a synagogue, as they do in her film.

"I think for me, it [her film] had to come from a truth I knew," Peraya says.

She adds that she doesn't like cruel comedy, which she avoids. "I don't think comedy needs to poke fun at people — it can poke fun at situations and problems. I think it is much more fun if we can laugh because we recognize those things in our own cultures and our own lives. I'm always aware of that when I'm writing. I'm not malicious in the comedy."

Peraya and Di Stefano married 10 years ago on April Fool's Day. This is Di Stefano's first directing effort. He usually works in film post-production and was involved in the post-production of *Chocolat*, whose cast included Johnny Depp.

"Working with my husband was really fun. Our skills are very different, he's a director — a far more visual person than I am — and the ways in which we challenge each other are actually complementary. Most of the time it was great," Peraya says.

Love and Other Dilemmas premiered at the Vancouver Film Festival in October 2006 and is opening in selected Canadian cities on Feb. 1.



Deborah Peraya

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Arts & Travel

'Schmelvis' releases comic techno album

By EZRA GLINTER
Special to The CJN

"I am not an Elvis impersonator" intones Dan Hartal on the first track of his new album, *Techno Lime Party*. In the context of the album's lyric-heavy electronica, the claim may seem obvious, but ironically, it's not actually true.

Hartal, a Montreal musician and songwriter, is in fact best known as Schmélvis, the Canadian Jewish Elvis impersonator. But as *Techno Lime Party* makes clear, Hartal's talents don't end at sequenced jumpsuits and big sideburns.

Over the course of 15 years and six albums, Hartal has never been afraid to reinvent himself. Born in Israel and raised since the age of eight in Montreal, Hartal pursued degrees in philosophy and education at Concordia University before turning professionally to music.

"Music is in my blood," Hartal said. "I always feel like I have to create and that's what drives me to it. It's so imbedded in me that I cannot escape it. It's the best way for me to express myself — otherwise I feel bottled up."

His first album, 1993's *Meeting You*, released under the pseudonym Herschel Fromme, was a classic exercise in bluesy, guitar-driven rock 'n' roll, and his critically acclaimed 1997 followup, *Music for the Masses*, further demonstrated his strong songwriting abilities.

Hartal's life and music took a turn, however, when people started pointing out that he bore an uncanny resemblance to Elvis Presley. Always open to new ideas, Hartal decided to run with the idea and started performing for the residents of retirement homes as Schmélvis.

"If you mix schtick with Elvis, it becomes Schmélvis," Hartal said, explaining his choice of moniker. "People just feel so good when they see an Elvis impersonator walk through the

room," he added. "I don't know if it's the jumpsuit or the glasses or the whole persona — it's an honour to be an Elvis impersonator or an Elvis tribute artist."

While the idea of a Jewish Elvis might seem far-fetched, according to genealogical research published in a 1998 *Wall Street Journal* article, the King may actually have been Jewish. Though Presley never openly acknowledged his Jewish background, he once performed with a chai symbol around his neck and contributed to the Memphis Jewish community for years.

Upon learning of Elvis' Jewish connection and Hartal's Jewish-flavoured tribute act, Montreal filmmaker Max Wallace decided to explore further. The ensuing documentary, *Searching for the King's*

Jewish Roots, was released in 2002. It followed Hartal as he made the journey to Graceland to say *Kaddish* for Presley on Aug. 16, the anniversary of his death. Mingling with thousands of other Elvis fans who had come to pay their respects, Hartal gained a new appreciation for Presley's life and work.

"A lot of people can poke fun at Elvis and say he was this fat, peanut-butter-banana-eating, drug-induced individual who died on the toilet, but this guy was an awesome individual," Hartal said. "Thousands of people flock to his grave site. Elvis had a self-searching purpose, and he wanted to bring peace on earth. He's definitely an inspiration, and we see it in his fan base."

While Hartal hasn't left behind his Schmélvis persona, *Techno Lime Party* represents his efforts to break new ground, musically and professionally.

"I'm much more of a rock 'n' roll kind of musician," Hartal said of his foray into electronic music. "I grew up idolizing people like the Beatles and the Doors and Led Zeppelin, and this is a project way out there."

In addition to providing all of the vocals and playing all of the instruments on the album, Hartal mastered and produced the album himself.

"I always wanted to do something independently," he said. "For me, doing this project was one of those challenges. I was not only going to do all the instruments but also record it at home and master the CD. It's one of these projects where I overcame the machine — a very fulfilling experience."

Not all is different, however. At heart, Hartal is a born entertainer, and his feel-good approach is evident in the album's

comic lyrics.

"I'm a feel-good, positive individual," Hartal said. "Anybody can be negative. The essential magic in this world is to see the beauty, and that's what I always look for."

Grew up
liking
The Doors
and
Led Zeppelin



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Herzl House museum named for founder of political Zionism

By **SHELDON KIRSHNER**
Staff Reporter

HULDA, Israel — The fine Ottoman-style building is clad with Jerusalem stone and adorned with green shutters.

It exudes an aristocratic air, as if it was once a seat of royalty.

This impression is reinforced by the path leading to the house. It is lined with regal palm trees.

What could be more majestic?

On the left side of the dwelling is a prominent mural of a bearded man in formal 19th century black attire, his arms folded in contemplation.

The person in question, Theodor Herzl (1860-1904), was a Budapest-born Viennese journalist whose visionary books, *The Jewish State* and *The Old New Land*, paved the way for modern political Zionism, a movement that irretrievably altered and still influences the geopolitics of the Middle East.

In these works, Herzl envisaged a socialist utopia, a new Jewish society underpinned by science and technology and inhabited by Jews

and Arabs co-existing in peace and harmony.

Herzl, having visited Palestine only once, died long before his dream materialized. But in a remarkable observation, he predicted that a Jewish state would arise in Palestine in the late 1940s.

Although the building is named after the godfather of Zionism, the man himself did not live in Herzl House, which is a museum today.

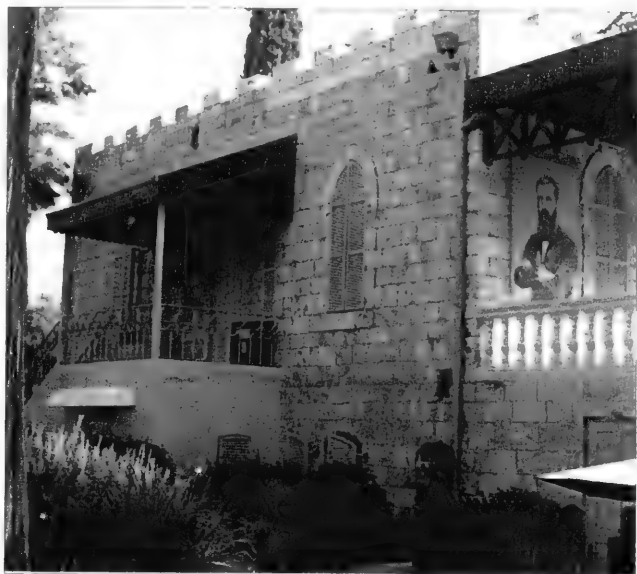
Nor did he visit the outlying lands of what would be the Herzl Forest, the Jewish National Fund's first-ever afforestation project.

Since then, the Jewish National Fund — which was founded in 1901 — has planted more than 220 million trees and purchased land and serviced it for settlement.

The story of Herzl House mirrors the history of Israel.

After Herzl's untimely death, the Jewish National Fund launched a campaign to purchase land for a farm.

In 1909, an olive plantation was established and a residence built in Herzl's honour. The farm was administered by an agronomist, Louis Brisch, who allocated the second floor for himself and the lower level for his workers.



Theodor Herzl's image on the side of the building. [Sheldon Kirshner photo]

Since Brisch did not get on well with his labourers, he was replaced by another agronomist, Louis Wilkansky.

In an attempt to create a mixed agrarian economy, he augmented the olive grove with fruit trees, woodland species, scrubland, field crops, dairy herds and chicken runs.

Most of Wilkansky's workers fled or were evicted by the Ottoman Turks during World War I.

The ones who remained faced water shortages and a locust plague. After the war and the British conquest, still more Jews settled in the vicinity.

The farm, a training centre for Jewish pioneers, was attacked by Arabs when riots erupted in Palestine in 1929. A Haganah commander, Ephraim Chizik, was killed during these communal disturbances.

Two years later, a group of Jews from Poland, members of the Gordonia youth movement, arrived to revive the farm.

They came under Arab attack during the Arab Revolt, which lasted from 1936 to 1939, and left the site to form Kibbutz Hulda, about one kilometre to the west.

When the 1948 War of Independence broke out, the road from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem was blocked by Arab forces. The kibbutz served as a base for Jewish fighters trying to break the siege.

Herzl House, meanwhile, fell into a state of disrepair. But in 1998, when Israel marked its 50th anniversary, the building was renovated thanks to the generosity of a Toronto man, John

Sereny, who donated the funds in honour of his parents.

The renovation was carried out by the Jewish National Fund in conjunction with the Council for the Preservation of Buildings and Historical Sites, the Nature Reserves and the National Parks Authority.

Herzl House, 10 kilometres southeast of the university town of Rehovot, contains a small exhibit of historical artifacts, notably an excerpt from *The Old New Land* and a copy of the manuscript in Herzl's own hand.

In the excerpt, a character describes his impression of Palestine in doleful terms: "Over the distant horizon loomed the deforested hills of Judea. The bare slopes and the bleak, rocky valleys showed few traces of present or former cultivation. This country needs nothing but water and shade to have a very great future."

A fairly informative 10-minute film elaborates on this theme.

Herzl House, whose day-to-day operations are run by members of Kibbutz Hulda, is open seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Entrance is free.

This year, Israel's 60th anniversary of statehood, is as good a time as any to visit Herzl House.

It drives home the point that Israel's birth was exceedingly difficult, that much progress has been achieved since then, and that Israel, in the deepest sense of the word, remains a work in progress.

Museum contains
hand written
copy of Herzl
manuscript

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Arts & Travel



Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

VIVIAN FELSEN PRESENTS ILLUSTRATED TOUR OF PALE OF SETTLEMENT

Visual artist, historian and translator Vivian Felsen presents a virtual guided tour of the Jewish Pale of Settlement, the region of Czarist Russia to which Jews were restricted. Co-sponsored by Friends of Yiddish and the Toronto Workmen's Circle, Felsen presents "A Journey Through the Pale," a lecture on what Jewish writer Nathan Ausubel once called a "gigantic ghetto."

Using colour slides to illustrate her themes, Felsen discusses the Pale from its creation in the 18th century to its demise during the Russian Revolution, examining why it came into being, its role in Yiddish culture and its significance for us today. Free for Friends of Yiddish and Workmen's Circle members; \$5 for guests. Workmen's Circle, 471 Lawrence Ave. W. Sunday, Jan. 20, 2 p.m.

Post-Holocaust Drama: Holy Blossom Temple Stagecraft Company presents the powerful drama, *The Action Against Sol Schumann*, by Jeffrey Sweet. Set in New York, Washington, D.C., and Toronto, the drama depicts two brothers' quest for the truth about their father, Sol, a Holocaust survivor, accused, decades after the Holocaust, of being a sadistic kapo in a German labour camp.

The play is based on a U.S. Office of Special Investigations case against Jacob Tannenbaum, a kapo who was alleged to have been brutal to Jews under his charge.

"Sweet has written a masterful study of one family's descent into emotional chaos, as Sol struggles to defend his war-time activities, and his sons are torn apart by some shocking revelations," said director Michael Ryval.

The play is unconventional in that the action is spread across 25 scenes and the cast of 11, who portray 15 characters, remains on stage throughout the entire performance. "It's inspired by Brechtian dramas, and the actors work collectively in narrating the story of Sol Schumann and his sons," Ryval said. "The end result is heart-rending."

The Stagecraft production features Ron Boyd, Susanne Egler, Heather Finestone, Karen Garmaise, Alan Gordon, Anna Grosman, Harry Hochman, Judy Kent, Eric Kirsh, Tal Maissner and Glenda Mindlin. \$15, \$10. Holy Blossom Temple, Eisendrath Auditorium, 1950 Bathurst St. Thursday, Jan. 24, and Saturday, Jan. 26, at 8 p.m., and Sunday, Jan. 27, 2:30 p.m. 416-789-3291, ext. 511

Music Notes

• **KlezFactor** performs a series of four shows to follow Hannah Moscovitch's one-act plays *The Russian Play* and *Essay*. Factory Theatre, 125 Bathurst St. Jan. 22, 24, 31 and Feb. 7, starting at about 10 p.m. Free with purchase of ticket to plays.

• Guest lecturer **Samantha Clarke** speaks on "Jews and Opera," the latest in the Great Jewish Composers series. \$9 admission with bagels and coffee. Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, Sunday, Jan. 20, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 0

• Solo performer **Tracey Erin Smith** teams up with the all-female Yiddish swing-klezmer band the **Sisters of Sheynville** for a performance in which Smith combines her comic show *The Burning Bush* with the Sisters' soulful music. The result is "an old-time swingin' gospel revival." Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St. W. Feb. 3. Dinner 7 p.m., show 8 p.m. \$15 (show only). Reservations, 416-778-8984.

Drama Notes

• Stage Centre's production of **Yasmina Reza's** award-winning *ART* continues its run. The play focuses on the cataclysmic

effect on three friends when one purchases an expensive work of abstract art. As they debate the painting's value, emotions run high, and the conflict escalates to the point of nearly destroying a long-standing friendship. Fairview Public Library Theatre, 35 Fairview Mall Dr. \$25-\$15. Until Jan. 26. 416-299-5557. www.stagecentreproductions.com

• New Zealand-born comic **Deb Filler** presents *Don't Get Me Started*, a one-woman show offering "some of the best Jewish jokes this side of the Catskills." Al Green Theatre, 750 Spadina Ave. at Bloor. Tickets \$25. Saturday, Jan. 19, 8 p.m. and Sunday, Jan. 20, 3 p.m. Totix.ca, 416 535-4556, www.fillerup.ca

• Encore Entertainment presents the Pulitzer-prize winning



Deb Filler

1950 Bathurst St., until Jan. 31.

• The award winners from the 2007 Toronto Outdoor Art Exhibition are on view at FCP Gallery, 100 King St. W., now until Feb. 29. Opening reception, Jan. 17, 6 to 8 p.m.

play *Driving Miss Daisy*, by Alfred Uhry. \$27.50-\$26. Toronto Centre for the Arts, Jan. 31 to Feb. 10. 416-733-0558. www.encoreshows.com

At the Galleries

• The Ontario Crafts Council presents "Unclothing and Uncovering: Revealing Art in Textiles," an exhibition of textiles released from any ties to wearability, functionality and disposability. Artists include Wendy Feldberg, Karen Goetzinger and Carmella Karjo Rother. 990 Queen St. W. Until Jan 27. www.craft.on.ca

• "Through A Window," a series of photographs by **Brenda Hoffert**, is on view at the Holy Blossom Temple's Cecile & Harry Pearl Gallery,

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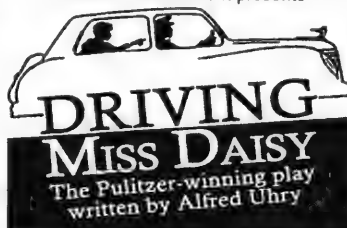
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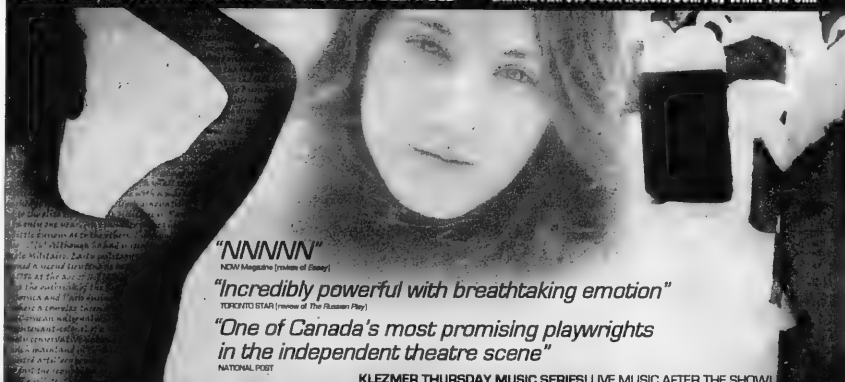
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Arts & Travel

Aruba synagogue boasts a real floor

By **RON CSILLAG**
Special to The CJN

ORANJESTAD, Aruba — The first thing one notices about the Beth Israel Synagogue here is the floor. It's a sensible linoleum — no sand that's the hallmark of several historic Caribbean synagogues.

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There's no creaky mahogany either, no old brass lamps or musty smell. "We are a little more modern here," says Martha Lichtenstein, president of the island's Jewish community, "and more Ashkenazi."

It's worth prying yourself off one of Aruba's many pristine beaches to visit the plain little synagogue in Oranjestad, the capital. Opened in 1962, well after most other Caribbean shuls, it's a microcosm of the country itself, which is indeed more modern and western than the neighbouring islands of the Dutch Antilles.

Beth Israel may be a world's difference from the grandiose Mikvé Israel-Emanuel in Curaçao, the oldest continually functioning synagogue in the western hemisphere, but it possesses a quaintness that makes it worth dropping by on a Friday night or Saturday (there's no daily minyan).

An autonomous country that broke off from the Netherlands Antilles in 1986 over a taxation/revenue dispute, it is still part of the Dutch kingdom. Aruba tallies about 100 Jews, and the synagogue counts about 40 local family members. Its real strength lies in an overseas membership of 185. On any given Shabbat, visiting North Americans outnumber locals, and life-cycle ceremonies by foreigners are popular.

Aruba was claimed in 1499 by the Spanish, who dismissed it as "a useless island" and used it to store their horses. It was acquired by the Dutch in 1636.

As with many places in the Caribbean, Aruban Jews can trace the community's lineage to one person, in this case, Moses Solomon Levie Maduro, a prominent member of a Sephardic Portuguese family in Curaçao who established a branch of the Dutch West Indies Company in Aruba in 1754.

Lichtenstein notes that Maduro brought his own slaves and spurned the slave trade that was a focal point of the economy in Curaçao.

Unlike their more pious brethren in Curaçao, Aruban Jews strayed from a traditional Jewish lifestyle. After 1924, a large group from Poland settled here. They were joined in the 1930s by Jews from Suriname, who came to work at the Esso oil refinery.

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The Beth Israel Synagogue in Aruba. [Ron Csillag photo]

In 1942, the community created the Jewish Country Club on Palm Beach. Four years later, it was officially recognized as a centre for worship and where weddings and bar mitzvahs were held. But it closed by the early 1960s, replaced by a new synagogue.

Today, while Sephardi surnames such as Maduro, Robles, Nassy, Lopez, and Henriquez can still be found, there are also the more Germanic sounding Lichtenstein, Pick and Gottfried.

There's no general demand for kosher

food. A kosher deli opened for tourists at a resort in 2005, but didn't last.

Until recently, the community had a fulltime rabbi, but since he decamped for Florida, there's a search for a new one. A cantor who departed in 2002 had initiated an adult education program to help unaffiliated Jews and those in interfaith marriages. There's a monthly newsletter, Chadashot Beth Israel.

Lichtenstein, who was born in Buenos Aires and came to Aruba in 1967, has a grievance heard commonly in these parts: Young people are leaving, mostly to study in Holland and the United States, and not returning.

"We are like a train station," she sighs. "People stay for a while, then leave." She's optimistic that the establishment of a law and medical school on the island will keep young people here.

There's no anti-Semitism and relations with Israel are "excellent," says Lichtenstein, who doubles as Israel's honorary consul. Arubans, in the Dutch tradition, are unusually tolerant, she says, and nearly everyone speaks four languages: Dutch, Spanish, English and Papiamentu, a lilting Spanish-Portuguese-Dutch-English dialect, with some African patois thrown in.

Recently, the government announced it would revamp its emergency services, and asked Lichtenstein to tap Israel's expertise. A delegation from Magen David Adom came to Aruba with ideas.

A small cemetery in town, with tombstone names dating to 1563, is the sole physical evidence of the historic Jewish presence in Aruba over the centuries.

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Books & Authors

Historian studies phenomenon of conversion in Germany

How Jews Became Germans: The History of Conversion and Assimilation in Berlin by Deborah Hertz, Yale University Press.

By **SHELDON KIRSHNER**
Staff Reporter

Karl Marx, Felix Mendelssohn and Heinrich Heine, three of the most illustrious Germans of the 19th century, apparently had little in common.

Marx, born in Trier in 1818, was a political economist and revolutionary whose radical ideas about capitalism and a classless society spawned communism.

Mendelssohn, born in Hamburg in 1809, was a conductor and pianist whose symphonies define the Romantic era in classical music.

Heine, born in Düsseldorf in 1797, was a poet whose lyric verse still resonates and moves Germans today.

While they were very different, they shared an alienation from their Jewish roots. Mendelssohn and Heine were converts to Christianity, while Marx hailed from a family that had already converted.

Conversion was not an uncommon phenomenon in the 19th century, when German Jews, still facing a myriad of anti-Semitic myths and restrictions that played havoc with their hopes, ambitions, dreams and careers, took the easy way out and converted to Christianity.

As Heine once famously said, conversion was his "ticket of admission into European culture."

Heine's dictum had its effect. By the 20th century, close to one million Christians in Germany were of Jewish origin.

Shortly after that, rabid racist Adolf Hitler assumed power in January 1933, and the new Nazi government announced laws that required all citizens to document their genealogy in full.

Determined to establish a racial state in which Jews would have no place, the Nazi regime sought to identify Christians whose ancestors had been Jewish.

Enlisting the aid of the country's churches, the race-obsessed Nazis created the *Judenkartei*, a repository of conversion and intermarriage records stretching back to the mid-17th century.

Deborah Hertz's book, *How Jews Became Germans: The History of Conversion and Assimilation in Berlin*, burrows into that issue by probing the lives of Jews who jettisoned Judaism and opted for Christianity in their eagerness for acceptance.

Hertz, a professor of modern Jewish history at the University of California in San Diego, focuses on a gallery of Jews within the context of German society. She does so by exploring letters, diaries and other materials.

Among her subjects, apart from Mendelssohn, Heine and Marx, are Rahel Levin Varnhagen (1771-1833), a Berliner who hosted one of the most celebrated literary salons in Europe; Friedrich Julius Stahl (1802-1861), an ecclesiastical lawyer and politician from Munich; and Karl Ludwig Borne (1786-1837), a political writer from Frankfurt am Main who was born as Loeb Baruch.

Varnhagen, whose father was a prosperous banker and jeweller, converted in 1814 prior to her marriage to a Prussian diplomat. To Varnhagen, a self-hating Jew, conversion came as a great relief.

Her friend, the Prussian nationalist Johann Fichte, was opposed to granting Jews civil rights. His mentor, the historian Friedrich Ruhs, subscribed to a wholly ethnic view of nationhood in which even converted Jews could not aspire to be true Germans. Ruhs' philosophy would be adopted by Hitler and company.

Stahl, whose original name was Jolson, was baptized into the Lutheran church at 19. A church activist and a professor of law,

he was known for his opposition to allowing unconverted Jews to hold civil service posts.

Borne, a convert to Lutheranism who studied constitutional law and political science, left Judaism in 1818. According to Hertz, he regarded Christianity "as integral to his identification with German national culture."

During the 17th century, the majority of converts were poor and remained impoverished. But by the middle of the 18th century, she observes, "we meet richer converts and more extended family conversions."

Since innumerable converts were wealthy, their departure deprived Berlin's Jewish community of part of its operating budget.

Hertz says that "a huge proportion" of converts were infants whose parents wanted to spare them "conflicts" later in life. She adds that 60 per cent of converts between 1800 and 1874 were under the age of five.

Conversion was a tempting proposition because neither wealth nor special privileges could guarantee social acceptance in Christian circles.

Yet converts who married each other proved that baptism was not always a step on the journey to real integration, she notes.

In an intriguing aside, Hertz points out that some Jewish assimilationists delayed conversion to dabble with Reform Judaism. Having concluded that it was unsuitable, they took the final plunge.

She reminds readers, lest they need such reminders, that conversion was a temptation to some because Prussia's treatment of Jews was dismal in comparison to the status of Jews in France.

The 1791 French Revolution emancipated Jews, but emanci-

pation did not reach Germany until its unification in 1871 after the Franco-Prussian War.

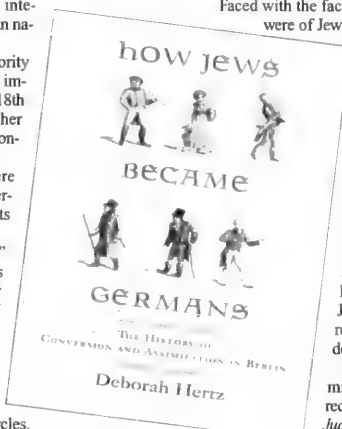
Still, even in the wake of this watershed, German Jews flirted with conversion, a topic Hertz virtually ignores.

Faced with the fact that considerable numbers of Germans were of Jewish descent, the Nazis played God, deciding who was and who was not a certified Aryan.

As Hertz writes, "Just how many Jewish ancestors made a descendant Jewish was a topic of intense debate during the Third Reich. Surprising as it might sound, in the beginning, in 1933, the definition of who was a non-Aryan was actually broader than it became in 1935. According to the first set of regulations issued in 1933, the non-Aryan category included quarter, half, three-quarter and full Jews. Later, after the Nuremberg Laws of September 1935, all of the quarter Jews and some of the half Jews were removed from the non-Aryan category and declared to be functionally Aryans."

The Nazis, of course, made their determination on the basis of the 60-odd narrow rectangular black volumes that comprised the *Judenkartei*. Hertz, having examined them in voluminous detail, avoids moral judgments about the converts until the end of her interesting book. "They wanted distinguished careers, loving marriages, a bountiful social life and an inner identity as Germans," she states. "They could not wait for history to bring them authentic emancipation."

But having given the converts their due, she admits that she progressively lost her sympathy for them as she stumbled upon episodes of "apparent hypocrisy, self-hatred and crass self-promotion."



Deborah Hertz

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Israel & the Jewish World

Israel deals compassionately with physically and mentally disabled

By **SHELDON KIRSHNER**
 Staff Reporter

OFKIM, Israel — A society can best be judged by the way it treats its weakest and most vulnerable members. By that criteria, Israel gets a high score in terms of its compassionate care of the physically and mentally disabled.

Aleh Negev and the Tlalim Institute, two of the most advanced institutions of their kind, are on the front lines of dealing with this issue in Israel.

Aleh Negev, a rehabilitative village for the severely disabled, opened in 2006 on the outskirts of this development town of 24,000 in southern Israel.

Situated opposite a lush field of peppers, Aleh Negev is a link in a chain of Aleh residential facilities caring for children and adults suffering from medical conditions ranging from cerebral palsy to autism. Founded in 1982, Aleh also has branches in Jerusalem, Bnei Brak and Gedera.

Already partially operational, Aleh Negev is a complex of of dun-coloured buildings and beautifully landscaped grounds whose infrastructure was laid out by the Jewish National Fund.

Aleh Negev currently has 70 residents, said Sarah Herskowitz, a spokesperson. Once fully operational, it will provide 220 people with a home, schooling, employment, medical care and opportunities for social interaction.

It will also provide 12,000 outpatient services annually to the entire area.

Designed to create a safe and homey atmosphere for its residents, many of whom come from families that lack the financial means or the time to adequately look after their children, Aleh Negev is dedicated to helping them achieve a greater degree of independence.

Staffed by a cadre of professionals and caregivers who tend to their needs from morning to night, Aleh Negev has set new benchmarks in the field of special education, offering therapeutic treatments in occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech therapy, music therapy and so on.

As a result, it has attracted the attention of experts from around the world.

Yet a visitor unaccustomed to being in the presence of the physically and mentally disabled is struck by their plight. One sees residents in wheelchairs, their heads slumped sideways, their tongues sticking out, their arms curled inward. But elsewhere, hope springs eternal as a group of residents sit at a table and grapple with mental exercises.

The chair of Aleh Negev, Doron Almog, a general in the Israeli army reserves, is a man who has first-hand knowledge in coping with the disabled.

His late son, Eran, was severely handicapped, and during his brief life, he neither spoke nor ever stopped behaving like an infant.

Eran, who died at the age of 23, was named after Almog's brother, who died to death next to a burning tank during the Yom Kippur War. "I swore that I would never leave a bleeding soldier behind," said Almog. "We all swore that we would never abandon our son Eran."

"Eran lived at home until he was 13," said Herskowitz. "At that point, the Almogs realized that, as Eran approached his teen years, he would need the intense stimulation and social environment that a specialized care facility could offer."

He was placed in Aleh's facility in Gedera, the first with a teen program. "I wanted to create [for him] a beautiful world, challenging yet surrounded and protected with the warmth of

true love," he explained.

"Doron was looking for a long-term solution," said Herskowitz. "It would offer Eran and his friends a quality of life through adulthood, including residential living, work opportunities, paramedical services, social events and recreation appropriate for older children. In this context, Aleh Negev was born."

Having been involved in Aleh Negev from its inception, he regards it as something of a temple, a village that will create "a future of hope and will be a source of pride for humanity."

The Tlalim Institute, a facility in nearby Dimona founded in 1975, resembles a kibbutz. A small park, built by the Jewish National Fund, adds to that bucolic impression, as does a colony of stray cats.



Aleh Negev. Inset: Nilli Ben-Dor
 [Sheldon Kirshner photos]

One hundred and sixteen caregivers, including doctors, nurses and social workers, attend to 234 mentally challenged adults from ages 20 to 76.

The residents are unusually outgoing and friendly. In child-like fashion, they are eager to shake your hand and ask for your name.

But one man, tall and gangly, was in an agitated state because he had not had visitors lately.

Residents regard visitors as crucially important, said the director, Nilli Ben-Dor, who holds an MA degree in special education.

When elderly parents or siblings are no longer able or willing to keep in regular touch with them, she assigns "aunts," or volunteers, to visit them.

But on this particular day, much to the distress of one of the residents, his "aunt" had not showed up.

Residents are kept busy in leisure time activities such as dancing and gardening.

If they need to be calmed down, they have access to two "snooze rooms."

As on a kibbutz, they take their meals in a common dining hall.

About half of the residents work part of the day, placing candles in boxes and wrapping forks and knives in napkins. Seventy-five residents do not work, being immobile.

Two doctors and an equal number of nurses look after their routine medical problems. In case of serious ailments, they are sent to a hospital in Be'er Sheva. Dimona, a town of about 40,000 southeast of Be'er Sheva, has no hospital. "It's a big problem," said Ben-Dor.

Otherwise, the residents of the Tlalim Institute seem to lack nothing. As Ben-Dor said, "Israel takes good care of its disabled population."

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Pressel made history in 2007 as youngest ever LPGA winner

By **MARVIN GLASSMAN**
Special to The CJN

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. — While most 18-year-old athletes are just aiming to get better in their sports, golfer Morgan Pressel has twice made history despite her young age.

Pressel's first brush with history came in 2001 when she became the youngest golfer ever to qualify for the U.S. Women's Open as a 12-year-old.

It didn't take that long for Pressel to make history again. In March, at 18 years and 10 months, Pressel became the youngest golfer ever to win a major championship by finishing first at the Kraft Nabisco Championships in Rancho Mirage, California.

Pressel was in shock and in tears after winning the \$300,000 (US) championship prize. Though she birdied her final hole and finished with a three-under-par 289, she trailed Suzann Patterson of Norway by four shots while Patterson was playing behind on the 14th hole.

But Patterson self-destructed with bogeys to lose her lead and finish one stroke behind Pressel.

"Oh my God, I really did not expect this," Pressel said. "I trailed, thought I had an oppor-

tunity but did not really expect to win when I finished."

"I went shopping to celebrate, got a few purses, and enjoyed celebrating the Passover seder with my whole family at my grandparents' home. It was so much fun to go through this experience, and I hope it is the first of many major championships in my career," she said.

Yet, what works well in golf on one day does not always work well on another. Pressel closed out the 2007 season on a disappointing note at the \$1.4-million U.S. ADT Championship in West Palm Beach, tying for ninth with a three-under-par 211 after three rounds of play.

Pressel was superb in the second round, making five consecutive birdies in the final nine holes for a seven-under-par 65, but shot a 73 the next day.

"You sometimes need to [be] knocked around once in a while to get better in golf or any other sport. Morgan has a long career in

front of her and disappointment is part of the process," said Pressel's grandfather, Herb Krickstein.

Having Krickstein by her side is one of the many reasons Pressel has shined at such an



Morgan Pressel

early age. Krickstein has been accompanying Morgan on the pro circuit along with Morgan's grandmother, Esther, for the past year and has been a mentor to Morgan since she took up the game at age eight.

For Krickstein, mentoring a young athlete was a case of *deja vu*. More than 20 years ago, his son Aaron, at age 16,

made history by becoming the youngest champion to win a pro tennis title — in Tel Aviv — in 1983. Aaron Krickstein was a world top 10 tennis player from 1983-94, ranked as high as sixth in 1990.

"It is not a fluke for this to happen twice," said Martin Hall, Pressel's golf instructor. "Herb Krickstein is a man with a vision. He knows how to recognize talent at a young age,

and also when to push the kids and when not to."

"Both Aaron and Morgan never had to be pushed to achieve what they accomplished. They both are willing to work hard to reach their goals and know they have to sacrifice to reach their goals," Krickstein said.

Pressel is so adept at golf that she turned down a scholarship at Duke University to turn pro in 2006, despite being an academic honours student at St. Andrews High School in Boca Raton, Fla.

Many former golf stars, such as LPGA Tour Hall of Famer Amy Alcott, think Pressel may be destined to be one of the giants in women's golf.

Alcott, who saw Pressel play at the Kraft Nabisco Championship, told Pressel she would be enshrined as the champion just before she ended her final hole with a birdie. A few minutes later, Alcott's prediction came true.

"I saw her win and saw how cool she is under pressure. Morgan is a marvelous young talent who will win many majors on the LPGA tour and her future is very bright. It would not surprise me if Morgan may become the youngest person to be inducted into the LPGA Hall Of Fame," Alcott said.

Maccabees compete in hockey tournament

By **PAUL LUNGEN**
Staff Reporter

The Israeli Maccabees finished respectfully, though out of the medals, in a holiday tournament sponsored by the Canadian Multicultural Hockey League (CMHL).

The Maccabees included skaters who played for Israel's national junior team and the Canadian entry at the World Jewish Cup in Metulla last summer. They won two and lost two, one of them in overtime, to score five points in the CMHL's eastern division.

The Maccabees defeated Hellenic Lightning 2-1 and lost to Japanese Arashi 5-4 in their overtime games. They added a regulation time 5-0 win over the Scottish Marauders and matched that with a 2-0 loss to the Irish Shamrocks.

The Polish Hussars were the Canadian Cup winners, defeating Nubian Kings 3-2 in the championship final.

The Maccabees, which played three of its

four games at North York Centennial (Herb Carnegie) Arena, shared a division with the Arashi, Shamrocks and Lightning, along with Macedonian Lions, Chinese Ice Dragons and Serbian White Eagles. Other communities represented in the tournament came from the Italian, Ukrainian, Korean, Maltese, Aboriginal and Portuguese communities.

Altogether 34 teams in four divisions — including a women's section — participated in the tournament.

The CMHL winter tournament is the brainchild of television executive producer Stanley Papulaks, who conceived of the idea 25 years ago but only launched the first event three years ago. The CMHL is a dream come true for Papulaks, who himself is the son of immigrant parents, the event's website (www.cmhl.ca) said.

The Maccabees were led by P. Sachetti in goal (he allowed eight goals in four games) and had skaters Ron Berman, Stacey Britstone, Mike Ceresne, N. Ceresney, Dave Faber, Jaime

Klaxman, Mikki Levy, Cody Schindermann, Elliot Shully, Mitch Sodofsky, Daniel Spivak, Shane Urowitz, Adam Weinberg, Jordan Weinberg, Kevin Willer and Ziv Zukier.

Britstone participated in the World Jewish Cup and has played with the Plymouth Whalers and the Tillsonburg Vipers in the OHA Senior League. Berman and Spivak have played for the Israeli juniors several times.

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Resolution No. 26

I've got a healthy Jewish spirit. On Friday nights, you'll find me romantically dining by candlelight with the Shabbat Queen.

That said, I could get right behind most secular holidays, too. I'm a fan of good marketing. For example, I love "the spirit" of Christmas. It's the one time of year when everyone I meet is courteous. They should just call the holiday "Courteous" – all the songs would still work. Of course the day after, it's back to road rage Wednesdays, but that's to be expected.

In the spirit of "when in Rome," this January, I'd like to extend a Happy "neither-Chinese-nor-Hebrew-calendar" New Year's to you all.

As I understand it, you'd like to eat more from column A and less from column B. You want to quit something and start something else.

We're three weeks in. How's that going?

Not great? Don't feel bad. It took me four years to get this next one off the ground. In 2004, I undressed my career in front of the mirror. It didn't have the definition I wanted – things were sagging. So I decided to send my skill set to boot camp and resolved to make a feature film from the bottom up.

On Jan. 30, that film, *Summerhood*, will premiere at the Santa Barbara International Film Festival.

Four years. That's some diet. I'd often measure myself against the efforts and accomplishments of friends and family, but this was my resolution.

Be mindful of the goals you set. Results do come in time, but time can take four years. Patience is a combination of managed expectations and DVD box sets.

Maybe we shouldn't compare our goals to others. My sister had two babies while I worked on this film. Two babies. Talk about glowing validation from Saba and Bubbie. My verbal art piece versus her biological enterprises – hard to compete with. Mind you, mine is a totally original work while hers, though crowd-pleasing, are merely reproductions. Plus, she

only co-authored that deal.

Either way, it's still a lot to compete with. And now that even my mother surfs the Internet, I'm in desperate need of a tangible, Googleable accomplishment.

It took me four years to keep this resolution, and every year Dick Clark was there to remind me that I had not yet reached my goal.

These were trying times. With deadlines looming, I

dug in deep this year, committed to completing the odyssey. Getting two hours of sleep a night through the final weeks of post-production, my body – not unexpectedly – buckled, and I got my first cold in decades.

My father's last words of 2007 were, "You disgust me."

He asked me late on a Sunday afternoon to go buy chicken soup. It wasn't going to fit into my Sunday schedule, however. I'd planned to be bathing in chicken broth on Monday, but this wasn't soon enough for his liking, and so he was disgusted with me. Which had me curious: of all the offensive things I did last year – and they did add up – this by no means seemed disgusting enough to elicit the camel's bite, yet it seemed to be the straw that broke his back.

As of the end of 2007, I am disgusting. I can't even get myself soup. And even though I managed to do so hours later, in 2007, I disgusted my father, which I figure is par for the course.

I hope that this year, with soup in my belly and with *Summerhood*, my heartfelt film, on screens, I will have earned back my place at the family table with my sister, her two babies, my father's bike trip around Israel and my mother's new laptop skills.

Heaven knows that my body needs the nutrition.

So, if your ambitions are deeply rooted, don't give up. Some goals take more than 30 days.

And if you find yourself in Santa Barbara on Jan. 30 at 7:30 p.m., consider yourself invited to my finish line.

ALMOST FAMOUS BY JACOB MEDJUCK



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Ingredients

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- 1/2 c. butter
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- 1/2 c. flour

Directions

PREHEAT oven to 425°F. Microwave chocolate and butter in large bowl on HIGH 2 min. or until butter is melted. Stir until chocolate is completely melted and mixture is well blended. Beat whole eggs, egg yolks, sugar and flour until well blended. Gradually add to chocolate mixture, beating constantly until well blended. **LINE** 12 muffin cups with paper liners. Place 1 cookie, upside-down, on bottom of each cup; cover evenly with batter. **BAKE** 8 min. or until cakes are firm around edges but still soft in centres. Let stand 1 min. Carefully remove cakes from muffin pan. Invert onto dessert dishes; remove paper liners. Serve with whipped topping.

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This year, I'd like to help you make that decision and stick to it. Making the deci-

It's time to get to it

sion to live an active life is easy – sticking to it isn't.

Most people set unrealistic goals for themselves and are sure to fail. I always tell my clients to take things one step at a time. If you've never exercised in your life, then starting with 30 minute walks inside or out is enough to help you lose weight and feel great.

I also strongly suggest that if you're new to working out or you have an injury of any kind, hire a personal trainer to show you the proper way to exercise safely and effectively.

If the gym is more your thing, then do it there. Gyms have lots of personal trainers with different levels of experience. Join with a friend, or join a class or two, especially for cardio training, because most people find it boring.

Make sure that the programs you choose are safe for you to do, and if you're not sure, ask your doctor. If you're a beginner, stick with beginner classes.

One of the biggest trends today is to share a personal trainer, or have group sessions, as they are called. Having two to four friends share an hour can make it more affordable, fun and motivating.

Start off with something you enjoy, because if you enjoy it, you will do it, and actually doing it will get you to where you want to go.

I'd like to help you reach your goal this year. E-mail me at felycesfitness@rogers.com with any questions or topics that you'd like to know more about.

Now go get started.

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

The new year, 2008, has arrived and the killing, raping and pillaging continues in Darfur, Sudan.

Basically, the world is full of it when it comes to halting this war.

In a recent article in the *Wall Street Journal*, actress and activist Mia Farrow wrote about Darfur – a place she has visited seven times – that "the world seems content to look on in silence. The diplomatic pressure needed to end [Sudanese President Omar] Bashir's pattern of obstruction is nowhere to be found."

Farrow, in referring to a "pattern of obstruction," is speaking about United Nations Resolution 1769, which authorized the deployment of 26,000 peacekeepers to defend the millions of people who are in danger in Sudan's Darfur region.

Bashir has stated categorically that he will deny entry to peacekeeping troops offered by Nepal, Norway, Sweden, India and Thailand. "Even if there is a shortage of troops from the

Darfur: the world is full of it

African continent," he has said, "we are not going to accept those people."

Bashir's reasoning is that the UN resolution requires the peacekeeping group to be African in character. It does not say, however, that it needs to be exclusively African. Bashir clearly has no interest in ending the war against the Darfurians, and it seems that the rest of the world can't be bothered, either.

China holds great sway over the government of Sudan, being one of its biggest purchasers of oil. Yet China has refrained from putting any diplomatic pressure on Sudan or contributing troops to protect the men, women and children of Darfur.

Farrow informs us that Sudan has refused to give the UN mission land or water access to Darfur, or a place to base and sustain its troops. She states, "It places restraints on UN helicopter flights. It denies landing rights to transport aircraft. It refuses to allow night flights

essential for civilian protection and medical evacuations."

During the Rwandan genocide, Canadian general Romeo Dallaire, who commanded the UN's peacekeeping force in Rwanda, asked for a few thousand troops to end the orchestrated, pre-planned, genocidal slaughter of Tutsis by Hutus. The request was denied. Since then, books and movies have been written and produced about the refusal of the world community to respond to his simple request. Tears have flowed and apologies have been forthcoming from major political figures.

I figure that more than \$1 billion has been spent on apologizing for Rwanda. What a waste of money.

And guess what? Gen. Martin Luther Agwai, commander of the proposed UN mission to Darfur, is now begging for 24 helicopters that he says are "essential for security and protection operations."

But not a single helicopter has so far been offered by one single nation. Not one!

In 1994 in Rwanda, over a 100-day period, the world watched silently as children were slaughtered in front of their parents, as women were gang raped and subjected to unspeakable acts before being killed, and as men, if they were lucky, were hacked to death by machete wielding thugs.

Today, in January 2008, a mere 13 years after words of regret and apology started to flow from the lying pens of politicians and citizens alike, the same barbarism is occurring in Sudan.

The carnage in Darfur continues, and the world seems to be no more compassionate today than it was during the Rwandan crisis, or for that matter during our crisis, the Holocaust.

The world is full of it.

Children, little tiny creations of God, are being murdered before our very eyes, and we're watching it happen all over again. And guess what? It will happen again and again and again.

Any ideas? "Never again" doesn't seem to be working.

Discuss this column at avrumrosensweig.ideas.blogspot.com, or e-mail avrum@yehavta.org.

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Philanthropist gives
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Is hummus the new
healthy snack food? **Page 39**

Heebonics

Gen Y reconnects through
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Arts & Travel



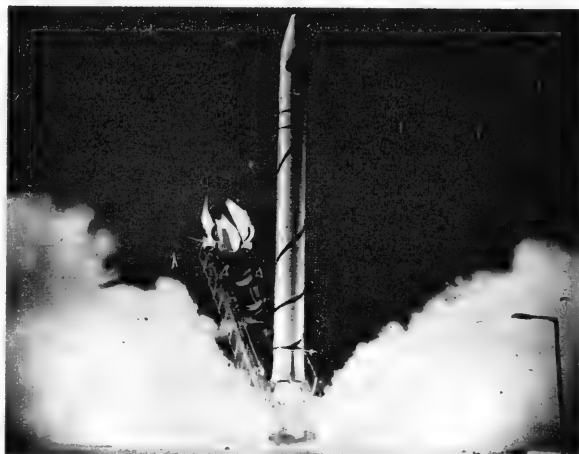
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Israel announced the launch this week in India of a new, advanced intelligence-gathering satellite.
[File photo from Israel Sun photo]

Israeli satellite boosts ability to spy on Iran

By YOSSEI MELMAN
Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

JERUSALEM — Israel launched a sophisticated new spy satellite on Monday that could boost the country's capacity to gather intelligence on Iran.

The satellite was sent into orbit from the Sriharikota Launching Range in India, using an Indian rocket.

The satellite — dubbed TECSAR and manufactured by Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) — will use radar to identify targets, even under adverse weather conditions, including dense clouds. In this, it differs from Israel's Ofek series of spy satellites, which rely on cameras.

IAI officials said the satellite, which weighs some 300 kilograms, was launched at 5:45 a.m. Israeli time and successfully placed in orbit. IAI ground stations reported receiving signals at 7:10 a.m. showing

that all systems were operating correctly.

Scientists and engineers are now conducting a battery of tests to further check the systems and gauge their performance. The first pictures from the satellite are expected within two weeks.

The TECSAR launch was postponed a number of times in the past, largely because of weather conditions.

Israel currently operates a number of reconnaissance satellites, including Ofek 5 and Ofek 7, as well as several commercial satellites such as the Amos and EROS series. A total of 11 Israeli satellites have been placed in orbit, and a number of them are still operational.

The Ofek 5 was launched in May 2002 and the Ofek 7 last July from the Palmachim missile range on Israel's coast.

Israel intends to launch another two spy satellites as part of its strategic operation commitments.

Canada takes Israel, U.S. off torture list

By ANDY LEVY-
AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Ottawa, demanding explanations.

Canada has removed Israel and the United States from a government torture watch-list after being rebuked by the Israeli and U.S. ambassadors.

A Jan. 17 CTV News report revealed that Canada's Foreign Affairs department had placed both Israel and the United States on the list as part of a training manual for diplomats visiting Canadian detainees in foreign prisons.

It also named China, Iran, Afghanistan, Egypt, Syria and others on the list, which was meant to help envoys spot signs of torture or mistreatment in these countries.

The training document placed particular emphasis on the U.S.-run Guantanamo Bay prison in Cuba, where Syrian-Canadian Omar Khadr has been imprisoned since 2002 on charges of war crimes. He alleges torture at the hands of his American guards.

The report prompted swift calls from American and Israeli representatives to

Canada, Alan Baker, said he was "shocked" the manual listed the Jewish state, while David Wilkins, the U.S. ambassador to Ottawa, called it "offensive" that his country was named.

Neil Hrab, communications director for Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier, initially distanced his office from the report.



Maxime Bernier

"The training manual is not a policy document and does not reflect the views or policies of this government," he told *The C.N.* last Friday. "We take the issue of torture very seriously. The training manual purposely raised public issues to stimulate discussion and debate in the classroom."

By the weekend, in response to the diplomatic pressure, Bernier apologized to Canadian allies listed in the document.

"I regret the embarrassment caused by the public disclosure of the manual used in the department's torture awareness training."

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Yitro

Candlelighting: 5:01

Havdalah: 6:07

Greater
Toronto
Area



No humanitarian crisis in Gaza, Olmert says — see page 47

The News in Brief

CANADA

New CJC Director

VANCOUVER — Canadian Jewish Congress, Pacific region, has named Romy Ritter as its new regional director, replacing Mira Oreck. Ritter, who started Jan. 21, previously served as CJC's regional community relations co-ordinator for five years, when her activities included developing anti-racism programs that were implemented throughout British Columbia. More recently, she has been a consultant to B.C. human rights and anti-racism groups. Ritter has a master's in criminal justice from Boston University, focusing on hate crimes and hate groups in North America.

WORLD

Zundel Lawyer Jailed

BERLIN — The lawyer for jailed Holocaust denier and former Toronto resident Ernst Zundel was sentenced Jan. 14 to 3½ years in jail in Germany for denying the Holocaust while defending Zundel last year. Sylvia Stolz, 44, girlfriend of jailed right-wing extremist Horst Mahler, was also banned

from working as a lawyer for five years. The Mannheim court said Stolz "lives in a make-believe world and wants to restore Germany's honour," and that she's a "fanatic anti-Semite." While defending Zundel, Stolz called the Shoah "the biggest lie in world history" and signed a court paper with the words "Heil Hitler." She was ejected from the trial. Zundel, 68, was later convicted of Holocaust denial, and incitement to hate and anti-Semitism. He's serving five years in jail.

Gandhi Sounds Off

WASHINGTON — The grandson of Mahatma Gandhi called Israel and Jews the "biggest players" in the world's "culture of violence." Nearly 500 people responded to the Jan. 7 blog entry by Arun Gandhi, part of the Washington Post/Newsweek "On Faith" weblog. Respondents were divided between those who called Gandhi an anti-Semite and those who added their own criticism of Jews and the Jewish state, as well as examinations of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. "Jewish identity in the past has been locked into the Holocaust experience,"

Gandhi wrote. "It is a very good example of how a community can overlay a historic experience to the point that it begins to repulse friends." He added that the Jewish future appears bleak, since Jews are a nation "that believes its survival can only be ensured by weapons and bombs." In an apology posted three days later, Gandhi stood behind his criticisms of Israel's use of violence, but said he shouldn't have implied all Jews support it.

Cemetery Desecrated

CHICAGO — Some 60 headstones at a Chicago Jewish cemetery were spray-painted with anti-Semitic graffiti. Swastikas and slogans such as "juden raus" (German for "Jews out") and "Aryan Power" were found at the Westlawn Cemetery, where 46,000 people are buried. The vandalism likely happened Jan. 6, said the local sheriff, who called it a hate crime and said several people are likely responsible.

Cancer Pioneer Dies

DENVER — Dr. Judah Folkman, a ground-breaking cancer researcher, died at the age of 74. Folkman, the son of a rabbi, collapsed and died Jan. 14 of a heart attack at Denver International Airport while changing

CJC Praises Late Priest For Dialogue Work

MONTREAL — Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) paid tribute to the late Roman Catholic priest Father Jacques Langlais, a pioneer in Catholic-Jewish relations in Quebec.

"He was a trailblazer in inter-religious dialogue and a good friend, and he will be greatly missed," said Victor Goldbloom CJC's Quebec region president.

"[Langlais'] leadership and innovation... will continue to influence the important work of so many dedicated individuals in this area," he said. "He was a tireless force in bridging different groups, communities and religions."

Langlais, who died Jan. 8 at 86, founded the Institut Interreligieux de Montréal, a centre devoted to ecumenism and intercultural relations.

Born in Rivière-Beauport, Langlais, a member of the Saint-Croix order, also founded the Institut Interreligieux in 1963, and, in 1980, he established the Quebec section of the World Conference of Religions for Peace. As well, he helped to create the Institut québécois sur la culture juive, and Dialogue St. Urbain, a dialogue group for Jewish and French Quebecers.

With the late CJC archivist David Rome, Langlais co-wrote *Juifs et Québécois: 200 ans d'histoire commune* (1986) and *Les pierres qui parlent* (1992). In 1994, he was the first recipient of CJC's Ezekiel Hart Award, given to non-Jews for furthering intercultural relations.

planes on the way to a medical conference in Vancouver. A Harvard University professor and director of the vascular biology program at Children's Hospital Boston, Folkman found a revolutionary new way of fighting cancer by cutting off the blood supply to tumours. Several successful cancer drugs are based on his approach.

Anglo Docs Wanted

JERUSALEM — A fellowship program is being

launched to bring more doctors to Israel. The aliyah group Nefesh B'Nefesh, along with Israel's ministries of health and immigrant absorption, is trying to address the serious shortage of doctors projected for Israel over the next few years. The initiative targets North American- and British-trained doctors under 40. It will provide grants for the first two years in Israel totalling about \$60,000. Doctors must practise at least nine months a year in Israel.

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Ahenakew conviction thrown out, new trial ordered

By **PAUL LUNGEN**
Staff Reporter

The Saskatchewan Court of Appeal has ordered a new trial for disgraced former native leader David Ahenakew, upholding a lower court decision that set aside his conviction for promoting hatred of Jews.

In a 3-0 decision, the court ruled the trial judge erred by not considering the defence contention that Ahenakew acted spontaneously and without criminal intent when he embarked on a rant against Jews in response to a reporter's questions during a conference in Saskatoon in December 2002.

"Mr. Ahenakew's comments, on any standard, were shocking, brutal and hurtful," Justice Robert Richards wrote for the



David Ahenakew

court. "However, that is not the measure of the offence prescribed by section 319(2) of the Criminal Code [the anti-hate section]. It engages only in circumstances where a person 'wilfully promotes' hatred against an identifiable group. I agree with the appeal judge that, at trial, there was a failure to consider all the evidence relevant to the question of whether Mr. Ahenakew had the intent necessary for a finding of guilt."

The Crown has yet to announce whether it will proceed with a new trial, stay the charges or appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada.

Canadian Jewish Congress and B'nai Brith Canada - whose League for Human Rights was an intervenor in the case - urged the Crown to appeal.

Steve Slimovich, B'nai Brith's national legal counsel, said that "these lower deci-

sions must be re-examined... The decisions, constitute a dangerous precedent in which the standard for conviction could be set inappropriately high.

"As the courts themselves have recognized, these hate-filled words were 'shock-

ing, brutal and hurtful.' Further proof of motivation is simply not needed. Additional elements introduced in these decisions, such as the need to consider whether the remarks were spontaneous or not is a step in the wrong direction that the [Supreme Court] must set straight."

Congress CEO Bernie Farber said the Supreme Court must be given the opportunity "to define the issue of wilfulness... It is certainly better to refer it to the [Supreme Court] than to order a new trial."

"The public utterances of Mr. Ahenakew, an important and once-respected Canadian, had the effect of targeting and

isolating the small Jewish community in Saskatchewan. After a thorough review, if the Crown believes there may be room to appeal this decision to the [Supreme Court], we certainly hope it does so," Farber stated.

Congress speaks out on human rights complaints

Please see page 20

Ahenakew, 74, the former national chief of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), drew national headlines in December 2002 for a speech

delivered at a meeting of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations.

In opening remarks to 200 to 300 delegates in which he was expected to discuss government medical services, Ahenakew related conversations he had with German civilians in 1957 while serving with the Canadian armed forces. The Germans, he said, blamed the Jews for starting World War II.

Continued on page 44

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Second of two parts

Last week in this space, I brought readers' attention to the recently released executive report of the *Jewish People Policy Planning Institute (JPPPI) Annual Assessment 2007: Social Aspects*.

The Jerusalem-based, independent think tank's mission is dedicated to the well-being of the Jewish people throughout the world.

As I wrote last week, the JPPPI's annual report is a much-anticipated, multiple-use document that provides a macro-summary of the state of the Jewish world and a micro-snapshot of the many varied communities that comprise the Jewish people of the world.

Last week, we reproduced the *Selected Indicators of World Jewry - 2007*, the report's comprehensive table of data highlighting demographic key points of the Jews of the world.

This week, I point to some of the significant issues that the writers highlighted in the 2007 report.

There are three parts to the report: *Policy Directions for World Jewry Today*, *Significant Recent and Current Challenges*, and *Societal Aspects of the Jewish People*. They encompass 10 discrete chapters on a wide range of subjects.

The discussion is compelling, informative and often eye-opening. The authors neither soft-pedal the negative nor embellish the positive. They entreat their readers to apply the requisite skills, abilities and resources to the wide Jewish communal needs that they identify as pressing.

Very often, the authors disclose interesting, intriguing facts and figures of modern Jewish life that are not generally known, even by people who are very interested in Jewish communal affairs.

For example, in the chapter on socio-

economic characteristics and mobility of world Jewry, the authors note that "52 per cent of world Jewry live in only five large metropolitan areas: Tel Aviv, New York, Jerusalem, Los Angeles and Haifa."

Or, on the subject of Jewish family patterns, we read: "The majority of American Jewish parents feel that the happiness of their children is more important than whether or not their children's spouse is Jewish."

In very brief fashion, I reproduce a summary of the "10 strategic agenda domains with policy directions" where the report's authors suggest action is needed.

1. Israel: The report identifies the key crisis points in relation to Israel: political/security to... confront the dangers of global radical Islamic terrorism and prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear capacities; more effective redistribution of wealth; upgraded education; and encouraging and facilitating study by haredi women and men.

2. Socio-economic issues: The authors are straightforward. Jewish education should be restructured, making it more attractive and easily available; poverty among Shoah survivors should urgently be rectified; and Jewish life should be made more accessible to a wider public.

3. Europe: A number of recommendations to help save only the "viable" Jewish communities in Europe are prescribed. The centrepiece of the suggestions concerns the availability of Jewish education. "Jewish formal education must expand. Evidence from all over the world shows that children attending Jewish day schools are more likely to develop a Jewish identity... Therefore, a significant share of funds... should be used to make Jewish education available

to all Jewish children."

The authors have pointed recommendations aimed at the leaders of European Jewry, urging them to set aside "ideological, political and religious struggles."

4. The American Jewish community and the Second Lebanon War: Jewish community leaders, intellectuals and opinion leaders must deepen their understanding of Israeli security issues.

5. Migration: Belonging to a community must encompass a sense of increasing geographic mobility.

6. Jewish culture: Five specific policies are recommended "to facilitate and intensify Jewish cultural creativity."

7. Jewish family patterns: The authors recommend three watershed policies: develop new modalities of conversion making it easier to convert while meeting traditional criteria; enable children of out-married couples to gain acceptance into the mainstream of Jewish society; and encourage middle class families to have a third or a fourth child.

8. Strategic thinking: The report pleads that upgrading long-term strategic thinking about the Jewish people "is a must."

9. Deeper study of societal dimensions and problems of the Jewish people: The writers of the report lament a lack of adequate data on critical societal dimensions. Thus, they contend, "there is an urgent need to develop a research agenda and implement it."

10. Jewish people leadership development: Finally, the reports urges policies to develop Jewish people leadership because of the "urgent need to upgrade the overall quality of Jewish people leadership in Israel and the Diaspora."

The full executive report can be viewed on the JPPPI website, www.jpppi.org.il. It is illuminating and worthwhile reading for anyone who cares about the Jewish future.

-MBD

From the
editor's
desk

Greater Toronto Area

More thinking of the future

See JN



DESERT DESSERTS FOR THE PRESIDENT: Children from Jewish communities in the Arava Desert area in the south of Israel, bring baskets of fruit that grow abundantly in the region to President Shimon Peres at his residence in Jerusalem. The fruit is used in the traditional celebration of the holiday of Tu b'Shvat - the New Year for Trees, on Jan. 22, this year.

[Isranet photo]



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Greater Toronto Area

Donation to Associated boosts tuition subsidies

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Inspired by Henry and Julia Koschitzky's recent commitment to provide \$1 million a year for at least four years to help a dozen Jewish elementary schools that provide tuition subsidies, Toronto philanthropist Gabi Weisfeld has donated \$500,000 to assist with subsidies at Associated Hebrew Schools of Toronto.

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto is matching the Koschitzky funds, and Weisfeld's gift will provide part of the matching grant for the portion of the Koschitzky donation that goes to Associated, based on the amount of tuition subsidies the school provides. Weisfeld's gift

Toronto philanthropist gives \$500,000 to school

will be used over a three-year period retroactive to the current school year.

The Koschitzky gift and federation's matching grant can be used by each school at its discretion, according to federation spokesperson Howard English. However, he noted in an e-mail to *The CJN*, "the intent is two-fold – to ease the financial burden borne by Jewish day

schools and to assist with tuition subsidies."

Weisfeld – who was born in Germany, grew up in Palestine and fought in Israel's War of Independence – said in a phone interview that "the seeds" for her gift had been there all the time.

A retired Hebrew teacher who worked at United Synagogue Day School and Beth Tzedec Congregational School, she became involved on the board of Associated after her retirement. Her late husband, Louis, who died in 1996, was instrumental in Associated's development.



Gabi Weisfeld

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"It was always at the heart of all his philanthropy. To him, Jewish education was a very important thing," said Weisfeld, whose first husband died in 1967.

Mark Smiley, educational director of Associated, said the school has almost 570 students whose tuition is subsidized, the largest number among Toronto Jewish schools. "We are delighted by the gift," he said.

This type of funding helps "make day schools accessible," he added. Both Smiley and Weisfeld expressed the hope that all Jewish day schools in the community would have the same opportunity.

Weisfeld, who has four grandchildren in the day school system, said she hopes her gift will give more children "the opportunity to have a Jewish education, and an all-round education. Jewish education is not just learning to read and write Hebrew. It has values, and outlooks, that make you a better person, period."

Just looking at the school's budget has had an impact on her, she said. "It makes you feel... if you're blessed, you have to share your blessings.

"I hope other people will follow suit."



Mark Smiley

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The dark masterpiece

The malevolence of the Palestinians who govern Gaza and the like-minded people who cheer them on, whether furtively or openly, is unique. They know that when they place Israelis within the gun sights of their weapons, they are aiming the delivery of death and increased hardship at their own people as well. Indeed, they count on the certainty of those double gun sights.

Like every other freedom-loving nation on earth, Israel will try to protect its citizens from harm and will retaliate when its enemies manage to perpetrate harm upon its citizens.

Thus, last week, was a particularly bloody week for the Palestinians in Gaza. Israel acted to retaliate for Hamas terror. It also reacted to prevent further terror. Some 30 Palestinians in Gaza, most of them gun-toting militants – but alas, five civilians too – were killed by the Israel Defence Forces.

In the week that ended last Saturday, Gazan terrorists fired some 130 Qassams and 80 mortar shells at Israeli towns and communities and at IDF forces. Last Tuesday, a 20-year-old Ecuadorian farmer was killed by a Palestinian sniper from Gaza while volunteering near Kibbutz Ein-Hashlosha.

The question begs to be asked – but it is not very often asked, one must lament, by the accusatory minds of the western correspondents – why? Why do the Palestinians continue to launch rockets and mortars at Israel? Israel has no presence in Gaza. Israel no longer rules Gaza.

The answer of course is partly because of the sense of military mission among the Palestinians who clamour for the blood of the "occupier," but it's also to evoke the Israeli retaliatory response that the planners of terror know will be rich in the lachrymose images of victimhood and "oppression." Ever the victims – in their own eyes and, it must be said, in the eyes of most of the world – Palestinian leaders have long painted and continue to paint the details of their collective, national portrait in the crimson hues of their own people's blood.

United Nations officials last weekend urged Israel to prevent the creation of a humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Hamas, typically and cynically, claimed that five people died in Gaza hospitals because of reduction in fuel supplies by Israel. But the claim was as spurious as it was false. Even with the cuts in fuel, Israel still supplied some 75 per cent of Gaza's fuel needs and Egypt an additional 5 per cent.

As the Israeli foreign ministry pointed out, "the diversion of fuel from domestic power generators to other uses is wholly a Hamas decision – apparently taken due to media and propaganda considerations. Noteworthy is the fact that while the Gaza population remains in the dark, the fuel generating power to the Hamas rocket manufacturing industry continues to flow unabated."

Israel is damned by the world when it retaliates even with non-military methods and damned by the terrorists when it does not.

But the more profoundly damned in this surreal, Catch-22 of Israel's conflict, are the people of Gaza, who, in the eyes of their own leaders, count primarily as statistical brushstrokes in the dark, manipulated masterpiece of Palestinian sorrow and suffering.

25 years ago in The CJN

The New Democratic Party was set to adopt a resolution, calling for the creation of "some kind" of Palestinian state. NDP secretary Gerald Caplan said the policy would resemble that of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), which said that Israel must recognize "the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people." The CLC also affirmed Israel's right to exist within secure and recognized borders, but said its withdrawal from lands taken in the Six Day War should be negotiated.

Editorials & Letters

Dry Bones
IN A BAKER
INSIDE GAZA

YOU SPOKE WITH AHMADINEJAD? YOU TOLD HIM THAT THE ISRAELIS ARE CRUSHING GAZA?



YES... BUT HE SAYS WE SHOULD NOT STOP FIRING MISSILES AT ISRAELI CITIES! NO MATTER WHAT!!



NOTHING WILL DETER HIM!



HE'S WILLING TO FIGHT TO LAST DROP OF OUR BLOOD.



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Bush's peace efforts futile

While every effort to achieve peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians must be applauded, it is difficult to envisage a peaceful solution while Hamas in Gaza steadfastly refuses to recognize the right of the State of Israel to exist and continues to allow rockets from Gaza to bombard Israeli towns. If Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas cannot provide the security that Israel requires, there can be no peaceful solution.

What good are agreements with respect to the future of Jerusalem or secure borders between Israel and the West Bank if the Gaza Strip remains a war zone that owes no allegiance to the Palestinian Authority nor is subject to any military control. If it is thought that some agreement can be reached between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, and then Israel will be left to eradicate the terrorists in Gaza, that would certainly never be accepted by the other Arab states and would provide for continuation of the isolation of Israel. Another factor that must be brought into play is the complete disarmament of Hezbollah in Lebanon, which to date the Lebanese government either has been unable or unwilling to do.

I am afraid that U.S. President George W. Bush's efforts will be just as futile as those of then-U.S. president Bill Clinton eight years ago.

Bert Raphael
Toronto

Ha'aretz controversy

Andrea Levin, the executive director of the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America (CAMERA), attacks *Ha'aretz's* editor, David Landau, for remarks he is alleged to have made at a private dinner with the U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice ("Below the journalistic standard," *CJN*, Jan. 10). Landau has called CAMERA's version of his words to Rice a complete distortion of what he said. The only thing we can be sure of is that he did encourage the United States to actively intervene in the peace process and force Israel to make a political settlement with the Palestinians.

However, most of Levin's attack on *Ha'aretz* is based on the newspaper's supposedly frequent condemnation of Israel as practising "apartheid." Indeed, as a regular reader of the English edition, I can testify that the word has sometimes been used by *Ha'aretz* reporters and editorialists. However, Levin offers no quantitative study of the term's use in the newspaper and so we are left with only anecdotal evidence and no evidence of the context in

which the term was employed.

Levin claims that *Ha'aretz* is engaged in the continual defamation of Israel, when it voices criticism of not only the occupation but of Israel's treatment of its own Arab and Bedouin minorities. She and others seem to believe that this somehow imperils Israel. As Zionists, we should rejoice that Israel has a free press in which the issues of the day are ardently debated.

Stephen Scheinberg
Co-chair
Canadian Friends of Peace Now

Kehilla clarification

A number of projects in which the Kehilla Residential Programme acted as development consultant were incorrectly described as being our properties ("Kehilla program celebrates 25th anniversary," *CJN*, Jan. 17). They include 2 Neptune Dr., the life lease seniors project (renamed the

Ruben Cipin Healthy Living Community for Seniors), which was sponsored by Baycrest and is managed by a separate board; Habayit Shelanu, which was developed in partnership with Circle of Care and is managed independently by a non-profit board; and the planned 60-unit Reena Community Residence for the Lebovic Campus in Vaughan, which will be a Reena building, with other partner agencies having units in it and sharing in the delivery of support services. The early Elm Ridge project is no longer operated by Baycrest, but by Reena. The Marc and Avenel buildings were both developed and are managed by Kehilla.

Nancy Singer
Executive Director
Kehilla Residential Programme

Seeking information

I am researching the tragic but heroic life of the chief nurse of the Warsaw ghetto, Ala Golomb-Greenberg (Golab-Grynbergowa), originally from Mlaw, Poland. She introduced many innovations into the Warsaw health system and worked with orphanages and pediatric clinics. During the war, she helped save hundreds of Jewish children's lives by facilitating their escape to Polish convents and orphanages. She obstinately refused passage out of the ghetto and instead stayed with her young charges up to the bitter end. Her brother, Sam Golomb, a medical doctor, survived and came to Canada after the war, as did her daughter, Rami. Anyone with information as to how to contact survivors saved by her, or any surviving family members, please contact me.

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Perspectives

Darfur deployment in disarray

By NORMAN L. EPSTEIN

Josef Stalin once said that one death is a tragedy, but a million deaths are just a statistic. The mind-numbing statistics in Darfur – more than 400,000 deaths, three million people forcibly displaced, untold numbers of women raped and wholesale destruction of 90 per cent of African villages by the government of Sudan and its Arab militias, the Janjaweed, continues to be tragically unresolved.

If this is not enough to rattle the world community, perhaps individual tragedies need to be told: Ameerah, a 15-year-old girl was gang raped and left for dead. She watched her younger brother being bayoneted to death and does not know where the rest of her family is. Or perhaps you should hear about Toma, a nine-year-old girl who barely escaped the onslaught of the Janjaweed militia and returned to the village razed to the ground and strewn with corpses. Or there is 16-year-old Mohammad, who hid in the bushes during an attack and watched his parents' throats being slit. He wants to fight for the rebels. These survivors languish either in refugee camps in Chad or in internally displaced person (IDP) camps dispersed throughout Darfur itself.

Is the international community finally moving, albeit incrementally, to an overdue intervention?

The UN Security Council passed Resolution 1769 on July 31, 2007. It calls for augmenting the ineffectual African Union Mission (AU) with UN forces to protect vulnerable civilians in IDP camps and to safeguard precarious transit lines for humanitarian aid. Humanitarian workers have been targeted for attack by both sides – 11 were murdered recently, others have been abducted, and precious assets of food and medical supplies have been confiscated.

The resolution calls for 20,000 troops and about 6,000 police in a UN-AU hybrid mission (known as UNAMID) that allows for aggressive force under a UN Chapter VII mandate to provide protection.

There is a caveat. None of the militias, particularly the Janjaweed – the Arab militia and primary perpetrators of these crimes against humanity – will be disarmed. This emasculates the mission's objective of bringing real security. Regardless, the resolution was passed unanimously by the UN Security Council, including Sudan's protector, China. The government of Sudan negotiated and then accepted the terms. Despite the resolution's approval, the Sudanese government has put up hurdles and obstacles to its deployment, which should have been in place by Dec. 31, 2007. In an Orwellian twist, the government of Sudan, the orchestrator of these crimes, sets and resets the parameters of the force.

Although the force is supposed to have mostly African troops, the resolution allows



File photo of displaced Sudanese refugees who await water at a camp on the outskirts of Zalengi in western Darfur. [RNS/Reuters photo]

for other countries to step up if there is not enough qualified African manpower. As this is the case, Nepal and Thailand have offered experienced troops ready for deployment, but the government of Sudan has nixed their inclusion. The government has dragged its feet with respect to leasing lands for multiple bases, and it reserves the right to shut down UNAMID forces' communication networks if Sudanese forces are nearby. The Sudanese government may restrict UNAMID flights at night and invoke curfews on the international force. Someone needs to inform the government that providing peace and security to this troubled region is a 24-hour-a-day job. Does the despicable duplicity of the government of Sudan know no bounds?

Or more importantly, does the international community's acquiescence to the government's demands have a threshold below which it will not sink? It is clear the world community does not have the appetite to forcefully intervene. There is fear of taking casualties for little strategic value, or the perception of "invading" another Muslim country and the possible fallout. Even if this is somewhat understandable, the world community could invoke targeted sanctions against Sudanese leaders like President Omar El Bashir, freeze the Sudanese government's monetary assets or block the sale of some of its crude around the globe, in order to pressure the government to comply with Resolution 1769. However, the world community has not designed any specific consequences for Khartoum's intransigence. The government continues to act with impunity.

Moreover, the UNAMID mission lacks ground transport and tactical helicopters for support of ground troops and reconnaissance. This provides a convenient excuse for the government of Sudan to blame the international community for UNAMID's potential failure.

If Canada does not have these helicopters, then it must use its diplomatic leverage to lobby those countries that do to ante up.

What about China's role in aiding and abetting a genocidal regime? Of the 500,000 barrels of oil Sudan produces every day, China imports roughly two-thirds. The Chinese have invested a great deal into the oil infrastructure to secure Sudan's sweet crude, as well as at least \$6 billion (US) for other commercial and capital investments. At a flip of a switch, China could end the crisis with its unequivocal influence with Khartoum. However, China is more concerned with keeping open the flow of oil and commerce with Sudan, than in stemming the flow of African blood.

China's coming-out party is the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, the first major international event hosted by China since the Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989. In view of China's sordid human rights record, and particularly its resolute support for the Khartoum regime, many have called for a boycott of the Games. Certainly this must be given consideration, or at least some sort of public flogging or humiliation to change China's policy on Darfur.

Sudan has other protectors and allies. In the newly minted UN Human Rights Council, there has been no condemnation of Sudan's egregious crimes. Other countries that are notorious as human rights violators themselves defend Sudan at every turn. The majority on the council blocked the recent presentation of a UN report citing Sudan's deplorable human rights record. Meaningful resolutions by the council might have pressured the Sudanese government to bow to international pressure instead of emboldening it. In fact, the only country that has been singled out for condemnation by this "august" UN body is Israel.

Doesn't a solution exist through peace talks? Surely a sustainable peace can come

about by bringing all parties to the table. But multiple rounds of peace talks have been tried to no avail, including the flawed 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement, which only one small rebel faction signed. Now, the rebel groups have fragmented into many splinter groups.

There have been attempts to bring the various groups together in order to develop a unified position. However, when the government of Sudan learns of these clandestine meetings, it sends aircraft to bomb the locations.

The Khartoum regime has procrastinated and prevaricated on numerous occasions, signing deals and then reneging on them. As soon as the ink dries, the government schemes to undermine the treaty. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed in 2005 between Khartoum and Africans in southern Sudan ended a brutal 50-year civil war. The wealth- and power-sharing entrenched in the peace treaty has not been honoured, and the tenuous peace is ominously close to unravelling.

Two million people, mostly African Sudanese, perished in that conflict and five million were forcibly displaced. The Khartoum regime honed its merciless tactics against southern tribes for its genocidal campaign in Darfur. The world was oblivious to African suffering then.

Are we still oblivious to African suffering in Darfur? Do the tragedies of Ameerah, Toma and Mohammad not resonate with our government leaders here in the West?

Canada is in a historic position to be the leader to end the carnage in Darfur. As a highly respected middle power unencumbered by the legacy of colonialism and the sponsor of the landmark "Responsibility to Protect" doctrine approved by the United Nations in 2005, Canada can fill the vacuum of international leadership. Twenty years ago, Canada demonstrated resolve and led the world community in facilitating the end of apartheid in South Africa.

There must be significant consequences (like targeted sanctions) for the Sudanese government's non-compliance with UN Security Council resolutions, particularly with the deployment of UNAMID.

As Canadians, we must push our government into this leadership role. More of us need to embrace the mantle of activism. Readers may join an advocacy group at castudan@sympatico.ca (author's coalition), info@sdcanada.org (Save Darfur Canada) or standwithus@stanfcanada.org (STAND Canada), each of which can walk you through initiatives to raise awareness and lobby elected officials. Call STAND Canada's 1-800-GENOCIDE for talking points to use when you place a call to our political leaders.

If we are complacent and don't engage our leaders, then we, as citizens, are just as complicit in another genocide.

As Ameerah, Toma and Mohammad fight for their lives, we have only one thing to fight – apathy!

Norman L. Epstein is co-chair of Canadians Against Slavery and Torture in Sudan (CASTS).

Opinions

All process,
no peace

The road to an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement has been littered with a plethora of faulty premises, broken promises and hollow pronouncements. Not by resolution, plan, framework, initiative, declaration, summit, accord, or conference – all catchwords that have been used at various



Lawrence Hart
in Hamilton

times to emphasize the perceived importance of the respective proposals – has anything substantive emerged that might have brought an enduring peace any closer.

As columnist David Frum reminds us (*National Post*, Jan. 12), there is the old joke that the Middle

East peace process is “all process, no peace.” And the odds that the perpetual stalemate will be broken post-Annapolis and in the wake of U.S. President George W. Bush’s recent visit to the region are slim indeed. There’s hardly a pundit who is predicting anything but more of the same.

Regrettably, what has emerged both before and since Annapolis is an overly forceful reaffirmation by the Palestinians that their “right of return” is inalienable and that without it, no deal with Israel is possible. The implication of this demand is no longer camouflaged, nor can it be ignored.

No less than code for the rejection of Israel as a Jewish state and the denial of Israel’s sovereignty over its own land, it looms large as the major sticking point in any current or future discourse between Israeli and Palestinian negotiators.

In paraphrasing comments attributed to Bush, a *Jerusalem Post* editorialist (Jan. 12) stated that Bush “has realized that it is not enough for the U.S. to leave the ‘right of return’ as a final status issue.” Instead, it “must be taken off the table now, because it stands in fundamental contradiction to the entire two-state concept.”

In essence, what we have is an American president who is hopeful that a resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian dispute is possible by year’s end. Yet, this same president has simultaneously declared that a *sine qua non* of the Palestinian position is a non-starter. So what are the chances this time of peace rather than just more (futile) process?

In her letter to the editor (“Response to Hart”, *CJN*, Jan. 10), Rebecca Woods Baum seems to have completely missed the point of my Dec. 20 column. “Time to reclaim our campuses.” There’s no question that promoting the normalcy and many virtues of the State of Israel is laudable and should be encouraged. Nor should there be any doubt that reaching out to uninformed or undecided students is a good thing. However, if Baum truly believes that these strategies – and playing (video) games – are the be-all and end-all of campus advocacy, it’s little wonder that anti-Zionist incidents of the sort that have occurred recently at York and Ryerson universities, as well as the University of Toronto, went unchecked.

Supreme Court’s authority must be maintained

Abrouhaha has been raging within the legal community here in Israel since Prof. Daniel Freidman was appointed justice minister a year ago. From Day 1, he declared his intention to make changes in the Supreme Court and the judicial system in general.

He has since set about drafting bills and proposals in this vein, and a serious rift has ensued between him and Supreme Court president Dorit Beinisch. Politicians, lawyers, professors, journalists and former justices have joined the fracas. Some very injudicious words have been spoken. There is talk that some of these plans, if put into practice, might even bring down the government (if the Winograd Committee’s report on the mishandling of the 2006 Lebanese war doesn’t do so beforehand).

Freidman’s wrath was further piqued recently when the Supreme Court issued an injunction prohibiting the state from cutting the electrical supply to the Gaza Strip, as a proposed response to the continued Qassam missiles barrage on the town of Sderot and other parts of the western Negev. It ordered the state to re-think its decision and bring it more in line with rules of proportionality and reasonableness.

Soon afterward Freidman stated his intention to introduce rules of nonjusticiability (issues that can’t be subject to legal ruling) aimed at curtailing the Supreme Court’s authority to review government agencies’ actions when these deal with security, political and fiscal matters. In his view, these are areas that should not be within the

courts’ discretion. Let’s examine the issue.

Israel’s Supreme Court has a unique role when it sits as the High Court of Justice. As noted on the Court’s website, in such cases, the “Court rules as a court of first instance, primarily in matters regarding the legality of the decisions of state authorities: government decisions, those of local authorities and other bodies and persons performing public functions under the law. It rules on matters in which it considers it necessary to grant relief in the interest of justice, and which are not within the jurisdiction of another court or tribunal.” Cases coming before the Court under this jurisdiction are often high profile, especially when top level government decisions or officials are challenged.

Taking security-related issues out of the High Court’s jurisdiction would be imprudent. I have had considerable experience for some 25 years as a legal advisor in the Israel Defence Forces, culminating in 2004-2007 when I served as the legal advisor to the IDF in Judea and Samaria. During this period, many decisions regarding West Bank issues were challenged in the High Court – between 400 and 500 in 2006 alone. Petitions dealt with a variety of topics, including means and methods of warfare, different aspects of the security barrier between the West Bank and Israel, Palestinian travel restrictions, family reunification in Israel and the West Bank, land seizures, administrative detentions, the dismantling of unauthorized Israeli outposts, the myriad issues relating to the renewed Jewish community in Hebron.

Military commanders are often exasperated

by these petitions. They are sticks in the spokes of the military administration, slowing or halting its machination. They require many lawyers and long hours to prepare adequate responses. However, making these issues nonjusticiable would be unwise. These petitions keep decision makers honest, understanding that their powers are not boundless. Don’t misconstrue. It’s not that they are immoral or insensitive to the potential victims of their actions. But knowing these actions may be challenged legally, they more carefully balance between the military necessity of their plans and the impact these might have on individuals and their legitimate rights.

The military seldom loses cases brought before the Court, because most of its actions have firm legal grounds. But the Court doesn’t always rule in the military’s favour. Judges’ remarks during court proceedings sometimes lead to plans being modified or abandoned, making adverse rulings superfluous.

And there’s another important rationale. Israel’s Supreme Court has an excellent international reputation. In an era when IDF officers are unjustifiably being threatened with international indictments and cases are brought against Israel in the International Court of Justice, it is imperative for both the IDF and the state that the highest court in the land adjudicates objectively on these often sensitive matters. When the court rules in its favour, the military’s actions gain legal and moral credence from a highly respected tribunal.

Wherever Beinisch and Freidman take their other differences, Freidman must shelve his plans on this specific issue.

Overselling peace hopes, again

Sderot, and with ongoing gun battles between Hamas supporters and Fatah loyalists, implementation of any peace agreement seems entirely unrealistic.

Bush’s latest plan is also so full of internal contradictions that will take much more than 12 months to sort out. One the one hand, he has again accepted the Israeli position that the 1949 armistice lines (the pre-1967 “Green Line”) are obsolete, and that there’s a need for defensible borders. But Palestinians ignored this and seized on Bush’s demand that Israel must end the “occupation” that followed the 1967 war. (Israeli settlements are the least difficult dimension of all this – once we agree on borders, there will be no settlements.)

Bush also emphasized territorial contiguity for a Palestinian state (presumably including Gaza) while at the same time restating America’s commitment to Israel’s security. But if Palestinians from Hamas-controlled Gaza are allowed to travel to Ramallah and Bethlehem, they will start making and firing rockets into Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. When U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice forced Israel to accept an open corridor agreement a few years ago, terror quickly increased and the agreement was frozen. Wishful thinking is not enough to resolve this.

The latest peace push will be accompanied by demands that Israel dismantle or reduce its security presence in the West Bank. At every opportunity, Palestinians repeat the mantra that

Israeli checkpoints, travel restrictions, military positions, security barriers, etc., are humiliating and make peace impossible. Similarly, we are told that the development of the Palestinian economy, including job creation and the creation of a “peace constituency,” also requires these changes in Israeli security policy. And such claims are repeated, usually without question, by journalists, diplomats and even by some Israeli pundits and politicians.

Here again, the gap between hope and reality is too big to ignore. Humanitarian aid shipments from the United Nations and Europe are still used to smuggle bombs. And a few years ago, when Israel removed checkpoints, reduced its security presence, and allowed the arming and training of Palestinian “police,” these goodwill measures were exploited for terror.

At the height of this violence, in 2002, when hundreds of Israelis were killed and disfigured in mass bombings, the so-called international community condemned Israeli responses in Jenin and elsewhere as “war crimes.” The Arab delegitimization campaign is continuing at the United Nations, in the media, among doubtful “human-rights” groups, on university campuses (with events such as “Israel Apartheid Week”), and elsewhere.

In these ways, the costs of failure are much too high to ignore. Instead of trying to create an idealized peace, the failure of Oslo showed that conflict management is more realistic. Small pragmatic steps that tackle one issue at a time will not salvage Bush’s legacy, but they are better than another disaster.



Yair Looftstein
in Tel Aviv

Following the Annapolis meeting and U.S. President George W. Bush’s tour, everyone is talking about peace. And real peace – meaning acceptance of Israel as a Jewish State, and an end to violence and demonization – would be a huge achievement. If Bush can accomplish this during his final year in office, we will all be grateful.

But past experience raises many questions and requires us to temper this optimism with some down-to-earth realism.

When grand peace initiatives fail, the damage is huge, and instead of moving forward, we end up moving backward, bringing even greater violence and isolation. The celebrated Oslo peace process ended with the Palestinian campaign of mass terror, in which more than 1,000 Israeli lives were lost only a few years ago. In parallel, the political war that exploited the language of human rights for demonization sought to isolate Israel through boycotts, divestment and sanctions.

The new American optimism and good intentions notwithstanding, one year is a very short period in which to resolve all of the complexities of this entrenched conflict. Internal discussions among Palestinians that might lead to compromise of the key “core issues” – including recognition of Jewish history in Jerusalem and the need to end Palestinian refugee claims – have not even started. Palestinian textbooks still don’t include maps with the word “Israel.” And with Hamas using Gaza to launch missiles at



Gerald Steinberg
in Jerusalem

The Kirshner File

Churchill's biographer is eminently prolific

In 1969, a year after he was named Winston Churchill's official biographer, Martin Gilbert spent a day with one of the late prime minister's friends, Edward Louis Spears, who had been a general, historian and parliamentarian. Spears, having been convinced that Gilbert would paint a realistic picture of Churchill, remarked, "Even Winston had a fault. He was too fond of Jews." Spears' nasty comment gave Gilbert pause. How, he wondered, did this "fault" manifest itself and what effect did it have on history, particularly on the Zionist movement's quest for Jewish statehood?

Gilbert, one of Britain's most eminent and prolific historians, did not get around to addressing this topic for decades, having been preoccupied with filling in the blanks of Churchill's distinguished career as a politician, prime minister and elder statesman from 1914 until his death in 1965.

Now 71, Gilbert has written six autobiographical volumes, compiled eight companion volumes of his papers and documents, and churned out an assortment of related books, from *Churchill's Political Philosophy to Churchill and America*. Amidst all this, he has produced general historical works such as *The European Powers 1900-1945* and *The Day the War Ended: May 8, 1945*, as well as a steady stream of Jewish-interest volumes ranging from *The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Its History in Maps* to *The Holocaust: The Jewish Tragedy*.

He had 70 books, with sales of approximately 1.6 million, to his credit when he finally settled down to write the book that had been on his mind for 40-odd years.

Published recently, *Churchill and the Jews* (McClelland & Stewart) is a sweeping account of Churchill's ties with British Jews and his relationship with Zionism. As he observes in the preface: "For more than half a century Churchill's life intertwined with Jewish issues. As a young member of Parliament from 1904 to 1908 with many Jews among his constituents; as a cabinet minister in 1921 and 1922 responsible for determining the future status of the Jewish National Home in Palestine; as a war leader

from 1940 to 1945 confronted by the power and tyranny of Nazi Germany; and as peacetime prime minister from 1951 to 1956, in the early days of the State of Israel..."



Sheldon Kirshner
in Toronto

A workaholic, Gilbert is currently compiling seven more volumes of Churchill's papers and writing *Are We Beasts?*, which turns on Britain's bombing policies in both world wars, when Churchill was in a position to exert influence on such weighty policy decisions. He is also working on a book about Jews who left Arab lands under duress between 1947 and 1957.

A graduate of Magdalen College at Oxford University, Gilbert has always admired Churchill. As a schoolboy, he would listen to his speeches in the House of Commons, and as a fledgling historian who was mentored by a remarkable teacher named Alan Palmer, he knew full well that Churchill could never be underestimated.

Barely out of Oxford, where one of his professors was the illustrious historian A.J. P. Taylor, Gilbert was recruited by Churchill's son, Randolph, to assist him in a biography of his father. When Randolph died in 1968, the Churchill estate asked Gilbert to replace him. "They were looking for someone who was young, who wouldn't die off soon and who was familiar with Churchill," said Gilbert, who recently visited Toronto in the company of his wife, Esther, to whom he dedicates *Churchill and the Jews*.

When he started, he did not have the slightest notion that the project would go on and on. But he quickly realized that his participation in it would not be lucrative, having been duly informed that he would receive only a stipend rather than royalties. Forty-five years on, he has no regrets. "Every day has been so fascinating," he said.

Today, Gilbert is doubtless the foremost expert on Churchill, having plumbed every nook and cranny of his life. He has no trouble rhyming off the qualities that made him great. "He coped with adversity, denial, isolation, misrepresentation and

defeat. He was tough, but not abrasive or vindictive. He didn't hold grudges or take anything tragically. He could turn implacable opponents into allies."

His greatest achievement, he believes, was in leading the British people through World War II in the face of adversity, bringing the United States on side and maintaining an alliance with the Soviet Union, an ideological foe. "I doubt whether a different prime minister could have stood up to Germany," he said, adding that a lesser leader might have capitulated and signed a peace treaty with Adolf Hitler that would have resulted in Germany's occupation of Britain, with all its unforeseen and probably terrible consequences.

As for Churchill's association with Zionism, he was largely instrumental in transforming the historic 1917 Balfour Declaration from a vague promise of support for Jewish claims to a homeland in Palestine to a more concrete expression of commitment. "Churchill's 1922 White Paper established the concept that Jews were in Palestine by right and not by sufferance," he noted. Thereafter, Palestine's Jewish population increased significantly.

To ensure that he would not grow stale, Gilbert alternated between working on the Churchill project and books on European and Jewish topics. After completing Volume 3 of *Winston S. Churchill: The Challenge of War, 1914-1916*, he dashed off *Russian History Atlas*. And after the last volume in the series, *Winston S. Churchill: Never Despair, 1945-1965*, rolled off the press in 1988, he wrote, among others, *The Second World War, Jerusalem in the Twentieth Century* and *From The Ends of the Earth: The Jews in the Twentieth Century*. His industriousness was recognized in 1995, when Queen Elizabeth II bestowed a knighthood on him.

An honorary fellow of Merton College,

Oxford, Gilbert ascribes his prolificacy to the fact that he was relieved of teaching and administrative duties in 1970 so that he could concentrate on his research. Yet Gilbert has not abandoned the classroom. He has taught at University College in London and still teaches at Hillsdale College in Michigan.

Two years ago, he accepted an offer from the history department at the University of Western Ontario to be a visiting professor. Although he has not given any courses, he has delivered lectures on the Holocaust and, of course, on Churchill. "The purpose of the appointment," he said, "was to generate interest in laying the groundwork for a Jewish studies program. My role there is really completed."

To Gilbert, Canada is hardly terra incognita. From the summer of 1940, when Britain was under attack by the Luftwaffe, to April of 1944, when Germany was reeling after a succession of catastrophic defeats, he lived in Toronto with a Jewish family at 546 Palmerston Blvd.

The son of a jewelry manufacturer whose Polish and Russian ancestors settled in Britain

about a century ago, he was sent to Toronto as a participant in a government scheme under which one million children were dispatched to Canada and other secure countries so that they would be far from the fighting. As it happened, only 5,000 children eventually went abroad, the program having been cancelled after several ships transporting them were sunk by German submarines in the Atlantic Ocean.

Gilbert is in good form these days, despite a heart attack he suffered in September. In a concession to it, he has virtually retired from the lecture circuit, which can be stressful. But there is a silver lining: he can now allot more time to honing his skills as an author. As he quipped, "My writing may even improve."

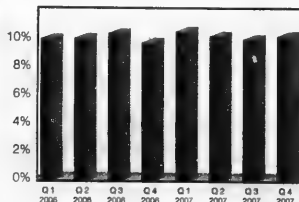


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Greater Toronto Area

CIC welcomes Bernier's decision

Continued from page 1

It contains a list that wrongly includes some of our closest allies," he said in a Jan. 19 statement. "I have directed that the manual be reviewed and rewritten."

The manual's existence was revealed when it was acquired by Amnesty International Canada through legal disclosure in a lawsuit against the federal government seeking to end the Canadian Forces' practice of transferring detainees to Afghan authorities.

The Canada-Israel Committee criticized the training document and the initial response by the government.

"There has never been a single substantiated case of a Canadian being subjected to torture in Israel," CIC chair Moshe Ronen told *The CJN*.

But the CIC was gratified to hear of Bernier's decision to review the manual.

"While the CIC remains concerned that a document such as the one in question would have included Israel as a suspect country in

the first place and that such a document would not have benefited from review at more senior levels of the [ministry] or directly from the minister's office, we are pleased that the minister has reacted quickly to rectify the situation," it said in response to Bernier's comments.

On Sunday, Baker told the Canadian Press he is satisfied with the minister's response, adding that "Israel doesn't engage in torture. It's prohibited by Israeli law."

Details about who authored the training manual remain unknown, but CP reported that it has existed for the last two years since being written in the aftermath of the Maher Arar affair.

Arar, a Syrian-Canadian, says he was wrongfully deported to Syria in 2002, where he was tortured. U.S. authorities alleged he was an Al Qaeda operative, after the RCMP supplied them with erroneous intelligence. A public inquiry later backed up his claims and cleared him of any links with terror groups.



BIRTHDAY ANGELS: Students in grades 5, 6 and 7 at Netivot HaTorah Day School took part recently in a tzedakah project called "Birthday Angels" sponsored by the Weizmann Institute's Perech program. They created and painted flowers and "birthday cakes" to be sold at the upcoming "The Art of Giving" art extravaganza to raise money to sponsor birthday parties for underprivileged children in Israel. Pictured, from left, are Yarden and Reut (Grade 6), Noah and Nadav (Grade 5) and Tamar and Jamie (Grade 7). [Rebecca Ansel photo]

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Greater Toronto Area

Bush-led peace process seen as a long shot

With the recent visit by U.S. President George W. Bush to Israel and Ramallah came a barrage of media coverage and commentary about the prospects for peace in the Middle East – some of it hopeful, but most of it skeptical.

According to Reports

By
PAUL MICHAELS

Many commented that it is virtually impossible to meet the November 2007 Annapolis summit's call for a peace agreement to be achieved by the time Bush leaves office in January 2009. Such an agreement would have to resolve key final status issues such as borders, refugees, Jerusalem, settlements, etc.

Neither Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert nor Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas is considered strong enough domestically to deliver on these crucial, highly divisive issues, especially within such a tight time frame. While final status talks officially began on Jan. 14, few Middle East experts are expecting much progress.



U.S. President George Bush with Prime Minister Ehud Olmert at an official dinner at the Prime Minister's official residence. [Israelnet photo]

Prior to Bush's visit, Olmert gave a frank and wide-ranging interview to the *Jerusalem Post* ("Olmert: Even Israel's good friends see our future based on the '67' borders, with Jerusalem divided," by Herb Keinson and David Horowitz, Jan. 1). He admitted, for example, that because Israel expects the Palestinians to comply with the internationally sponsored "road map" peace plan's first-stage demand to disarm and dismantle terrorist groups, Israel, too, must comply with the demand to stop "natural growth" of even existing settlements. Israel had not yet done this, Olmert conceded, adding: "The State of Israel will not build new settlements and will not confiscate land for this purpose, and I intend to keep the obligation."

Many journalists who focus on settle-

ments as an "impediment to peace" should be reminded that the Camp David talks of the late 1990s did not break down over the issue of settlements. That was a resolvable issue. The talks failed due to then-Palestinian Authority president Yasser Arafat's refusal to accept Israel as a Jewish state and his insistence on the "right of return" of Palestinian refugees to Israel.

Bush revisited this issue in his statement in Israel on Jan. 10, in which he said that any Israeli-Palestinian agreement "must establish Palestine as a homeland for the Palestinian people, just as Israel is a homeland for the Jewish people."

As the *Jerusalem Post* editorial "10 essential words" (Jan. 12) noted: "These words are critical, because they signal an end to the Arab world's double game," namely talking about accepting a two-state solution while, at the same time, insisting on a "right of return" to Israel, which means the negation of Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people.

Olmert was asked in the *Post* interview whether he believes Abbas is prepared to accept Israel as a Jewish state and give up on the "right of return." In response, Olmert was diplomatic: "I think that Abu Mazen [Abbas] has made that choice in his heart. I can't speak for him... My impression is that he wants peace with Israel and accepts Israel as it defines itself... [although] he will not say that."

In the meantime, Abbas faces more immediate problems. As the *Economist* said ("America in the Middle East: George Bush drinks in the last-chance casbah," Jan. 12, reprinted in *Montreal's Gazette* on that date), "With the Gaza Strip and its 1.5 million inhabitants now under the control of Hamas... Mr. Abbas can speak only for the West Bank, where more Palestinians live but over which his ramshackle Palestinian Authority exercises only the feeblest control."

Abbas' inability to control even his own territory has led a majority of Israelis, according to two recent major Israeli polls, to stop supporting, for now, a withdrawal from the West Bank.

Consistently, all polls have shown over a period of several decades that Israelis are willing to give up land as part of a peace agreement. However, the massive shelling of Sderot and the arrival in Gaza of Iranian-supplied longer-range rockets (which have already hit Ashkelon and may soon be fired at other major population centres such as Kiryat Gat) are severely undermining the position of those who believe that security can be attained during the current Bush-initiated peace process.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

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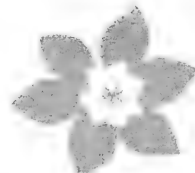
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Suicide bombers are not unstable: researchers

By **SHELDON KIRSHNER**
Staff Reporter

In a comprehensive survey of Palestinian suicide bombings, three University of Toronto researchers have concluded that the bombers were not psychologically unstable and were often motivated by personal vengeance rather than by religious passions.

The study, carried out by political sociologist Robert (Bob) Brym and PhD students Bader Araj and Yael Maoz-Shai, was funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada to the tune of \$127,000.

The results have been or will be published in several academic journals – *Social Forces*, *Contexts*, *Canadian Journal of Sociology* and *Political Science Quarterly*.

Having exhaustively studied the literature on the topic and having conducted extensive interviews with Palestinians and Israelis, the researchers reached the conclusion that the bombers were not, as previously widely believed, simply crazy.

Indeed, virtually all the bombers were stable, reported Brym.

"The organizers of suicide attacks don't want to jeopardize their missions by recruiting unreli-

able people. A research report prepared for the Danish government a few years ago thus noted that 'recruits who display signs of pathological behaviour are automatically weeded out for reasons of organizational security.' It may be that some psychologically unstable people want to become suicide bombers, but insurgent organizations strongly prefer their cannons fixed."

He added that the majority of bombers, like a 29-year-old Palestinian woman who killed 20 civilians in a 2003 bombing in Haifa, were motivated by a desire for revenge and retaliation. She acted to avenge the deaths of her brother and cousin at the hands of Israeli forces.

The handlers of bombers, however, tend to think in strategic and rational terms, said Brym, whose previous scholarly interest turned on Soviet Jews.

According to his data, fewer than half of suicide missions were perpetrated by individuals with "discernible religious inclinations."

In a paper, Brym observed, "In its origins and at its core, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not religiously inspired, and suicide bombing, despite its frequent religious trappings, is fundamentally the expression of a territorial dispute."

Brym said that suicide bombing is often informed by political logic. "In many cases, it is used as a tactic of last resort undertaken by the weak to help them restore control over territory they perceive as theirs."

Brym and his colleagues were able to identify the organizational affiliation of 133 suicide bombers between September 2000 and July 2005. Sixty-four per cent were affiliated with Islamic fundamentalist groups such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad, while the rest were aligned with secular groups such as Fatah.

The Islamists were the target of 124 Israeli assassination attempts, or more than 60 per cent of the total.

Brym found that counter operations are not necessarily effective and that harsh repression may even intensify bombings and prompt bombers to devise still more lethal methods to achieve their aims.

Brym said that after Israel began to crack down ruthlessly on suicide bombings in 2002 – the high-water mark of the second Palestinian uprising – Palestinian rocket attacks against Israeli civilians escalated sharply. "In general, severe repression can work for a while, but a sufficiently determined mass opposition will always be able to design new tactics to surmount new obstacles..."

Brym said that, in 2003, Israel's then chief of staff, Gen. Moshe Ya'alon, recognized this problem when he acknowledged that Israeli tactics had become too repressive and were stirring up potentially uncontrollable levels of hatred and terrorism.

Yet Israeli operations have had an effect, he said. "We do know that of the nearly 600 suicide missions launched in Israel and its occupied territories between 2000 and 2005, fewer than 25 per cent succeeded in reaching their target. Israeli counterterrorist efforts thwarted three-quarters of them using violent means."

In addition, Israel pre-empted attacks with targeted assassinations of planners.



Robert (Bob) Brym

From 2000 to 2005, Israel carried out more than 200 such pinpoint strikes, killing the intended person in 80 per cent of the cases, sometimes with considerable collateral damage.

In a chronology of suicide bombings, Brym said the first attack took place in April 1993 in the Jordan Valley settlement of Meholah. It was the first of 20 such attacks in the next four years, killing 175 people.

A second and more lethal wave began with the eruption of the second intifadah in September 2000.

Altogether, from 1993 to 2005, bombers perpetrated 158 suicide attacks in Israel and the territories, killing some 800 people and injuring more than 4,600.

In an aside, he said the first-ever suicide bomber in modern Middle East history was a Japanese man, a member of the Japanese Red Army group, who blew himself up after a May 1972 terrorist attack at Ben-Gurion Airport that claimed the lives of 26 civilians, almost half of whom were Puerto Rican Catholics on a pilgrimage to Israel.

Surveying suicide attacks from a global perspective, Brym said there have been almost 1,000, with the vast majority having occurred in eight countries apart from Israel: Lebanon, Sri Lanka, Turkey, India (Kashmir), Russia (Chechnya), Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan.

In an interview, Brym said he and his assistants created a data base about suicide bombings during the second intifadah.

Araj, his Palestinian assistant, interviewed about 75 militant Palestinian leaders in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and also talked to 25 per cent of the families of bombers. Maoz-Shai, his Israeli Jewish assistant, interviewed 75 counterterrorism experts in Israel.

Brym said there is only one lasting solution to suicide bombings – real peace.

He argued that Israel's tit-for-tat military approach in responding to suicide bombings has been "empirically false" since it radicalizes Palestinians and exacerbates the Arab-Israeli dispute.

He advised Israel to reach an agreement with the Palestinian Authority as soon as possible. "George Bush is right," he said in a reference to the American president's call for a peace treaty by the end of 2008.

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Greater Toronto Area

Christian Zionists are not 'missionaries': historian

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Support for Israel by evangelical Christians is not a new phenomenon, according to Paul Merkley.

Speaking last week at Beth Tzedec Congregation on Christian Zionism, the Carleton University professor emeritus of history said that Christian Zionism is "deeply embedded in the American Protestant culture, which is rooted in America's Puritan beginnings," and that it is based on the belief that the establishment of the State of Israel fulfilled a biblical prophecy.

Merkley, who taught at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem on an academic exchange in 1981, said that evangelical support for Israel was not new even when the State of Israel was established in 1948.

For half a century before that, evangelical Christians worked "hand in glove" with mainstream Zionist organizations, he added.

Since 1948, pro-Israel Christian groups have "tirelessly and effectively lobbied the Congress and the executive of the United States, have led public meetings and rallies, and their leaders break bread with political leaders on a regular basis," he said.

Merkley, an adviser on international politics to Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day, says it's not true that the "most important factor in keeping Israel secure is the Jewish vote" in the United States.

As evidence, he noted the decline of the American Jewish population to "less than two per cent" of the U.S. total.

Christian Zionists support Israel, he said, because "they sense that the people who hate Israel are the people who hate America. It's an adjunct of Conservative patriotism."

The two most important Christian Zionist organizations today are Bridges for Peace and the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (ICEJ), both of which are based in Jerusalem and have been recognized by the Israeli government for their support of the State of Israel, Merkley said.

With activities such as an annual Feast of Tabernacles parade in Jerusalem (around the same time as Sukkot), which Merkley said is the largest tourism event in Israel, the ICEJ - of which he is a board director in Canada - has "won the goodwill of most [Israeli] citizens, and to a considerable degree has alleviated the suspicions that the Orthodox Jewish population has about the intentions of evangelical Christians."

The term "evangelical" has been "kicked around - kicked out of shape - by graduates of journalism school who never read books and who know nothing about history and nothing about theology," Merkley said.

The result is that the word "now belongs in the company of 'right wing,' 'fundamentalist,' and 'fascist,' words that - with the exception of 'fascist' - once had "an honourable meaning," he added.

About 200 years ago, "evangelical" was used to describe a Christian who underwent a "discovery" that led to a process similar to *ishuvah* in Judaism, he explained.

Merkley maintains that most Christians are "well disposed towards Israel," despite anti-Israel positions taken by some of their leaders.

Other misconceptions, he added, are that Christian Zionists are "missionaries disguised as friends," and that they are "premillennial dispensationalists" whose "real intention is to herd all of you so that you'll be on the spot in time for the coming of Christ on the Mount of Olives and then forced conversion."

"It's simply not true," Merkley said. Rather, the source of Christian Zionism is "Hebrew scripture," specifically Genesis.

He noted that "all the major" Christian Zionist organizations have written policies requiring members to refrain from proselytism, "and their practice conforms entirely to their policy."



Paul Merkley

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Day on the slopes will benefit kids in Israel

For the first time, Shaare Zedek and State of Israel Bonds are teaming up to organize On the Slopes, Canadian Shaare Zedek Hospital Foundation's annual ski day.

On the Slopes will be held Wednesday, Feb. 20, at Alpine Ski Club in Collingwood, Ont., sponsored by BMO Financial Group, Fabricland and Firm Capital Corporation. Proceeds from the event will benefit the new Wilf Children's Hospital at Shaare Zedek Medical Center in Jerusalem.

This event includes ski trails, breakfast, lunch and snacks, ski and snowboard lessons, registration gift, silent auction and raffle prizes, transportation by coach buses and much more. To register for the day, please visit www.hospitalwithaheart.ca/OTS.

For more information please contact Dara Newton, co-ordinator of fundraising programs, the Canadian Shaare Zedek Hospital Foundation, 416-781-3584



Greater Toronto Area

Cancer victim inspires masquerade party fundraiser

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

When Evan Erlick was 11 years old, undergoing treatment for brain cancer at the Hospital for Sick Children, he had a dream to make the oncology ward more "kid-friendly."



Evan Erlick

At 13, in December 2006, Evan succumbed to his illness before he could see his vision come to fruition, but his dream to make young cancer patients more comfortable didn't die with him.

On Feb 21, the first annual Evan's Dream: Funky Black & White Masquerade, organized by SickKids Foundation and the Israel Cancer Research Fund (ICRF), will take place at This Is London Nightclub, to raise money for cancer research and

fulfil Evan's dream of providing other kids with cancer a better experience.

The hope is that the event, which was inspired by Evan, will raise enough money to create a room for child cancer patients to play games, and take their minds of their situation while waiting for treatment.

"My son passed away from cancer a year ago and it was his dream - when he was going through chemotherapy, he didn't like the waiting room. So the money is going to a new waiting room. It's for kids waiting to go through chemother-

apy, so when they come for their treatment, it'll be more kid-friendly," said Lisa Erlick, Evan's mom and an ICRF board member who co-chaired the event.

"He wanted there to be toys, video games - I mean through an 11-year-old's perspective, he wanted it to be Disney World, but it'll be whatever it can be," she said, adding that some of the proceeds will also go toward improving a room in the bone marrow transplant unit, where parents wait.

Brad Goldhar, the president of the Toronto chapter of the ICRF, a 33-year-old non-profit organization that raises money in North America to fund cancer research by Israeli scientists, said that the event promises to be a great party.

Teen had dream to make oncology ward more 'kid-friendly'

"Lisa and Alan Erlick, who have been very involved in ICRF, have become leaders in the SickKids Foundation, and they basically wanted to do something in the memory of Evan and raise money for both SickKids and ICRF," Goldhar said.

"It'll be a cocktail party with live music, a masquerade with a black and white theme... There will be both a live and silent auction, and Michael Lansberg, [the host of TSN's *Off The Record*] will be the MC and auctioneer," he said, adding that he hopes the event attracts 300 to 600 people.

Guests will also be treated to live entertainment, including fire jugglers and an illusionist.

The event was inspired by Evan because even when he was suffering through surgeries, chemotherapy, long hospital stays

and radiation treatments, he still thought about other kids who were going through the same ordeal.

"He would always say, 'I'm going to give them my Xbox, I'm going to give them this...'" When we were there, thank God, we were in a financial position where he could go home to an Xbox if he wanted one, and everyone was so generous with him," his mother recalled.

"Some of the other kids didn't have that... There are just too many kids that are undergoing treatment. You can't have an Xbox or a Playstation for every kid. He was just really compassionate to these kids," she said, adding that SickKids did its best to offer the kids all that it could but her son wanted to offer them more.

"He was just unique. He was very unique. He had a feisty spirit and a humongous heart. He used to challenge the doctors, and he used to get into trouble. He was just a fun, bright, feisty, compassionate, normal 11-year-old boy," she said.

"He whined, he complained, he was lazy, but he really, really was a true hero for what he had to go through. The weekly, sometimes daily trips to hospital - and the poor kid wasn't well... Some people just want him to be seen a certain way... but he was just a very sweet little boy."

Erlick said that it was a pleasure working with the people at ICRF and the SickKids Foundation because they have been very supportive to her and her family in their quest to fulfil Evan's dream.

She hopes that the event will raise awareness about what child cancer patients have to endure.

"People should just realize what these kids go through and how they really are heroes and they deserve that when they go for their treatments to at least have some sunshine - something to brighten their day."

Tickets cost \$150 each and are on sale until Feb. 11. For more information visit www.sickkidsleaders.com/evan.

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Health & Lifestyles

Rabbi honours kind-hearted, 'scary' personal trainer

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

Rabbi Avram Rothman, the spiritual leader of the Thornhill Community Shul, accomplished more than getting fit when he joined the Pavilion Health Club.

He learned not to judge a book by the cover from an intimidating hulk of a man with an earring who could bench-press 650 pounds and had a loving and giving heart.

When that man, Julian (Jules) Reese, died unexpectedly after a bout of pneumonia at the age of 34, Rabbi Rothman determined to run the Chai Lifeline marathon in his memory. It is part of the annual ING Miami Marathon, a standard course of 42.195 kilometres (26 miles, 385 yards), which takes place in Miami, Fla., on Jan. 27.

When Rabbi Rothman turned 50, he decided that he had to lose weight and get fit. "I thought that if I don't do it now, I'll kill myself. So I made the commitment to do it right," he said.

Together with his wife, Ruth, he joined the Pavilion Health Club because "it was new, it was close, and lots of other Jews were going there."

The staff told the rabbi that he would do better with a personal trainer, to encourage him and teach him how to accomplish his goals. And that's how he met Reese.

"He was scary. His neck was as big as my thigh. He was broad and muscular, and he had a shaved head," Rabbi Rothman said. Reese, a former football player, had left the National Football League after suffering a serious injury.

But Reese was also warm and encouraging, and he had a wonderful smile, the rabbi added.

Under Reese's influence, Rabbi Rothman lost 60 pounds and began to run. He is very proud that he managed to run the Zareinu marathon.

Besides being a terrific personal trainer, however, Reese turned out to be a wonderful person as well. When he saw a group of young, obviously Jewish boys being harassed by a group of older boys, he got out of his car and came near. The older boys took off on seeing such an enormous man approaching. The younger boys also got scared and ran away.

"He felt badly that those young boys were so scared of him," Rabbi Rothman said.

When he found out that several boys from She'arim Hebrew Day School wanted to play basketball but didn't have anyone to teach them, Reese volunteered not only to coach them (at no cost) but to raise funds for uniforms and other supplies.

Rabbi Rothman and his wife are still running and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. To honour Reese's memory — a "wonderful, friendly, caring giant of a man who taught me the real meaning behind 'never judge a book by its cover,'" the rabbi said — he is organizing and fundraising for the "Run for Jules" section of the Chai Lifeline marathon.

Chai Lifeline is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to helping Canadian children suffering from serious illnesses and their family members. It offers counselling, support, and a big brother/sister program, as well as sponsoring Camp Simcha, a camp for children with cancer.

To find out more about Run for Jules, call Chai Lifeline Canada at 647-430-5933 or visit the websites www.teamlifeline.org or www.chailifelinecanada.org.



HAIR TODAY, GONE TOMORROW: Micah Sienna, a Grade 8 student at the Toronto Hesche School, recently donated his hair to Angel Hair for Kids, which provides human hair wigs for children from poor families who have lost their hair because of chemotherapy and radiation treatments, burns or other conditions. He had been growing it for three years as a bar mitzvah project and plans to grow it again in for another donation.

Donation to aid research into juvenile diabetes

Toronto couple gives \$100,000

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

The Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation of Canada has received a \$100,000 donation from Torontonians Irwin and Sheila Lancit.

Juvenile diabetes, now usually referred to as Type 1 diabetes, is an autoimmune disease that occurs when the pancreas doesn't produce insulin, the hormone that removes glucose from the blood and sends it to nearly all the cells in the body, enabling them to do their job.

While the disease usually begins in childhood, it sometimes hits those in their 20s or older.

Type 2 diabetes, on the other hand, sometimes called adult onset diabetes, can begin at nearly any age, and occurs when the body does produce insulin but is unable to use it properly. There is also gestational diabetes, which occurs during pregnancy.

The Lancits' first serious involvement with juvenile diabetes came after Irwin Lancit's brother, Harvey, was diagnosed with the condition when he was 23. Because he did not take proper care of himself, Sheila Lancit

admitted sadly, he suffered many complications, including blindness, having both legs amputated and needing to go on dialysis due to kidney failure.

He died 15 years ago at the age of 52.

Six months before Harvey Lancit died, Sheila and Irwin's son, Matthew, then age 12, was also diagnosed with the illness. The family was terrified.

"But Matthew takes care of himself," Sheila said. At 28, he is a filmmaker, a healthy one, who exercises, watches his diet and takes his insulin.

The family was always involved with the Jewish community, Sheila said. Harvey was a former national vice-president of B'nai Brith Canada, and she and her husband have been involved with the United Jewish Appeal, Mount Sinai Hospital and Associated Hebrew Schools of Toronto.

When they were first approached to take an interest in Type 1 diabetes, "my first reaction was to say no," Sheila said.

But they realized that there is a real need for research — and that takes money.

The couple went to a gala fundraiser for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, and that's when they were inspired to announce their \$100,000 dona-

tion.

The purpose of their gift, she said, is to advance research, knowledge and treatment.

"Basically, we want to prevent people from getting diabetes and the complications that arise from it."

The Lancits and Sharon Anisman of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation of Canada note that so far, neither party has decided exactly what project the money should be directed toward.

The organization was founded in 1974 by parents of children with the disease who were desperate to find a cure. There are now chapters all across Canada. The parent organization, Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation International (JDRF), is the leading charitable funder and advocate for Type 1 diabetes research worldwide, according to a media release.

In 2006, the release says, JDRF provided \$6.3 million for diabetes research in Canada alone. Research funded by the organization includes such therapies as restoring autoimmunity, preventing and reversing complications and achieving metabolic control.

For more information about JDRF Canada, call 905-944-8700, 1-877-287-3533, or e-mail info@jdrf.ca.



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Jewish Life

Some human rights complaints are frivolous

By RABBI REUVEN BULKA and SYLVAIN ABITBOL

In recent weeks, there has been significant media attention regarding two human rights complaints lodged against a respected Canadian magazine and a well-known media personality.

In the first case, *Maclean's* magazine has been taken to task for its publication of an excerpt of a book written by Mark Steyn, and in the second, Ezra Levant is the subject of a complaint for his decision two years ago to publish examples in the *Western Standard* of the so-called "Danish cartoons," which featured what some believe are derogatory images of Muslims and the Prophet Muhammad.

As the controversy has swirled around these matters, the attention of many columnists has focused, understandably and predictably, on the perceived limitation to our cherished value of freedom of speech. Human rights tribunals have been characterized as "kangaroo courts" and its proceedings as "Kafkaesque" or reminiscent of the medieval English court of the Star Chamber. The commission process has been condemned as a form of "lawfare" that drains the resources of the defendant while allowing the aggrieved party to proceed without penalty or cost.

Columnists have roundly condemned these two cases, characterizing them as prime examples of the willingness of human rights commissions to entertain frivolous complaints. In some cases, calls for the elimination of both the national and provincial human rights commissions

have been made.

In our view, only the first of these critiques has it right, since we believe the Canadian Human Rights Commission and its provincial counterparts play too important a role to be jettisoned altogether for the sins of the British Columbia and Alberta commissions in accepting these two cases.

Freedom of expression has long been regarded as a core democratic value, if not the core democratic value, but free speech is not an absolute right, and even the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms allows for laws to override basic rights if, as Section 1 states, they can be "demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society."

Through the Criminal Code, the Canadian Human Rights Act and other instruments, our legislators have declared messages promoting discrimination or hatred to be unprotected expression, balancing a diminution of individual rights against the greater collective good of social harmony and cohesion.

In the past, the Canadian and provincial human rights commissions have played an important role in protecting Canadian society, and particularly its vulnerable minorities, from the corrosive effects of hate speech. They have also historically been effective in breaking down barriers of discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all Canadians.

In the interest of full disclosure, we should note that Canadian Jewish Congress has made use of the Canadian Human Rights Commission on a number

of occasions over the decades in order to protect the rights and security of the Jewish community when threatened by extremist racists and hatemongers. In our view, these individuals not only put our community at risk, but promoted a worldview that was antithetical to core Canadian values. In some cases, our complaints were accepted and led to a human rights tribunal or to mediation, and in other cases our complaints were denied. This is part of the process, and we accepted the outcomes.

But while we have always argued that the state has a fundamental role to play in protecting vulnerable minorities from hate speech and the harmful impact of hate, there have to be limits on the limitations.

Plainly put, it's the responsibility of the human rights commissions to assess complaints as they are tendered and to determine if those complaints fall within the ambit of the relevant human rights legislation, and then to determine if the complaints are legitimate, vexatious or frivolous. Human rights commissions must constantly recalibrate where the balance lies between free expression and its abridgement, but the determination of where to place the fulcrum must always be based on the statutory standard that such expression is "likely to expose a person or persons to hatred or contempt."

This cannot be meant to take into account speech that is merely offensive,

"politically incorrect," unpopular or critical or that hurts feelings. In a sophisticated country such as Canada, offence should not be given or taken so easily.

In our estimation, the complaints against *Maclean's* and Levant fall well short of the mandated standard of the provincial human rights commissions petitioned for redress and should not have been accepted. In the case of the latter, while CJC deplored Levant's decision to reprint the offending cartoons, there must be no doubt that in a free and democratic society, he has the right to be offensive.

Yes, our community knows only too well that words hurt and have been used as weapons of hate. But there must be some parameters and standards for state action to kick in. If every statement or publication that is unpopular

or causes hurt feelings is actionable, then none is. And, as we have seen from the firestorm of criticism of these decisions, such abuse of legitimate human rights mechanisms vitiates their effectiveness and brings into disrepute their true value and necessity.

In the end, the appropriate application of statutory criteria is our best defence against those who would eliminate the law to protect their interests, and against those who would use the law to promote a narrow political agenda.

Rabbi Reuven Bulka and Sylvain Abitbol are co-presidents of Canadian Jewish Congress.

The state has a fundamental role in protecting vulnerable minorities

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Jewish Life

Romanians still deny their role in the Holocaust

By BARUCH COHEN

The International Commission on the Holocaust in Romania, which was headed by Elie Wiesel, released a report in November 2004 that unequivocally pointed to Romanian culpability in Adolf Hitler's Final Solution.

Guest Voice

It declares: "Of all the allies of Nazi Germany, Romania bears responsibility for the death of more Jews than any country other than Germany itself." —From the final report of the Commission on the Holocaust in Romania, presented to the Romanian President in Bucharest, Government of Romania, November 2004.

Yet, until today, it remains unclear whether the conclusion of the commission will in fact give rise to a new national narrative. A real change in Romania's attitude will, it seems, take generations — if in fact it ever comes.

In *Realitatea Evreiasca* (Nov. 6, 2007), the official publication of the Romanian Jewish Community in Bucharest, Mario Katz, president of the Agency for Combating Anti-Semitism, is quoted as saying in a report that "France and Romania, members of NATO and EU, are doing

no Holocaust in Romania and that the few Jews killed were communist agents or agitators."

Denial of the Holocaust is now illegal in Romania; however, the current government has not yet taken any legal measures against deniers or anti-Semites.

In December 2005, the League for the Struggle against Anti-Romanianism published a manifesto declaring: "Israel is planning an invasion of Romania to Judaize the Romanians!" The article is signed by university professor Ion Coja. The Coja Manifesto is a pallid version of the Czarist forgery *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Coja promises "a better Holocaust without remnants. We are going to do it better."

Coja's reported trial for Holocaust-denial, dating back to 2005, has seen little progress, although the Romanian Consulate General of Montreal would not confirm this fact, on the grounds that they had no information available.

Before World War II, close to 800,000 Jews lived in Romania. They were proud of their creative and flourishing contributions to all areas of Romanian society. Today, only 8,000 or 9,000 elderly Holocaust survivors live in the country.

Baruch Cohen, a Holocaust survivor, is a member of the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre and research chair of the Canadian Institute for Jewish Research.



Baruch Cohen

nothing to combat negationism [Holocaust-denial] and anti-Semitic manifestations in their country."

There are reports that, in keeping with the Elie Wiesel Commission's recommendations, the topic of the Holocaust has been introduced into the school curriculum in Romania. However, a close examination shows not only that there are inconsistencies in the subject matter, but also that there is a tendency to omit the fact that Romanians were responsible for the brutal murder of almost 400,000 Jews. It is very disappointing that the Romanian ministry of education could not block powerful forces that are doing their utmost to slow down the Holocaust education process in their country.

There are a few encouraging signs. In several universities, including Bucharest, Iasi and Cluj, courses have been instituted that focus on teaching about the Holocaust in Romania, and Romanian President Traian Basescu has pledged to right former wrongs.

But there is a lot more to be done. As recently as the November issue of *Realitatea Evreiasca*, an editorial noted that anti-Semitism and Holocaust-denial are still widespread in Romania's media — journals, magazines, and television — and among journalists generally.

Lawrence Weinbaum, in his June 1, 2006, article for the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, "Romanian Society and the Holocaust," wrote: "In private conversations with the Romanian ambassadors to Israel and Ukraine respectively in 1998, this author was assured that there had been

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By RABBI AVRAM ROTHMAN

Many people are debating the need for a school such as the She'arim Hebrew Day School of Toronto, for children with learning disabilities and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Some think that the same service can be provided to the student while he or she remains in the mainstream Jewish day schools with the assistance of a "special needs department." Sadly, for a significant minority of students, that is a terrible error.

A number of years ago, I was privileged to be one of the creators of the special needs program in a local Jewish day school. Yet, even this particular school was unable to provide the tools needed by many of the special needs children.

My experience has shown me that Toronto's mainstream day schools could not address the enormous issue of the child's self-esteem. Time after time, we see children who are being taken out of class and given modified programs and tutors. They feel like failures as they see their friends excel and grow in areas that they cannot. Being taken out of the classroom and going to the special needs program is, regardless of how sensitive the school, an attack on the fragile psyche of a young child. The end result is that the child sees him or herself as a failure, stupid or simply unable to succeed.

In addition, the demands of today's mainstream Jewish day schools for a student to conform, be it to rise early or stay late for religious studies or prayer services, or to conform to a dress code, is beyond the ability of a special needs child, be it due to medication or the very learning issues themselves, thereby

She'arim gave my son self-esteem

causing him or her to be criticized or disciplined by the staff, teacher or rabbi, and causing the child to be classified as rebellious.

These incidents lead the special needs child to have little self-esteem, feel like a failure, be wary of authority and to become the rebellious student they are treated as.

There is absolutely no way that a mainstream Jewish day school can address these students' issues. They cannot have some students constantly arriving late; not participating in some of the religious programs; and not conforming in other ways. It disrupts the school and hinders the positive growth of the other students.

Certainly, some special needs children, perhaps with medication, could be mainstreamed. But the large number of Jewish students we have today with low self-esteem, who experience constant failure and are rebelling during adolescence, is a sign that mainstreaming does not work for many of our children.

I believe when possible, each school should address the need within its own walls. But we must understand that many students cannot be mainstreamed and that She'arim is not a luxury but a necessity.

When working to develop my school's special needs program, I had no idea that I would have a child that would need to use such a program. Even more so, I had no idea that the program and the school would prove unable to address the needs of my child.

I want my children to grow up in an

atmosphere of Torah, with a love of Judaism and learning from wonderful, caring rabbis. However, more so, I want my child to remain a good Jew, to feel good about himself, to believe that he can succeed. He needs to know that he is a good boy, that HaShem loves him and that he is not a loser or stupid.

Mainstream Jewish day schools try very hard to give our children the knowledge and lifestyle that we want for them. They also try to make them feel good about themselves and to be caring Jews. But while it is not the fault of the day schools, some students need to be in a school such as She'arim, a school specifically designed for them and one that has shown time and again to work.

She'arim could not provide the specific religious atmosphere I wanted for my child – it is a community school – but it gave him much. It gave him the self-esteem, the knowledge that he can succeed, the feeling that he is not second rate and the tools to take the next step in his education successfully.

Even though my child has completed the She'arim program, I certainly hope and pray that our community will do everything in its power to support it and all of our children whose future depends on it. For the sake of the children who need this school – those who do not have a choice – don't take away the lifesaver that has proven to work, for we are talking about their future, and frankly, our future depends on it.

Rabbi Avram Rothman is the spiritual leader of the Thornhill Community Shul.

By ELLIOTT MALAMET

The policies and practices implemented by the Israeli regime on the people and land of Palestine are strikingly similar to those implemented by the South African apartheid regime and are in direct violation of the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid. Israeli apartheid is

rooted in the state's creation in 1948, when more than two-thirds of the indigenous Palestinian population were ethnically cleansed from their homes and lands to create the Jewish majority needed to establish the Jewish state. Since 1948, the Israeli state has implemented forcible transfer of populations, land expropriation, labour exploitation, ghettoization, humiliation and murder of indigenous Palestinians to maintain Israeli domination over Palestinians.

This crackling bit of prose – courtesy of the folks who are about to bring us Israeli Apartheid Week 2008 (after successful stints in 2005, 2006 and 2007) – is an odd combination of inflammatory and yet turgid, racist and yet mundane, tragic and yet

Debunking the apartheid myth

comic in its mendacity and utter pomposity. But it's also real. These people are coming to a campus near you in a few weeks (Feb. 3 to 10) to inform us

that Israelis are occupiers and the Palestinians are their victims.

Never mind all those charming young men and women with Semtex and 10 pounds of nails strapped to their chests who are obliterating all of those wicked Israeli colonialists on their way home from Grade 3. A mere side point. For as we know from our friends on the left, there are no civilian targets, anyway. In between soccer results and bites of falafel, Israelis plan strategies of colonization, and suicide bombings are just the tactics of liberation.

So here's another definition of the "postmodern": any piece of delusional fantasy that gets an airing as serious discourse. Apartheid week is the postmodern in all of its perverse glory. One can, I suppose, close one's ears until all of the shouting stops, but I think there's a better way, and that's to get informed on the utter deception that is being perpetrated here by peo-

ple who yell apartheid and scream about freedom – usually within the cushy confines of some Western university – and then want to boycott Israeli academics.

Prof. Menachem Kellner, an internationally respected scholar of Jewish thought and head of the Jewish studies department at the University of Haifa, has spent much time and energy writing and lecturing on the lies that form the basis of the attempted boycott of Israel for being an "apartheid" state. In his words, a "pastiche of distortions" are used to generate support for the ultimate aim of Israel's destruction.

Some months ago, I invited Kellner to speak about these issues in Toronto. As coincidence or providence would have it, his visit to Toronto coincides with the shenanigans of Apartheid Week. I urge every single person who is interested in being informed about what is happening on campus and about the assault that Jewish students are increasingly facing, to attend Prof. Kellner's lecture, sponsored by Torah in Motion, in Toronto at Yeshiva Or Chaim on Thursday, Feb. 7 at 8 p.m.



Jewish Life

Exit Ghost by Philip Roth, Viking Canada.

Every new book by Philip Roth becomes a publishing event – eagerly awaited and fiercely discussed. Approaching 75, he is the recipient of a bevy of literary awards and the only living American writer whose complete works (28 volumes) are being published by the Library of America.

Exit Ghost (the title is a stage direction in *Macbeth*) is Roth's ninth novel featuring his putative alter ego, Nathan Zuckerman, who first appeared in *The Ghost Writer* (1979). Although the protean Zuckerman is close to Roth in biographical detail, their lives and actions are hardly congruent.

Exit Ghost is neither as ambitious nor as successful as that trio of earlier Zuckerman novels: *American Pastoral*; *I Married a Communist*; and *The Human Stain*. Also, it lacks the compassion and emotional intensity of *Patrimony* (1991), the compelling story of the life and death of the author's father.

Zuckerman, now 71, is the sad victim of prostate cancer that has rendered him both impotent and incontinent. For 11 years he has lived reclusively atop a New England mountain. His energy and vitality are things of the past.

Roth cruelly writes that "the once rigid instrument of procreation was now like the end of a pipe you see sticking out of a field somewhere, a meaningless piece of pipe that spurts and gushes intermittently, spit-

Roth says goodbye to Zuckerman

ting forth water to no end, until a day arrives when somebody remembers to give the valve an extra turn that shuts the damn sluice down."

Forsaking his rural retreat for a visit to Manhattan to consult his urologist, Zuckerman is bewildered by the ubiquity of the cellphone. "Everywhere I walked, somebody was approaching me talking on a phone and someone was behind me talking on a phone. When I took a taxi, the cabbie was on the phone. For one who frequently went without talking to anyone for days at a time, I had to wonder what that had previously held them up had collapsed in people to make incessant talking into a telephone preferable to walking about under no one's surveillance, momentarily solitary, assimilating the street through one's animal senses and thinking the myriad thoughts that the activities of a city inspire. For me it made the streets appear comic and the people ridiculous."

In the big city, Zuckerman has three unexpected encounters that lend tension and interest to his return, however briefly, to modern society.

The first of these is a figure out of his past, Amy Bellett, once the lover and inspiration of the famous writer I.E. Lonoff, Zuckerman's friend and mentor. She is now poor and sickly, and her beauty and wit have faded ravaged by time and circumstance. She possesses an unfinished manuscript by

Lonoff that may contain a scandalous secret.

The second of Zuckerman's encounters is with 28-year-old Richard Kliman, a relentless and predatory writer who is eager to glean information from Amy and Zuckerman about the life of Lonoff whose biography he is writing. Both of them, dismayed by Kliman's insensitivity, turn aside his frantic importunities despite his anger and frustration.

In the end, Kliman's "exasperation reached its crescendo, but rather than hurling the manuscript at my head – as I fully expected, instinctively raising my arms to protect my face – he dropped it onto the pavement, onto the New York sidewalk, only inches in front of my feet, and fled into traffic, darting between the streaming cars that I could only hope to see shatter the rampaging would-be biographer to bits."

The third and most significant of the encounters is with a "beautiful, privileged, intelligent, self-possessed, languid-looking 30-year-old." She is happily married, and Zuckerman's infatuation with her is a meaningless fantasy beyond realization.

Interspersed throughout the novel is an imaginary dialogue, a playlet with the characters He and She. The words are written by Zuckerman on his hotel stationery, the erotic ramblings of an old man for the unobtainable.

Rich with provocative ideas and Roth's distinctive literary style, *Exit Ghost* is a sympathetic farewell to Zuckerman. He had been around a long time, the subject of nine of Roth's novels. It was time for him to go.



Books
Bernard Baskin

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

Jewish birthdays, Part 2

Happy Birthday! If you are celebrating your birthday today, you are sharing this special day with about 36,000 Jews around the world.

The number of Jewish birthday boys and girls will vary depending on which calendar you are using and the accuracy of the recently released estimate of 13.2 million Jews by the Jewish People Policy Planning Institute. [tinyurl.com/333wdd]

Anyway, back to you. You can't celebrate your Jewish birthday if you don't know when it is. If you've lost track or were never sure of the date, no problem. It's easy to figure out. Just go to the Jewish Birthday Calculator, type in the English date and indicate whether you born in the morning or in the evening or night. Click the button to find out the Jewish date to find out when it next occurs. You can even set it up to e-mail you an annual reminder prior to your Jewish birthday. [tinyurl.com/2vjw2d]

How can you celebrate the day in a Jewish manner? In the article "Birthdays, Jewishly," Sandra Widener and Lisa Farber Miller have several suggestions for kids, but I think adults could enjoy some of these, too.

- Plan a special family-only Shabbat dinner dedicated to the person celebrating a birthday.
- Or start a Saturday slumber party with a havdalah ceremony.
- Do a mitzvah together. Birthdays are a

good time to convey the importance of mitzvot such as bringing a piece of birthday cake to an ailing relative or friend.

- Plant a tree. An ancient and lovely tradition is to plant a tree when a new baby is born. According to the Talmud, in biblical times, a cedar was planted for a son and a cypress for a daughter. [tinyurl.com/pw8or]

Although the song *Happy Birthday To You* is a staple of most birthdays, you can inject some Hebrew into your next celebration. There are several kids' tunes ranging from *Hayom Yom Huledet* [tinyurl.com/2aoxcj] along with a surprising number of other melodies. [tinyurl.com/25jp97]

And for a decidedly more mature audience, there is Moshe Vilensky's *Tefilat Yom Huledet, A Birthday Prayer*. Vilensky (1910-1997) immigrated to Israel from Poland in 1932 and was awarded the Israel Prize in 1983 for his work in Hebrew music. [tinyurl.com/2sblep] *Yom Huledet* is moving and melancholy. Even if you don't understand the lyrics, you'll be entranced by Chava Alberstein's incredible performance. [tinyurl.com/2wfb43]

For something more upbeat, here's one more Hebrew birthday tune for you. I have written before about the Eurovision Song Contest, which Israel has won on three occasions. [tinyurl.com/33vo8u] Eurovision entries try to be crowd pleasers, and in 1999, Israel's submission was the breezy Hebrew

and English tune *Happy Birthday* sung by the quartet Eden. "Happy Birthday to you, chalomot yitgashmu... Bekef, besimcha uve'osher" (dreams will come true... with fun, with happiness and joy). [tinyurl.com/3ck6bf] *Happy Birthday* placed a respectable fifth in a field of 23.

As I mentioned last week, part of the reason for this column is that Israel is about to celebrate its 60th birthday. You can take a peek at some of the special events being planned at the Israel@60 site. [60israel.org/]

When Israel hits 60 in May/lyar, it will still be a youngster compared to the fabled age of 120. In that vein, I'll leave the last word to Rabbi Lewis Eron, director of religious services at Jewish Geriatric Home in Cherry Hill, New Jersey. [tinyurl.com/322sdj] One Shabbat morning, the rabbi announced that a well-loved resident of the home was about to celebrate a milestone birthday and he wished that she live to the age of 120. At that moment, a friend of hers raised her voice and corrected him. The friend said firmly, "No, rabbi, you should wish her 120 years and three months."

"Why the extra three months?" the rabbi replied.

"Rabbi," she declared, "why should she spoil her last birthday? Don't you want her to enjoy her party?"

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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Generation Y Visits Israel

We will all experience 'infinite goodness': Kabbalist

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

When Madonna and Briney Spears began wearing red string bracelets on their left wrists to ward off the evil eye, Kabbalah took a hit in the mainstream world, and some devoted followers of the Jewish mystical teachings were upset that celebrities were trivializing it.

But when a group of Canadian students and young professionals travelled to Israel on a subsidized tour organized by Jewish Urban Meeting Place (JUMP) – a new centre in Thornhill that offers Jews a place to “hang out, be inspired and JUMP in” – they met with a Kabbalist who was intent on showing them how “awesomely awesome” the Kabbalah is.

Avraham Loewenthal, who is originally from Detroit, made aliyah in 1994 and currently lives in a flat below his Gallery of Mystical Art in Safed, a northern Israeli city known as the centre of Jewish mysticism.

Before Loewenthal made the move to Israel, he began studying meditation while studying psychology and painting in university.

“Someone in college told me about this book *Jewish Meditation*. I read this book in college and it changed my life. I started reading it, and I was just like, ‘Wow, there’s this kind of stuff in Judaism!’”

He said the book, written by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, was so dense that it took him about six months to get through it, but it floored him.

“I was like, ‘This is the most amazing thing I’ve ever read in my life... To make a long story very short, there was another book on the Kabbalah by Aryeh Kaplan, and I read another book by Aryeh Kaplan, and then I moved to Tzfat [the Hebrew name for Safed].”

Although Rabbi Kaplan was soft-spoken, even skeptics wouldn’t be able to resist his charisma, passion and infectious positivity, Loewenthal said.

“The reason we were created is for every single one of us to experience the greatest possible goodness that could ever possibly be,” Loewenthal added. “It says in the Kabbalah that the only reason we were created was for every single one of us to bliss out so big that we can’t even imagine what we are talking about. It’s a really awesome idea.”

But reality is getting in the way, he said.

“There isn’t one person in the world who is experiencing infinite goodness. There is a lot of suffering. Right now in the world, every single day, there are 24,000 people dying of starvation. Every single day, after day, after day, year after year, and that’s just one thing happening in the world.”

During his brief lecture about the basic subject matter of the Kabbalah, Loewenthal explained that the texts deal with life’s biggest questions: What is the meaning of life? What is our soul? What is God? Why are we here?

He said that according to the Kabbalah, the process of creation has three stages and

that everything we go through in life is part of the process of spiritual transformation.

“Every single one of us has a body and a soul. Our bodies are here in the world for so many years and then they’re gone. The Kabbalah is trying to get us to realize that the part of us that is really us is something that is here forever, is something that so awesomely awesome, you can’t even imagine how awesome it is.”

He said that another concept is that everyone’s soul is part of one universal soul and we all go through experiences together.

“When all the spiritual transformations are complete, all the infinite goodness is finally going to become real to everybody in a place of eternity.”

Loewenthal added that Kabbalists believe that the purpose of creation was to give infinite goodness to everybody – and God doesn’t fail in his plans.

“So we know that there is a 100 per cent guarantee that every single one of us, every single one in the world, no matter what we do, every single model of creation, will come to experience all infinite goodness.”

He said that miracles are happening before our eyes, but people are so caught up in their daily lives, they don’t realize they’re happening.

“If we can think of the bigger perspective for one second and go back 2,000 years, we

were all living in the land of Israel. We were a holy, holy spiritual nation. Two thousand years ago, we were kicked out of the land of Israel, we spread throughout the whole world, but we left with an ancient tradition so that way into the future, we could gather from all over the world and come back to the land of Israel,” he said.

“Where were we 65 years ago? In the Holocaust. In the past 65 years, in front of our eyes, Russia falls. And the Jews come back. South Africa falls, and the Jews come back... It is a miracle. Nothing like that has ever happened in history. It’s happening so fast, we don’t even realize that it’s happening. It’s such a trip.”



Avraham Loewenthal explains concepts found in the Kabbalah in his Gallery of Mystical Art in Safed. [Sheri Shefa photo]

Photo has been altered to accommodate religious sensibilities. — The Editor

Difficult History, Diverse Audiences:

The Holocaust & Antisemitism in Contemporary Perspective

A conference by the Mark and Gail Appel Program, which brings together future educators from Canada, Germany, and Poland to study the past in order to teach towards a better future. All talks take place in the Founders College Assembly Hall (152 FC), York University, Keele Campus, and are open to the public free of charge.

Saturday, 9 February 2008 8:00 PM **Sunday, 10 February 2008 2:00 PM**

If It's So Bad, How Come It's So Good? Antisemitism in Britain and Europe Today

Professor David Cesarani, OBE

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Generation Y Visits Israel

Canadians reminded of human cost of war

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Living in Canada, learning about Israel primarily through the media, we can easily forget that it's a place where life goes on despite the constant threat.

On the other hand, during a 10-day tour of Israel packed with sightseeing, adventure and fun, it's easy to forget about the human cost of a seemingly everlasting conflict.

But when a group of Canadian students and young professionals travelled to Israel late last month on a subsidized trip organized by a new social networking group called Jewish Urban Meeting Place (JUMP), the trip staff wanted the participants to experience Israel on all levels.

The group travelled to Misgav Am, a kibbutz in the Upper Galilee that sits on a hilltop metres from the Lebanese border. There, at a lookout point where they watched clouds roll over Lebanese villages below, they met Arieh Ben-Yakov, a hardened, politically incorrect, 67-year-old kibbutznik who moved to Israel in 1961 from the United States.

Having served Israel on the battlefield and in the agricultural field, Ben-Yakov felt he was entitled to what he called his harsh, crass worldview.

"I have very strong opinions about lots of things, and you need to realize the fact that I've been a committed warrior for a long time. You don't keep doing this without it having an effect on the way you look at the world and the way you see things," he said.

Ben-Yakov spoke about "Arab propaganda" that perpetuates lies about the Jewish state.

"Contrary to Arab propaganda, we didn't steal their country, we didn't kick them out of their homes, we didn't rob them of anything. They sold us shit and we turned it into gold. This country, the beauty of it and the development of it, we did it. Nobody else. And we've been doing it since the 1890s," Ben-Yakov said.

"When Zionism started in 1890, we got permission from the Turkish authorities to purchase land for Jewish people in Eretz Yisrael. And the Turks thought that was a super good idea. The Arab landowners did not sell us good land. They sold us marshes and swamps and the mountain tops and all the places where nothing grows. And they thought they were doing a good job taking money for nothing."

He said that after Israel's War of Independence and the Six Day War in 1967, many who didn't want to live under Israeli rule, fled to neighbouring Arab countries.

"They attacked us and they lost and then they ran like hell, and the rest who stayed bitch and moan about their rights when they lose. If they had won, there wouldn't be a Jew left here..."

"Understand, we did not come here to be crusaders. We just came to set up a home... In '48 we didn't even have an army and they attacked us from five different countries... They've been attacking us ever since and putting the blame on us."

He said that during the Second Lebanon War, his kibbutz, which grows apples and cherries but also shares its property with the army, was bombed from the first to the last day of the war.

"Unfortunately, more than 10 rockets landed inside... we spent most of our time firefighting."

When it comes to achieving peace in the

Middle East, Ben-Yakov said there is a very simple solution.

"Stop trying to kill me. Stop trying to kill me and you'll have peace the same day. I'm not looking for trouble, I want to raise my children. But I've learned how to deal with trouble."



Ronen Malik, JUMP's Israeli tour guide who shared his story about his terrifying experience as a reserve soldier during the Second Lebanon War, is seen here educating the participants about Israel's ancient history.

[Ori Gilad photo]

Behind the tough exteriors of hawkish Israelis like Ben-Yakov, there are daughters, sons, wives and husbands who want nothing more than to live with their families in peace, and fear the consequences and losses of yet another war.

The JUMP participants were reminded of this fact when Ronen Malik, their 30-year-old Israeli tour guide, told his horrifying account of fighting in the Second Lebanon War as a reserve Israel Defence Forces soldier, and shared his fear of not being there for his wife and young daughter.

Ten days after two IDF soldiers were kidnapped from an area near the Israeli-Lebanese border, Malik got a call from his commander to join his unit.

He met with his unit on Friday, and before Shabbat, Malik, who is modern Orthodox, called his wife to wish her a Shabbat Shalom.

A few hours later, his unit arrived at Misgav Am before they set off on a seven-hour trek into Lebanese territory.

He said they travelled on foot toward a village near Tayba, where his unit was to relieve a group of young soldiers who had been on duty for 48 hours, and that after the next 48 hours, his unit would be relieved by another unit. But when the time came for them to be relieved, his commander informed them that no one was coming to replace them, and they would be continuing deeper into Lebanon.

When they arrived in Tayba, they saw a UN vehicle.

"We asked our commander if we could stop the car to check if they were enemies or not. We didn't get permission to stop it because the permission comes from politicians. The moment this car left – and they saw us – right after, there was rain of grenades and rockets over my unit."

After escaping unhurt from this attack, they entered another village, and that night, they found a large home to eat and sleep in.

"It was three floors. On the first floor, there was a very big kitchen. No one was allowed to be in there because there was a big window that faced the Litani River... But one of the main problems that we had in the last war was they

didn't open logistic routes... for vehicles and tanks to bring in food. After 48 hours, we didn't have any food."

Malik said they had to prepare their own food, so he and two other soldiers in his unit volunteered to bake pita bread and make rice.

Baking the pita created a lot of smoke, so to avoid getting all the smoke in the kitchen, they found a small room adjacent to the kitchen.

Because they were running back and forth between the kitchen and the small room, they decided to take the door off the hinges to make it easier for them. After they ate dinner, they tried to get the door back on the hinges, but they couldn't do it.

"To this day, I don't know why. It was so simple. It was just two pins. So we just put the door leaning [against the wall]."

Malik said that minutes later, the door slid down and made a loud bang. A second after, terrorists from Hezbollah began shooting into the kitchen where he and

his two friends were.

"My friend screamed, 'Mechabel!' Terrorist! And we started to shoot back."

One of his two friends got injured, but all survived the attack. After an investigation into the incident, they determined that the loud noise

made by the door gave them warning about the attack.

"Thanks to the fact that we didn't succeed to put the door in place when it fell down, the terrorists thought that we were shooting at them. They had been two metres behind the kitchen waiting for a good moment, and they shot without looking. If that door hadn't fallen down and surprised them... I don't want to think about what could have happened."

Malik also shared a story about a soldier from another unit that moved him to tears.

"Not far from where I was, there was another soldier from the reserve, and [his unit] entered more or less the same kind of house."

During a gun battle between the IDF and Hezbollah, a grenade was thrown into the house.

"Roey Klein, this was his name, saw the grenade. He was married with two kids. He decided to jump on the grenade to save all the soldiers around him. In the moment that he jumped on the grenade, he screamed, *Shema Yisrael HaShem Elokeinu HaShem Echad...*"

"The last day of the war I remember that I had a dream. My daughter was four months old, she wasn't speaking yet and I had a dream that she's screaming, 'Father, where are you?'" he said, fighting back tears.

He recalled crossing back into Israel at 4 a.m. Having had no contact with his family for the 11 days that he spent in Lebanon, he couldn't wait to hear his wife's voice.

"I called my wife, and I start to cry like a baby."

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On Campus

Scholarship recognizes student's leadership

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

He's got the kind of resume that might give other students his age anxiety attacks at the mere thought of living up to his standards.

Michael "Mookie" Kideckel, 18 and a recent Thornhill Secondary School graduate, accomplished more in his four years as a high school student than most do in their entire academic careers.

But Kideckel doesn't look as if he'll be slowing down any time soon, and certainly doesn't seem like the type who will peak in high school.

The University of Toronto freshman is the latest recipient of the Dennis Waldman Foundation for Jewish Education award, in recognition of his outstanding accomplishments.

The foundation was established after Dennis Waldman, a former Hebrew school teacher, died suddenly in 1989, at the age of 41.

His family and friends established a trust in his honour to contribute to the education of Jewish youths in the community.

Every year, the non-profit organization awards a \$2,500 scholarship to a student who has completed high school and intends to continue on to post-secondary education.

As a high school student, Kideckel was involved in extracurricular activities from the start.

In Grade 9, he was part of the school's technical crew that offered their skills for school assemblies. He later became the co-founder of Battle of the Bands and helped raise money for the York Region Food Network and for War Child, an organization that helps raise awareness about children affected by war. In grades 11 and 12, he served as a mentor for incoming freshmen.

Kideckel also helped found a new chapter of STAND (Stu-

dents Taking Action Now Darfur), a social action group dedicated to raising awareness about and ending the crisis in Sudan.

"I'm not sure how I first heard about the Darfur crisis, but around 2005, I started to become more interested and concerned about this alleged genocide that nobody seemed to be doing anything about," Kideckel said.

He said that when a group of students approached him and a friend, Brittany Dale, about starting a high school chapter, they got to work.

"Since all but Brittany and I were graduating that year, it was really up to us to get it off the ground... We connected with [STAND] and became the first high school chapter in Canada, running T-shirt sales, letter-writing campaigns, and hosting a Darfur conference attended by delegates from schools all over York Region."

But most important was his role as a young Jewish community leader. Kideckel is an executive member of the Temple Kol Ami youth group and was also elected as the 2007-08 national North American Federation of Temple Youth (NFTY) vice-president responsible for social action.

"We just spent time raising money for and spreading education on the need for mosquito nets to combat malaria in Africa. Right now, I'm working on a new initiative, based on the idea that as a youth movement, we should be working for youth rights issues," he said.

Kideckel said he is thankful to his mother, who pushed him to become involved in the Jewish community.

"Working with Jewish youth has been a major part of my life because I found that NFTY brought together people with a strong, positive outlook on social action and a lack of apathy," he said.

"The Jewish tradition has so much to teach about the values

of tikkun olam [repairing the world] and justice, and it applies to the most contemporary issues. The teachings of Torah and rabbinic commentaries have some of the oldest and strongest statements on environmental protection, the importance of welcoming the stranger, not to mention worker rights and other issues."

Not only did Kideckel leave an impression on the board of directors for the Dennis Waldman Scholarship, but his teachers were also impressed by his accomplishments and character.

"Mookie is a prodigious and ambitious young man, dedicated not only to academic excellence, but also to working for the betterment of society... I believe Mookie's genuine personality is at the heart of his outstanding qualities as a leader. He leads by earning respect and is able to build consensus by listening to and expressing genuine appreciation for the ideas of others," wrote Ian Beswick, Kideckel's business studies teacher, in a letter of recommendation.

"The main reason I do what I do is that I've found it fun and fulfilling. I love working with people and get a thrill from leadership," Kideckel said, adding that being awarded for doing what he loves is an honour.

"I know there were a lot of other qualified applicants, and the recognition and prestige of this award mean so much."

Kideckel, who is hoping to get into the peace and conflict studies program at U of T, which doesn't start until the second year, said he is still uncertain about what career path he'll choose, but working with people is a priority.

"So far, my options seem like law, probably working for an NGO or some sort of international forum, teaching, or some sort of informal youth work. Maybe even a rabbi. Who knows?"



Michael Kideckel

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גידי קורן וחברים



רכבים לעצמאות

ביום העצמאות הששים למדינת ישראל תנוע בכבישי ישראל חבורה של מאות אופנועים באופנועי הארלי דווידסון והנדה אימתנים. לא, אין אלה אנשי מלאכי התופת מפילי האימה, אלא חברי YOW (Yiden on Wheels), ובהם קבוצה גדולה של רוכבים מטורנטו. אחד ממנהיגי הקבוצה, גדעון לי הטורנטאי, סיפר ל"דעות אחרונות" ש"המטרה היא להצדיע לישראל ולתרום לשינוי התדמית שלה באמצעות אופנועי הארלי דווידסון, שמאוד מתאימים לעופים של ישראל ולאווירה הצעירה בה". משר כוח לגדעון, ק'די וחבריהם, על היומה המדליקה. שיהיה בכין.

סרטי חוב

אוי, איך שאני אוהב את חודשי החורף שבהם מוציאות חברות הסרטים את המיטב שבמיטב לפני תחילת האביב. אני מנסה לסנן עבורכם הרבה ובל כדי להמליץ על סרטים שאני די בטוח שגורמו לכם הנאה.

The Kite Runner

קרוב לרואי שכבר קראתם את הספר המופלא הזה, סיפורם של שני ילדים אפגנים בתקופה סוערת של מלחמות, שלטון רוסי, שלטון טאליבן, וחיים באר"ב. זהו ללא ספק אחד הספרים היחידים שלמים שיצאו לאור בשנים האחרונות. בעיני גדולה היא בהעברת ספר מוצלח לסרט על המסך הגדול הפעם, לטעמי האישי, עלה התסריט יפה ביותר. הסרט נאמן מאוד למקור. וגם אם קראתם את הספר, שווה לראות את הסרט ולו בגלל התמונות המופלאות של הפרחת העופיות-לראות את העיד קאבל מנסה בעיפיותם, והמחלמות האגרסיביות להורדת העופיות.

לפני שנה וחצי הייתי בכיכר טיאנמן בבייג'ינג, ונדחמתי לראות מאות עופיות סגוניים מכסים את השמיים, ולא רק ילדים הפריחו אותם. וחשבתי לעצמי שלא מפלא שבמדינת סוגרות ומדאונג-קו השמיים שייכים לאזרחים, והעופיות אינן ידע גבולות ונעות להם הרגשה של חופש. תשע בסולם קורן.

Junio

נערה בת חמש עשרה נכנסת להריון מיוחסים תמימים עם בן כינתה הגמלני. לכאורה-באלאן שאפשר להפוך אותו לסרגלני ולסרט שחור משחור. אבל לא ג'ונז! זהו סרט רגיש, מלא חוש הומור וסיטואציות צובטות לב על החיים בשנת אלפים ושבע. הילדה ג'ונז מקפדת משפחה חמה וגם חברה לכיתה תומכים בה. לא אגלה לכם את הסוף, כדי לא לפגוע בהנאה שלכם, אבל זה סרט שעושה ממש כין. תשע בסולם קורן.

בוש

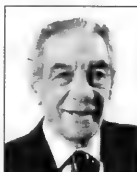
האם ישפיע בוא של בוש למורח התיכון על קצב תהליך השלום? קשה לדעת. עד כה נכשלו רוב הנבואות בתחום. למען האמת-פריצת הדרך הגדולת-ביקורו של סאדאת, החסכם עם עראפת-באז בעיקר בגלל אומץ לבם של מנהיגי המורח התיכון, ולא של גורמים חיצוניים. שנים מהם, סאדאת ורביק, שלמו על אומץ לבם בחייהם אחרי שוב בפרס נובל לשלום. אי אפשר להתעלם מתרומתו של בל קלינטון, אבל קשה להאמין שבא, בשנות השמינית והאחרונה יצילו לגשר על המרחק העצום שבין המחנות, ובעיקר במציאות של חמאס שולט ביהודה. אבל מי אמר שלא ניתן צאצא, קטן ככל שיהיה. אבל שישאר ביעור.

On Campus



HANGING OUT IN ISRAEL: Hillel of Greater Toronto students, from left, Ashley Amar, Nikki Greenspan, Raffi Brass and Shoshi Akselrod, met in Israel recently to catch up and have dinner at Cafe Hillel in Jerusalem.

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Fax: 902-422-7322
Website: www.campkadamah.com
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E-mail: summer@camplakeland.com
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Tel: 905-881-0018
Fax: 905-881-9019
Website: www.campnbb.com

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For decades, kids in Canada and the States have gone camping in the summer. We remember our camping days fondly, and want to pass the experience on to the next generation.

Founded in 1958 by Barry and Philomena Lowes, Camp Timberlane has strong roots in this camping tradition. "Spirit Integrity Tradition" is their motto.

Camp Timberlane is just south of Algonquin Park, with its own lake, Lake of Two Islands. The camp is beginning its second 50 years, now under director-owner Corey Mandell, of Mandell Entertainment. Barry and Philomena's son Brit Lowes is a director.

Mandell himself was a camper, then a staff member and program director. He has been involved in Timberlane for 28 years.

"Timberlane's staff," Lowes observes, "have a strong sense of community and commitment. Ten to 15 years on staff is not unusual. Many of our people see the camp as a 'home away from home'. It's a cliché, but sometimes they're true."

Seventy-five to 80 per cent of paid and volunteer staff, says Lowes, are former campers. And many alumni return as volunteers to share skills whether learned at camp or in the wider world - that can contribute to various programs. These skills range from cooking to yoga.

Programs for camp residents include a wide range of artistic and sport activities: water skiing, tennis, golf, dance, wakeboard. Campers can specialize in these programs, yet have time to enjoy other activities as well. Instructors are well qualified and trained.

There are plenty of out trips, by bike and canoe for example, to explore Camp Timberlane's natural surroundings. And in some sports,

there's inter-camp competition.

(A wakeboard is the latest thing; it's like a snowboard, but on the water. It's called a wakeboard because you can use the wake of a boat to launch it, and it can also jump the wake. Along with water skiing, this is a major choice of teenage boys and girls.)

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"Camping," Lowes says, "offers a great deal to all concerned. Parents and kids get a break from each other. Guided by camp staff, kids learn independence, responsibility, and community living skills. And the friendships formed in camp, last a lifetime."

While Timberlane maintains traditional camping values, it has a philosophy of inclusion. Most, but not all of the campers are Jewish; and all are welcome.

There's a Friday evening Shabbat dinner and service. Each service has a theme, like friendship or caring, and is put on by campers. Brit's father Barry Lowes, still active at 81, in Timberlane, does the Friday benediction.

**You can call Brit Lowes at 416-923-7200 ext. 246
Or visit the website: www.camptimberlane.ca**



Director Corey Mandell &
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Camps

Camp Kadimah - Generations of Memories

A Jewish identity is a great gift. Jewish Camping creates the possibility for building Jewish leaders through peer to peer education, lasting friendships and fun, informal Judaic programming that kids remember and cherish for a lifetime.

universities are some of the ways that campers can involve themselves further in camp life.

Younger campers enjoy a range of special programming including outings to the Atlantic Ocean, local farms, a camp carnival and theme days. Our Machar program, for our oldest campers 14-15 year olds, is designed to be challenging and fun, addressing Israeli culture and politics, as well as Jewish ethics.

Our Counselor In Training (CIT) program gives 16 year olds the chance to experience working on different types of programming throughout camp, working with campers in cabins, and leadership training. The CIT program incorporates volunteer opportunities with local camps and towns to encourage leadership and tzedakah. A 5 day trip in Atlantic Canada promotes CITs learning about local culture, small Jewish communities, and visit beautiful Atlantic Canada.

Camp Kadimah is a place where generations have danced and sung the same songs. A place of first loves, first accomplishments, and standing ovations. It is a place where kids can feel a part of a community of peers, and be given a chance to shine at what they do best.

Camp Kadimah is entering its 65th summer on the beautiful shores of Lake William, two hours outside of Halifax, Nova Scotia. We offer a wide range of activities for children ages 7-16 including arts and crafts, land sports, water-ski and wake-boarding, sailing, canoe and kayak, Red Cross and Royal Lifesaving instructional swim, drama, Israeli song and dance, and scouting. As a proud member of Canadian Young Judaea, our program team and schlichim from Israel ensure fun Zionist content to inspire a knowledge and love of Israel in our campers.

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Camps

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 For more information, please contact Josefa Michaelson,
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All contest entries received by 3 p.m. on **Tuesday, February 12, 2008** are eligible.
The winning entries will be randomly selected at The CJN offices on **Wednesday, February 13, 2008**, at 10 a.m. The winners will be notified the same day.
Odds of winning depend on the number of entries received. One entry per person!

The CJN will not enter into any correspondence with contestants

Send your entry to: **"Love Song"** at contest@cjnews.com
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Employees and family members of The CJN and Leah Posluns Theatre are not eligible to enter.

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The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

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Food, Scrumptious Food

Dave Lieberman recommends making cooking easy

By MARCIE SOMERS
Special to The CJN

He's only 28, but Dave Lieberman already has two cookbooks and two nationally syndicated television shows under his belt. With no formal culinary training, Lieberman is one of today's hottest young celebrity chefs.

Growing up in Philadelphia, while most seven-year-olds were playing with GI Joes and reading comic books, Dave Lieberman was in the kitchen with his stay-at-home dad learning how to cook.

"I just loved the comfort, creativity and smell of food," he says.

The young Lieberman would spend hours reading his father's cookbooks, watching the Discovery Channel's *Great Chefs*, *Great Cities* and analyzing culinary programs. His first wannabe gourmet meal was steamed salmon wrapped in romaine leaves and dripping with Italian dressing. "It was pretty awful," Lieberman concedes, "but my parents bravely pretended to like it."

Flash forward 12 years. When he was a political science major at Yale University, Lieberman was always entertaining friends with extravagant dinners. He became known for throwing legendary dinner parties, single-handedly roasting, frying and baking while mixing drinks for dozens of friends.

On a whim, Lieberman recruited some friends who were film students and filmed a weekly television show about how to cook. Topics ranged from how to cook with a budget, cooking for a date or cooking for the *Hook-Up*. The show, *Campus Cuisine*, aired on New Haven's Citizen's Television. Lieberman soon gained fame among his peers. Students would stop him in the hallways to ask for a "hook-up" recipe. He was also often recognized off campus, as tapes of the show were passed around to New Haven foodies.

In 2003, Amanda Hesser, a *New York Times* reporter, heard about the young chef and featured him in a front-page article in the dining section of the *Times*. Immediately his phone began to ring. "I remember walking out of a class and found six messages from television producers and publishers. The best advice I received that day was to get an agent — fast!"

He immediately signed with Hyperion for a two-book deal. His first cookbook, *Young and Hungry: More than 100 Recipes for Cooking Fresh and Affordable Food For Everyone* was an entertaining intro to twentysomethings, organized by eating occasion, with chapters like "Lazy Mornings" and "Cooking for a Crowd." His second cookbook, *Dave's Dinners*, focused on dinners and offered recipes designed to satisfy novice cooks, meticulous gourmets and busy families.

He also landed a gig with the Food Network. He is the host of two shows; *Good Deal with David Lieberman* and the web-based show, *Eat This*. He also hosts Yahoo! Food's *In Search of Real Food*.

Lieberman is currently developing a new television show that will be more investigative in nature. "People are more conscientious about what they're eating. They want to know what and where their food comes from, so I'm going to explore what's behind our food — what we should know about our food but don't."

Lieberman has certainly achieved a great deal of success and fame at a young age. In 2006, he was named one of *People* magazine's 50 hottest bachelors.

"I took a lot of flak from my friends for that one," he says

with a laugh. "And contrary to popular belief, it didn't exactly help my love life either."

One thing people are not laughing at is his straightforward approach to cooking. "I like to keep things simple. I don't try to get too fancy."

It's his approach to making cooking easy by paring down on ingredients that appeals to his young audience. It's also what he advises those new to the kitchen.

"Use as few ingredients as possible. Don't try to do so much or use complicated recipes."

Lieberman describes his style as a fusion of his grandmother's cooking with Indian and Asian cuisine. When he was growing up, his grandmother not only influenced the young Lieberman, but also his father. "My dad got a lot of good recipes from my grandmother, so he often made a lot of traditional Jewish food such as brisket and ribs. To this day, there's nothing like my grandmother's kugel, brisket or tongue. And my father's ribs. No matter what I do, I still can't make ribs as good as his."

JEWISH APPLE CAKE from Dave's Dinners

This isn't an innovation or groundbreaking dessert, but I really wanted to include it because it's one of my favourite things in the world to eat. In fact, I can literally eat it all day, or any time of day. If I have it lying around the house, I'll have a slice for breakfast, a slice with some tea or coffee in the afternoon and a slice with vanilla ice cream for dessert. If you're going to make this for dessert, then I definitely recommend the vanilla ice cream part.

1 1/2 lb. Golden Delicious apples, peeled, cored and sliced into 1/4-in. slices
juice of 1 lemon
1/2 cup sugar
1 tsp. ground cinnamon

For the batter:
4 large eggs
1 1/2 cups vegetable oil
1 stick unsalted butter, melted
2 cups sugar
1 tsp. pure vanilla extract

1/2 cup warm water
2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 tsp. salt
1 tbsp. baking powder

Preheat oven to 350. Mix the apples with the lemon juice, sugar and cinnamon in a mixing bowl and let stand while you make the batter.

Lightly whisk the eggs in a large mixing bowl. Add the oil, melted butter, sugar, vanilla and water and whisk until smooth. In a separate bowl, combine the flour, salt and baking powder. Use a whisk to mix the dry ingredients together.

Gradually stir the flour mixture into the wet mixture and stir just until incorporated. Do not overmix.

Grease and lightly flour a Bundt pan. Pour 1/4 of the batter into the pan, then arrange 1/2 of the apples around the top of the batter. Smooth some batter over the apples. Make 2 more layers of apples, smoothing the batter over them after each addition. Top off with the last quarter of the batter and smooth.

Bake about 70 minutes until risen, the top is nicely browned and a sharp knife inserted in the middle of the cake comes out dry. Serves 12-15.



Food, Scrumptious Food



The unofficial national food of Israel could be a healthy substitute for American junk food.

Hummus – the next healthy snack food in North America?

TEL AVIV — It's practically a national sport in Israel. At sidewalk cafes and bustling fast food joints, diners enjoy the fine art of sopping up delicious plates of hummus and technah with freshly baked pita. Truly a wonder food, hummus is rich in vitamins, high in protein and fibre and free of trans fats. And prepared Israeli style, it tastes fantastic.

Canadians and Americans can begin putting their bread in dipping position because fast food giant PepsiCo recently announced that it has signed an agreement to offer the Israeli-owned brand of Sabra Middle Eastern dip products in North America under its Frito-Lay snack food division.

The agreement, worth \$45 million (US), will bring the Sabra line of chickpea and eggplant-based dips and spreads produced by food manufacturer Strauss-Elite directly to American grocery shelves alongside other Frito-Lay products like potato chips, salsa and popcorn.

"It builds on our health and wellness portfolio," Aurora Gonzalez, a spokesperson for Frito-Lay, told the *Dallas Morning News*. "This fits well with the direction that Frito-Lay and PepsiCo have been taking with health and wellness."

Hummus is a dip or spread made of mashed chickpeas, sesame technah, lemon juice and garlic, and is a staple

not only in Israel, but throughout the Middle East and Mediterranean countries.

Sabra, the top-selling and fastest-growing hummus brand in the United States, was founded in 1986 as an American outlet for fresh, Middle Eastern-style salads catering to New York residents who craved genuine Israeli cuisine.

In 2005, having acquired market share in mainstream supermarkets, the brand piqued the interest of Strauss-Elite, which bought a majority share in the company. The most recent deal, to be concluded this month, grants PepsiCo a 50 per cent stake in the business, bringing Sabra into a stable of hundreds of snack, drink and cereal brands that together generate more than \$35 billion in revenue every year.

For the Strauss Group, one of the largest players on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange, the chance to tap into PepsiCo's marketing muscle makes it possible to get North Americans just as hooked on hummus as Israelis are.

"Sabra will lead the freshness revolution in the United States and Canada, consistent with notable emerging consumer trends in the world today," said Strauss president and CEO Erez Vigodman.

So say goodbye to burgers and hot dogs, and don't be surprised if Israeli hummus starts turning up at health-conscious tailgate parties. (*Israel 21c*)

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish News



Mazel tov to Debbe & Michael on their Oct. 14 wedding. Love, your parents Eva & Marc Wahiche and Janet & Raphael David.



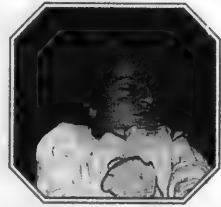
Mazel tov to Sean Dunec & Ruthy Frank on your recent engagement.



WOW! Batya Hennah Deltoff is two! Happy birthday sweetheart! Love and kisses, Mommy, Daddy, Dovid, Yaakov and Periel!



With pride and joy, we wish Jesse Matthew Berman mazel tov on his bar mitzvah, Oct. 6. Love from your family.



Mazel tov Edward Segal, born Nov. 16, son of Sheila & Jarrad. Grandparents, Marian & Mark Segal, Vicki & Steve Borsodi. Great-grandmothers Charlotte Silverstone, Edith Segal.



Mazel tov to Arthur Cherry on his 90th birthday. To 120 years in good health. Much love from Gordon, Joyce, Rebecca and Avi.



Mazel tov to Heather, 8, and Maya, 4, on their birthdays. Proud parents David & Rachel, grandparents, Bina Blumenfeld and Ruth & Mark Lane.



Mazel tov David & Deborah Naken on the birth of Jesse, April 22. Brother for Zale. Grandparents Roy & Maureen Arluck, Terry Naken.

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Label the back of all photos and keep wording to 25 words or less.
Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return.
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North York, ON, M3B 3K4.
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*What's
New*

By **REBECCA NADLER**



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What's New deadlines: Monday, Jan. 28, is the deadline for the Feb. 7 issue and Monday, Feb. 4, is the deadline for the Feb. 14 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, Jan. 24

MUSIC OF PRAYER

Cantor Marshall Loomer completes the series *The Origins and History of the Music of Prayer* with "The Chazzanin of Boro Park." 7:30 p.m. at Beth David B'nai Synagogue. Free. 416-633-5500

Friday, Jan. 25

TOT SHABBAT

Temple Har Zion invites parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles to bring children ages 2-4 and siblings for a child-friendly Shabbat celebration. 6 p.m. Adult service 8:30 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 26

SAFE MEDICATION USE

Thornhill B'nai Brith Lodge hosts an evening on the topic of "Senior Safe Medication Use" with pharmacist **Jack Pinkus**. 7:45 p.m. at the Rosemount Community Centre, 1000 New Westminster Blvd. \$3, \$5/couple; \$3.00 single. For info, call Marilyn, 905-731-9054.

NOTUS WOODWIND QUINTET

The Notus Woodwind Quintet performs a community concert. 8 p.m. at B'nai Torah Synagogue. \$12 advance reservation, \$15 at the door. Reserve, 416-226-3700.

THE SHIDDUCH CRISIS

Sasson V'Simcha presents **Dr. Lisa Aiken** on "The Shidduch Crisis: Root Causes and Remedies," followed by a panel discussion. 8 p.m. at Shaarei Tefillah Congregation. 416-256-4497

Sunday, Jan. 27

TRUST AND TAXES

Rabbi Jeremy Wieder, rosh yeshiva in the Mazer Yeshiva program and a professor of Bible, talks about "Trust and Taxes: Ethical Issues in Government Relations" at Yeshiva University's Sunday learning program. 9 a.m. at BAYT. Info, www.kolloyomrison or 416-783-6960.

JEWISH VALUES

Elliott Malamet speaks on the topic "Can Modern Trends Actual-

ly Enhance our Judaism?" Bagels and coffee 9:45 a.m., lecture 10:30 a.m. \$15, students \$5. Reservations required, 416-229-2600, ext. 3.

BT FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Beth Tikvah Friendship Group presents **Dr. Peter Gilbert** speaking on "Racism, Prejudice and Anti-Semitism in Today's World." 2-4 p.m. \$2, non-members \$3. For info or to reserve, call **Ettie**, 416-631-9079 or **Harry**, 416-512-2897.

ASPECTS OF EATING

Aish Toronto presents "I Can't Believe I Ate the Whole Thing: Exploring the Mystical, Philosophical and Medical Aspects of Eating" with **Dr. Michael Kirzner** speaking about a Maimonidian method and **Rabbi Mitch Mandel** presenting a kabbalistic perspective. 8 p.m. 949 Clark Ave. W. \$5.

Monday, Jan. 28

RELIGION 101

Rabbi Wayne Allen's topic is "What Jews Should Know About Islam." 8 p.m. at Beth Emeth Synagogue.

ORGANIC KOSHER

Beth Emeth Synagogue invites women in their 30s and 40s to an evening of friendship and an opportunity to hear **Aviva Allen**, a nutritional consultant and the author of *The Organic Kosher Cookbook*. 7:30 p.m. Info, **Cathy Sodomsky**, cathyzhavah@yahoo.ca or 416-276-8422; **Kelly Lipperman**, kellyzhavah@yahoo.ca or 905-482-0054; or **Karen Rice**, mkrice@rogers.com or 416-636-1863.

Continued on page 41

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Concert proceeds to support ongoing Ashkenaz programming

What's New

Continued from page 40

Tuesday, Jan. 29

TUESDAYS AT THE MOVIES

Beth Tikvah Synagogue movie series with **Larry Ankiewicz** presents *Image Before My Eyes*, about Jewish life in Poland between the world wars using historic film clips, photos and interviews. 2 p.m. \$5. 416-221-3434

JEWISH LIFE IN POLAND

The Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation launches the first English edition of the book *Poyn: My Life Within Jewish Life in Poland, Sketches and Images* by **Yehiel Yeshaia Trunk**, a testimony that paints a portrait of Polish Jewry against the backdrop of the Nazi genocide. **Prof. Piotr Wróbel** hosts the event. **Rafal Sokolowski** reads in English, and **Kalman Weiser** reads in Yiddish. Klezmer music by **Jonno Lightstone**. 7 p.m. at the George Ignatieff Theatre, 15 Devonshire Pl. \$10, members and students \$7. www.pjhfToronto.ca

BROADWAY'S JEWISH ROOTS

Temple Har Zion presents music and a lecture on "Jewish Roots of Broadway: Stephen Sondheim" with **Jordan Klappman**. 7:30 p.m. \$5 for non-members. 905-889 2252

Wednesday, Jan. 30

MEDIA WORKSHOP

Beth Tzedec Congregation hosts a lecture and workshop on Israel and the Canadian media. "Media and the Broader Middle East: Threats and Response." Learn how to identify and combat the anti-Israel bias in the Canadian media with **Mike Fegelman** of *HonestReporting* Canada. 7:30 p.m. 416-781-3511

SPIRITUAL ZIONISM

Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism offers a mid-week study group on spiritual Zionism, looking at **Asher Zvi Ginsberg**, the author known as **Ahad Ha'am**. Non-members \$5. 7:30 p.m. at the Wagon Centre. RSVP, Peter, 416-250-0926 or petergilbert@rogers.com.

CANCER SUPPORT

Man to Man and Side to Side, prostate cancer support groups, host a prostate cancer awareness night with **Dr. Andrew Loblaw**, of Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, on "Active Surveillance vs. Other Treatments and Their Potential Side Effects." 7:30 p.m. at the Toronto Botanical Garden. 416-932-8820

EXPLORE MUSSAR

Join **Modya Silver** for a five-

week exploration of Mussar, the study of character trait development, and explore how to bring heart and mind together. Participants will have the opportunity to explore ethical concepts found in the Torah and how one can use these teachings to grow as an individual. Begins tonight through Feb. 27, 7:30-9 p.m. at Beth Shalom Synagogue. Free. To register contact **Karen Goodis**, 416-783-6103, ext. 225, or karen@bethshalom.net.

Other News

FLOWERS AREN'T ENOUGH

The Toronto Miklat Committee raises awareness about domestic violence in the Jewish world. Support their work at *Flowers Aren't Enough*, featuring Israeli-American actress **Naomi Ackerman**, Saturday, Feb. 9, 8 p.m., at the Baycrest Terrace. \$36. Info, miklat.toronto@gmail.com.

DOMESTIC ABUSE

Domestic Abuse happens in our community. It is often difficult to understand and to identify. Jewish Women International Canada (JWIC) has a program available for any group/organization to educate about this issue. JWIC has trained survivors of abuse who are willing to speak to groups and paint a real-life picture of what abuse in a relationship looks like and how it affected them, their children and families. To book a speaker, call JWIC at 416-630-9313.

JACS PROVIDES SUPPORT

JACS, an organization led by volunteers, is dedicated to encouraging and assisting alcoholics, chemically dependent persons and their families, friends and associates to explore recovery in a nurturing Jewish environment. It provides support for Jews in recovery and is an information resource on the effects that alcoholism and drug dependency have on Jewish family life. For info, 416-410-5227 or visit www.jacstoronto.org.

JIAS TORONTO

Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, 4600 Bathurst St. #325. www.jias.toronto.org. To register, volunteer, or for more information on these programs call 416-630-6481.

Conversation Cafes: Newcomers to Canada practise speaking English in a casual friendly environment with JIAS volunteers. Interested participants or volunteers should call **Joanna**, ext. 30.

Youth Groups: Programs for newcomer children and teens. Both Canadians and newcomers get community service hours for participation in our teen group. For more information, call **Joanna**, ext. 30.

JUMPStart: If you have a networking or job opportunity in the skilled labour market for a newcomer, connect to our JUMPStart program by calling **Elisa**, ext. 24.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. Information/registration 416-638-7800 or www.jfandcs.com. Call **Shawna**, ext. 215, for info and registration.

When You're About To Separate – What To Tell The Kids: A workshop for parents about to separate or in the early stages of separation on how to best meet your child's needs. Tuesday, Jan. 29, 9:30 a.m. noon at the Promenade Mall, #313.

One Family, Two Homes: A three-session series for families experiencing separation and divorce. Children participate in separate age-appropriate groups. Topics for parents include keeping the kids out of the conflict and trends in family law. Begins Tuesday, Jan. 29, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

For Men After Divorce: A six-week group for men experiencing separation or divorce. Discuss how to let go of your grief and sadness, how to express anger without affecting children and how to become an effective single parent. Mondays, beginning Feb. 4, 7:30 to 9 p.m. at the Promenade Mall, #313.

Today's Woman: A six-session group for women wanting to make a change in their lives. Begins Wednesday, Feb. 4, 7-9 p.m. at the Promenade Mall, #313.

FOR SENIORS

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Casino Rama. Thursday, Jan. 31. Mah-jong, Tuesdays 10 a.m.-1 p.m.; duplicate bridge, Wednesdays, 12:30-3 p.m.; bridge, Thursdays,

12:30-3 p.m. New members welcome. Info, Tuesday-Thursday 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 416-395-7881.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Bonafide Bingo, fundraiser for osteoporosis, Wednesday, Jan. 30, 3-4:30 p.m. \$10.

"Judaism and the Environment": A lecture by **Rabbi Yossi Sapirman**, Tuesday, Jan. 29, 10 a.m. \$2, non-members \$4.

Wellness Presentation: "Jewish Meditation: An Interactive Experience," Thursday, Jan. 31, 1:30 p.m.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www.mnjcc.org.

"Bar/Bat Mitzvah – All in the Family": A lecture about the bar/bat mitzvah with practical questions answered by **Stuart Schoenfeld**. 10:15-11:30 a.m. All welcome. Info, call **Joan**, ext. 112.

Toronto Jewish Film Society's 30th season – on Sunday, Jan. 27, *Nina's Home*, about the houses established by the French government to shelter Jewish children 4 and 7:30 p.m. \$15 rush seats on sale 15 minutes before screenings. Info ext. 606.

Register for Jewish life courses that include Hebrew, Aramaic, Jewish meditation. Klezmer Players Workshop, a 10-week ensemble with **Eric Stein**, Tuesdays, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Adult Pottery, Wednesdays, 7-10 p.m. Registration, ext. 0.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-

1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

"Beyond the Red Thread": a one-night introduction to Kabbalah with **Rabbi Elyse Goldstein**. Monday, Jan. 28, 7:30-9:30 p.m. \$15 By pre-registration only. Call ext. 235 or visit www.kolel.org.

Lunch 'n' Learn with **Rabbi Moshe Stern**, Friday, Feb. 1, 12-1 p.m. Free. Bring your lunch, coffee and tea served.

"Great Songs from Yiddish Theatre," Wednesday, Feb. 6, 1-2:30 p.m.

Free Tax Return Clinic: To qualify – income below \$17,000, no dependents; \$25,000 with dependents. Call ext. 0 for appointment.

The BJCC Seniors-Online computer lab specializes in computer and Internet classes for those 55+. Each course is four weeks long, two classes per week. \$55, non-members \$70. Register ext. 235.

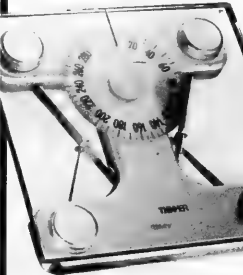
A few spaces remain on Kolel's Inward Bound Women's Tour to Israel, March 30-April 8. Registration closes Feb. 1. For info and itinerary, call **Rabbi Elyse Goldstein**, ext. 472 or egoldstein@bjcc.ca.

School and day-care registration is now open for the 2008-09 school year. Morning, full-day options. For information, call ext. 248.

Volunteers Needed

BAYCREST CENTRE

Baycrest's Community Day Centre is in need of a dynamic Yiddish-speaking volunteer to lead its Tuesday morning discussion group. The individual must be able to engage the members, be knowledgeable, be fluent in Yiddish and be a good listener. He or she will come prepared with materials both written and visual or audio. Contact Baycrest volunteer services department, 416-785-2500, ext. 2572.



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SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 43

OBITUARIES and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Goldsmith, Ann	Dec. 13/07	
Nava, Meir	Jan. 7/08	386 Carrington Dr
Sheldon, Fred	Jan. 9/08	
Botnick, Rochelle Annett	Jan. 10/08	54 Fontainebleau Dr
Amouyal, Yacov	Jan. 10/08	167 Oakhurst Dr
Bendavid, David	Jan. 11/08	7420 Bathurst St
Getzler, Philip (Polek)	Jan. 11/08	85 Skymark Dr
Shapira, Arnold	Jan. 11/08	175 Cummer Ave
Gochman, Polina	Jan. 12/08	35 Parkhome Ave
Melnikova, Eugenia	Jan. 12/08	Private
Braun, Marta	Jan. 13/08	Private
Grunberg, Herma	Jan. 13/08	1555 Finch Ave. W.
Kamenetsky, Aron	Jan. 14/08	4266 Bathurst St
Finkelstein, David	Jan. 14/08	90 Fisherville Rd
Silbert, Morris	Jan. 13/08	10 Nadolny Sachs Private
Rattner, William	Jan. 14/08	4005 Bayview Ave
Reiss, Goldie	Jan. 15/08	2 Neptune Dr

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Ida Orliffe	Jan 4/08	55 Ameer Avenue
Charles Katz	Jan 5/08	570 Sherbourne Street
Gertie Elbaum	Jan 5/08	103 Black Hawkway
Dalia Sadu	Jan 5/08	57 Scenic Millway
Jack Greenberg	Jan 5/08	400 Walmer Road
Harvey Tenebaum	Jan 6/08	26 Langholme Drive
Henry Batchner	Jan 6/08	2623 Spruce Needle Drive
Leonard Glazer	Jan 7/08	18 Edinburgh Drive
Eva Feldberg	Jan 8/08	167 Pannahill Road
Susan Weber	Jan 8/08	7700 Bayview Avenue
Nathan Marcus	Jan 10/08	155 Marlee Avenue

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Delmar, Sol 71, daughter of Mercedes & Abraham, loving sister to Jack, Armand, Celia and Mair, and to 10 nephews & nieces and Great-Aunt to 20, passed away gently in her sleep on Jan. 8, 2008.

May her soul rest in peace. We would like to thank the Hebrew Club for the Blind, the St. Clair Seniors Centre services, the Davenport Spanish Women's Club, and the home care and all of the volunteers that helped her during her life.

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Coast to Coast

Nursing home resident freezes to death

By RHONDA SPIVAK

Special to the CJN

WINNIPEG — The Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA) is investigating why a developmentally challenged Jewish man froze to death after he apparently went outside for a cigarette at the Jewish nursing home here.

Barry Collen, 74, died of hypothermia after being outside for 3½ hours in -20 Celsius weather. He was found by a Sharon Home worker at around 4:30 a.m. on Jan. 2 in the outdoor courtyard of the Sharon Home at the Kamee Centre in Winnipeg's north end several hours after he had entered the area to have a cigarette.

Ann Collen, Barry Collen's sister-in-law, said that she "found out about Barry's death from the police. The Sharon Home didn't even notify me that he had died."

According to Saul Collen, Collen's nephew, "The Winnipeg Police were the first to be called in to the scene. Barry apparently fell and banged his head while outside in the courtyard and was found lying in a pool of blood."

"They have a smoking room [at the Sharon Home], but he had been banned from the smoking room because he smoked too much... If he'd been allowed in, this wouldn't have happened," Anne Collen said.

"When he first became a resident of the Sharon Home, Barry was allowed to smoke in the smoking room. But at some point that changed. I don't really know why exactly," Saul Collen added.

Anyone wanting to enter the courtyard where Collen's body was found is required to enter a code, but no code is needed to get back inside. It's not known why Collen couldn't get back inside.

"It seems that once inside the courtyard, the door may have locked on Barry, and he couldn't get out. We're not really sure how or why this happened. Although there is a key pad to get in, there isn't a key pad to get out," Saul Collen said.

"We are investigating all the circumstances of his death," WRHA spokesperson Heidi Graham said.

Winnipeg Police have ruled out any suspicious cause of death.

According to his sister-in-law, Barry Collen had the intellectual capacity of a five-year-old as a result of a condition he was born with.

He also had Charcot Marie Tooth,

a neurological disease that made it difficult for him to feel cold in his feet and fingers. It also affected his balance and made it very difficult for him to use buttons or zippers.

Because of these facts, Anne Collen feels that staff should have kept a close eye on him during cold weather.

"They should have been checking on him," she said, adding that she questions why it took Sharon Home workers so long to find him, regardless of the exact cause of death.

"The medical examiner's office told us that Barry was fully clothed and was fully zipped up when he was found in the courtyard. Barry had a down-filled parka. Because of Barry's medical condition, he wouldn't have been able to zip up his parka himself, so I think that an orderly or other staff member from the Sharon Home must have done up his jacket before he went outside," Saul Collen said.

"The courtyard is all surrounded by glass, so in the daytime it's easy to see into it. But I don't know if there are any lights there at night," he said.

He added: "Barry was a roamer. It would have been usual for him to roam around the building during the night and also to go outside. There is a security

desk at the main entrance of the Sharon Home, and when he went out the main entrance to go for a smoke, he would be seen by security. But to get to the courtyard, you don't have to go through the main entrance."

Sandra Delorme, Sharon Home president and CEO, did not respond to calls for comment on this story. But she told Winnipeg's *Jewish Post and News* that Barry was competent enough to head out for a smoke.

She added that staff didn't become alarmed when Barry didn't come back to his room at night, because he had a tendency to roam around the building day and night, and it wasn't unusual for him not to be in his room.

She noted that Collen had been a resident of the home since 2004 and had been going to the courtyard for years to smoke without incident.

"No one from the executive or board of the Sharon Home has had any contact with our family since Barry's death, not even to express condolences," said Saul Collen.

Johanna Abbot, director of Manitoba's office of the Chief Medical Examiner, said that an autopsy confirmed that Collen died from exposure.

*'They should
have been
checking
on him'*

Coast to Coast

Co-operation among Jews, Native groups

Continued from page 3

Ahenakew was later approached by a reporter from the Saskatoon *StarPhoenix*, and in the course of a three-minute exchange, he said Hitler "fried six million of those guys" to prevent Jews taking over Germany or Europe.

"Jews owned the goddamn world and

look at what they're doing. They're killing people in the Arab countries," he told the reporter.

Asked about the Holocaust, Ahenakew said "how do you get rid of a... disease that's gonna take over, that's gonna dominate, that's gonna everything, and the poor people, they..."

Ahenakew later apologized for his

remarks, but in 2005, he was convicted of willfully promoting hate and fined \$1,000. He appealed, and in 2006, a Court of Queen's Bench judge overturned the decision and ordered a new trial.

Farber said native leaders have condemned Ahenakew's remarks and that despite his rant, "even in situations like this there are silver linings."

"The six-year battle in the Ahenakew

case has solidified our relationships with First Nations," he said.

The Jewish and Native communities have co-operated on a number of issues, including land claims and the residential schools scandal. "We had the extraordinary pleasure of hosting 18 AFN chiefs on a trip to Israel last year.

"This matter brought us closer together," Farber said.

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Islamic woman seeks protection from Canadian legal system



Family Matters

by **John Syrtash**

B.A. (Hon.), LL.B.
Counsel

Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator
for 26 years

Question: I am a 40 year old woman from Somalia and of the Islamic faith. Seven years ago my husband signed a contract agreeing to give me an Islamic divorce and he has since broken that contract. I am now much older, it is now much more difficult for me to remarry within my faith and I have suffered great emotional anguish. Moreover, my husband now refuses to give me an Islamic divorce unless I consent to go to an Islamic sharia court to resolve our issue over the custody of our 9 year old child. I am afraid that if I go I will lose before such a court. I know that the Ontario government doesn't allow these courts to enforce their rulings in the Ontario courts, but Ontario sharia courts don't care about such enforcement and never did. I would simply be completely shunned from my family and the community or punished socially in other subtle ways. What can Canadian or Ontario law do to help me if I was brave enough to have its Courts intervene? Can I seek civil damages for his putting me through all this anguish?

Answer: The Ontario court will likely assist you. Under laws I was privileged to

develop under Canada's Divorce Act and Ontario's Family Law Act, a Judge can prevent anybody from pleading their case or defending themselves from a family lawsuit if he or she has failed to remove barriers to their spouse's religious remarriage. In the Islamic religion a man grants a "talaq." In the Jewish faith spouses consent to a "Get". So, if you asked for custody, child/spousal support or property division and your husband tried to make his own claim or tried to defend himself, an Ontario Judge would likely issue an Order that he must first remove barriers to your religious remarriage before he could do so or lose all his legal rights under Ontario family law.

In Ontario, the Supreme Court of Canada decision, arising from Quebec, may or may not apply, depending on the facts. Section 56(5) of the Ontario Family Law Act allows a Judge the discretion to set aside any part of a separation agreement or Minutes of Settlement or the entire agreement if the contract contained a provision in which there was an exchange of money or "other consideration" for the removal of barriers to one's religious remarriage, such as a Get or a Talaq. In other words, a contract for a Get or a Talaq may not be legally valid. In my view, where one was "blackmailed" into giving a Get on certain unfair terms an Ontario court may set aside such a contract and refuse to enforce it hence no damages. However, where the contract was not "unfair" perhaps an Ontario Judge will allow damages and apply the Supreme Court case.

Neither Garfin Zeidenberg LLP nor John Syrtash is liable for any consequences arising from anyone's reliance on this material, which is presented as general information and not as a legal opinion.

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Mr. Syrtash has now moved to a new law firm and has been appointed as Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, Ontario M5G 1E6. John Syrtash can be reached at (416) 642-5410, Cell (416) 886-0359. Visit: www.freemchild.com; www.spousalsupport.com; www.garfinzeidenberg.com.



TIME TO PLANT TREES: Almond trees are blossoming in the junior kindergarten at Bialik Hebrew Day School, just in time for Tu b'Shvat, as teacher Sandi Weisberg and her students display plants that the kids grew all by themselves.

Cancer specialist named new CEO of Jewish General Hospital

MONTREAL — Dr. Hartley Stern, a cancer specialist who currently heads the Ottawa Hospital Regional Cancer Centre, will be the next chief executive officer of the Jewish General Hospital (JGH).

Stern, who assumes the post March 10, succeeds Henri Elbaz who was CEO for 16 years and worked for a total of 32 years at the hospital.

A Toronto native, Stern is also provincial head of surgical oncology with Cancer Care Ontario.

He has been in Ottawa since 1994, when he was appointed surgeon-in-chief at the then-Ottawa Civic Hospital and chair of the department of surgery at the University of Ottawa.

He has been in his current position since 2000. Four years ago, the cancer centre was integrated into the Ottawa Hospital and became an expanded program of cancer services, research and education. He will continue in his present job until the end of February.

Stern's clinical specialty is colorectal cancer.

JGH says he will be a good fit for the hospital, which two years ago opened the state-of-the-art Segal Cancer Centre, a comprehensive treatment, support and research facility that uses a multidisciplinary approach.

"A new era in the evolution of one of Quebec's most important health-care institutions is underway with this appointment," said JGH president Samuel Minzberg in making the announcement.

"We are very optimistic about the future of the JGH under Dr. Stern's leadership. [He] brings extensive experience as an academic, surgeon, health-care administrator and as an advocate for quality improvement in the health care system."

Minzberg noted that during Stern's tenure, there has been a major capital investment in cancer services in Ottawa and the creation of a regional network, as well as an improved standard of cancer surgery in Ontario as a whole.

Coast to Coast

Court opens door to Seifert's extradition

**Canada is ill-served
having this man living amongst us,
says Canadian Jewish Congress**

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

War criminal Michael Seifert stands one step closer to extradition after the Supreme Court of Canada turned down his request that it review a lower court decision permitting his removal to Italy.

The high court gave no reasons for its decision, but its refusal to hear the case leaves in place a B.C. Court of Appeal judgment that permitted Canada to extradite Seifert to Italy.

Seifert, 83, was convicted in absentia by an Italian court of war crimes in connection with his service as an SS guard at the Bolzano concentration camp. The Italian court found him guilty of helping kill and torture 11 people at the Bolzano camp in 1944 and 1945.

When the war crimes allegations were raised, the federal government proceeded on

two parallel tracks to remove him from Canada. It opened denaturalization proceedings to strip Seifert of his citizenship, and in 2006, then Justice Minister Irwin Cotler signed a surrender order permitting Seifert's extradition.

Seifert challenged both the extradition and citizenship-removal cases in court. In November, a federal court judge ruled Seifert entered Canada and acquired citizenship illegally, "by misrepresenting and concealing his activities during the war and his place of birth." That finding permitted the federal cabinet to strip Seifert of his citizenship, but before it did so, the parallel extradition case was resolved by the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court's decision "means the surrender order signed by the minister is valid and the way is clear for his extradition to Italy," said Alain Charette, speaking for the Justice Department.

Seifert "has been afforded due process under our extradition law," said Charette, adding the Supreme Court's decision marks the last opportunity for Seifert to challenge his removal under Canada's extradition law. Jewish groups urged the government to quickly remove Seifert to Italy.

"Canada is ill-served having this man living amongst us, and we now strongly urge the federal government to honour Italy's extradition request and immediately send the 'beast of Bolzano' back to his home to face the justice he has so long evaded," said Keith Landy, chair of Canadian Jewish Congress' war crimes committee.

"Canada's highest court has ruled that there will be no appeal for Michael Seifert. There

is nothing further standing in the way of what we expect will be his immediate extradition from this country," said Frank Dimant, executive vice-president of B'nai Brith Canada. "There is only one outcome in this case that will serve the cause of justice and that is for his immediate removal from Canada."

Landy called on the federal government "to deal with the remaining cases of denaturalization and deportation with Nazi-era defendants," while Dimant noted B'nai Brith launched a court challenge last August seeking judicial review of the federal government's decision not to revoke the citizenship of Wasyl Odynsky and Vladimir Katriuk. Courts have found both guilty of lying about their wartime pasts when entering the country.

**"SHE OPENS HER MOUTH WITH WISDOM,
AND THE TEACHING OF KINDNESS IS ON HER TONGUE"**



THE CANADIAN FRIENDS OF THE JERUSALEM COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
EXTENDS HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES TO THE KLASNER, FREEDMAN, AND CONNOR FAMILIES ON
THE PASSING OF THEIR MOTHER, GRANDMOTHER, AND GREAT-GRANDMOTHER

SYMA FRAIDENRAICH Z'L

MAY THE ALMIGHTY COMFORT YOU AMONG THE MOURNERS OF ZION AND JERUSALEM

Youth charged in anti-Semitic vandalism

Durham Regional Police have laid criminal charges against a youth in connection with anti-Semitic vandalism found at a trashed rental property in the town of Bowmanville, east of Toronto.

The young offender, who cannot be identified, has been charged under section 441 of the Criminal Code of causing damage to a rental property, an indictable offence that carries a maximum sentence of five years in jail.

However, police are concerned that unless witnesses step forward, prosecution of the case will be difficult. "We have issues with the case," said Const. Kevin Stuart of Durham Regional Police. "I have no doubt we have the right person. The trouble is finding witnesses."

Stuart said the property, located in downtown Bowmanville, had been rented by a tenant for 10 years, but the tenant had turned the home into a virtual "flop-house" with an open door allowing all kinds of people to come and go.

"The house has been pretty much open to anyone," he said. The problem is "proving who actually did the damage. There are people out there who know."

Alan Schwarz, whose family owns the property, is disappointed at how the case is developing, particularly with the charges, which he said don't reflect the seriousness of the offence.

"It was a horrendous event. It caused

huge distress to my parents," he said.

"The whole house was annihilated. No one can live in the house. It can't be salvaged," he said, adding that it has been boarded up since the crime was discovered in September.

Schwarz said he's also disappointed police aren't treating it as a hate crime.

Swastikas were painted on the front door and on the inside, along with the slogans "F-k Jews," "Kike," "white power," and "SS."

"My mom is still extremely upset about it," he said.

"From day one, they refused to acknowledge it was a hate crime. But let's face it. Swastikas, 'F-k the Jews,' 'SS,' 'white power' are not messages of love."

Stuart said he interviewed the suspect and "he told me stuff that might have racial views." But, he added, there's no evidence he's connected to any white supremacist groups.

Assistant Crown Attorney Michael Hill said the racist aspect of the crime could come into play if there is a conviction. At that point, when making submissions on sentencing, the Crown can argue that anti-Semitic graffiti is "an aggravating circumstance."

"The ugly, hateful things on the wall are something that could form part of the submission on sentencing" and warrant a stiffer sentence, he said.

— P.L.

Ethical Challenges Series

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9:30 am - Seminar
10:15 am - General Q & A / Ask-the-Rabbi

Breakfast, Lecture, and Source material for the seminar will be provided free of charge. Sponsored by Yeshiva University and BAYT Adult Education Committee

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Coast to Coast

Iran won't get nuclear arsenal: Israeli spokesman

By SHELTON KIRSHNER

Staff Reporter

The Iranian government wants to finish building an atomic arsenal by 2009 or 2010, but according to Israel's new foreign ministry spokesperson, Iran will be stopped in its tracks.

"The international community will prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon," Arye Mekel said in an interview last week.

Speaking by phone from his office in Jerusalem, Mekel said the major powers are in unanimous agreement that Iran cannot be permitted to develop a nuclear capability. "It's out of the question."

Mekel, the former Israeli consul general in New York City and before that Israel's deputy representative to the United Nations, suggested that the UN can thwart Iran by imposing still more sanctions.

"Iran is very susceptible to economic pressure," said Mekel, explaining that Tehran is vulnerable because it has failed to provide enough employment opportunities for the generation that has come of age since the 1979 Islamic revolution.

Even countries like Russia and China, which have so far been lukewarm to tougher UN sanctions, oppose Iran's quest to build a weaponized nuclear program.

"No one, including China and Russia, wants to see a nuclear Iran," said Mekel, who assumed his current position recently.

Israel is convinced that Iran is trying to produce an A-bomb, notwithstanding a recent U.S. intelligence report claiming that Iran froze its nuclear weapons program in 2003, he said.

Iran, he added, is also working on a long-range ballistic missile program.

Israel has irrefutable evidence that Iran is continuing to

work on its nuclear program. "We know for a fact that Iran is trying to produce nuclear weapons."

Iran could achieve its objective by 2009 or 2010, he warned.

Asked what Israel's response would be in that case, he replied, "We don't answer hypothetical questions."

Turning to another issue, Mekel said that 2008 may be a "significant year in the peace process" if the Palestinians fulfil a key obligation under the 2003 "road map" peace plan.

"The Palestinians have to stop terrorism, and if they do, we may make progress," said Mekel.

In a reference to Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's summit meeting with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas in the United States last November, he said, "Already we see some progress since Annapolis."

Israel stands ready to meet all its commitments under the road map, including the dismantlement of unauthorized outposts in the West Bank, if the Palestinian side complies with its obligations. "Anything that's illegal – the outposts – will eventually be removed," Mekel said.

Mekel said Israel has no intention of building new settlements in the territories and has not built any there in the past decade. But Israel reserves the right to expand existing settlements to allow for "natural growth," he noted.

Though warning that Israel's century-long conflict with the Palestinians does not lend itself to a quick fix, Mekel said the time for a settlement may be ripe because Israel is militarily strong.

"Both sides will benefit tremendously from peace."

Nevertheless, he acknowledged that the Hamas takeover of the Gaza Strip poses an obstacle to a lasting agreement.

"Eventually, the Palestinians themselves will solve this problem. They will find a way. It could be done very peacefully."

In an allusion to Israel's blockade of Gaza, he said, "Life in Gaza is difficult. People in Gaza will have an interest in getting rid of Hamas."

The Israeli government will not even consider the possibility of negotiating with Hamas unless it abides by three cardinal conditions: recognizes Israel, renounces terrorism and accepts previous agreements signed by the Palestinian Authority.

When asked whether Israel should nonetheless sign a long-term truce with Hamas, he said, "We don't talk to them. We have nothing to discuss. You don't stop violence by giving in to terror."

Mekel said Israel's armed forces are doing their best to suppress Qassam rocket and mortar fire from Gaza aimed at settlements inside Israeli territory. "We are acting all the time, operating all the time. We've reduced the number of attacks and casualties."

He would not speculate whether Israel would launch a full-scale invasion of Gaza should the situation warrant one.

But Mekel said that this option remains a possibility, even if Israel is deep into negotiations with the Palestinian Authority. "We'll do what it takes to protect our citizens."

Israel is prepared to resume bilateral negotiations with Syria. "We're ready to talk to all our neighbours."

However, Israel is hesitant to engage Syria when President Bashar Assad hosts such radical groups as Hamas and Islamic Jihad and assists Hezbollah. "We're saying that Syria, while supporting these organizations, is not showing real intent to live in peace."

Asked whether Israel is ready to meet Syria's demand for a full withdrawal from the Golan Heights, Mekel said all issues will be on the table once talks get underway again.

Mekel declined to react directly to a comment made by Mohammed El Baradei – the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency – that Israel's widely reported bombing of a Syrian nuclear facility last September had set "a bad precedent."

"We don't confirm it," he said.

The security situation along the Lebanese border is better today than it was prior to the Second Lebanon War in the summer of 2006, he said. "The United Nations is there and Hezbollah has been pushed back, though the smuggling of weapons to Hezbollah still goes on."

In closing, Mekel said Israel has reason to be thankful as it gets set to mark its 60th anniversary.

"We have to remember that 45 per cent of the Jewish people live in the Jewish state. We hope that more will settle in the next few years. We're by far the strongest country in the region. Our economy is booming. Our high-tech industry is among the top 10 in the world. We have a lot to be grateful for."



Arye Mekel

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OUT OF THE COLD

Rebecca Katzman, Jenna Zucker, Michelle Marcus, Olivia Bencheitrit and Josh Grosh of Associated Hebrew Schools' Danilack Middle School recently took part in a coat and blanket Drive for Out of the Cold, an initiative by Toronto-area shuls, churches and faith communities to offer shelter, hospitality and refuge to homeless people. The students collected items for the Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue site, which is hosting the program for 10 consecutive Monday evenings through March 17.



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BARRISTERS/SOLICITORS

Israel cuts Gaza fuel; Olmert says 'Gazans can walk'

© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

JERUSALEM — Prime Minister Ehud Olmert pledged Monday that Israel would not allow the Gaza Strip to slide into a humanitarian crisis in the wake of the decision to halt fuel supplies over ongoing rocket fire on the Negev, but later said that gas-deprived Gaza residents "can walk."

"As far as I'm concerned, all the residents of Gaza can walk and have no fuel for their cars, because they have a murderous terrorist regime that doesn't allow people in the south of Israel to live in peace," the prime minister said in broadcast remarks.

Also Monday, a Qassam rocket struck the western Negev. Southern Israel absorbed more than a hundred rockets fired from Gaza last week, but the weekend marked a significant drop in Qassam attacks with only five fired, along with two mortar shells, on Sunday.

Olmert made the pledge to prevent a humanitarian crisis in separate talks with Egyptian Pres-

ident Hosni Mubarak and Dutch Foreign Minister Maxime Verhagen. Mubarak called Olmert on Monday to express his concern over the deteriorating situation in Gaza.

"We will not allow a humanitarian crisis in the Strip," Olmert told both leaders.

"We will provide the population with everything needed to prevent a crisis, but we will not supply luxuries that would make life more comfortable," he added.

Olmert told Verhagen that 75 per cent of children in the Negev suffer from anxiety as a result of the daily rocket attacks.

"Israel does not want to use the same means and shoot without aim," he said. "We are trying to attack terrorists, but we also show the population that it cannot shed itself of responsibility for the situation. We won't allow the Palestinians to fire on us and destroy life in Sderot, while in Gaza life is going on as usual."

Hamas was exacerbating the situation in the Strip in order to increase international pressure on

Israel, Olmert said, adding that Israelis were suffering daily from Palestinian terror.

"Hamas is firing on the power station that supplies electricity to Gaza. That is simply crazy," he told the Dutch Foreign Minister, adding, "What would the Dutch government do if it were being fired on daily?"

Verhagen responded that his government condemned the firing of rockets on Sderot, but was bothered by the situation in the Strip and believed Gaza residents needed to be given an alternative to Hamas.

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni said Israel sought to "maintain a reasonable humanitarian level" in the Gaza Strip while "waging a war against terrorism."

"The Palestinian people need to understand that there will be no routine living or normal economic situation as long as Israeli citizens are unable to function normally," she told reporters in Sderot.

Ten human rights organizations asked the High Court of Justice on Monday to issue a temporary order to expand the quantity of industrial diesel fuel shipped into the Gaza Strip.

The court had scheduled a hearing on the issue for Feb. 3, but attorneys for the rights groups attorneys argued that the debate should be immediate, declaring that cutting diesel fuel shipments has sparked a severe humanitarian crisis in the Strip, as well as the power blackout in Gaza City.

The groups, led by the Adalah organization, also sent letters to Olmert and Defence Minister Ehud Barak, asking them to rescind Barak's decision last week to close the crossing points between Israel and the Strip. The organizations asked that food, medicines and humanitarian goods be immediately allowed into Gaza.

Also on Monday, a United Nations aid agency spokesperson said that international food aid to the residents of the Gaza Strip would have to be suspended if an Israeli closure of the coastal territory continued.

"We are going to have to suspend operations on Thursday or Friday... because we are running out of plastic bags we use for food, and we are running out of fuel," said Chris Guinness, spokesperson for the United Nations Relief Works Agency, which distributes food aid to 860,000 Palestinians in Gaza.

UN officials said the organization, as well as the European Union, were pressing Israel to allow in fuel and medicine immediately to the Gaza Strip, where 1.5 million people live.

Meanwhile, Hamas political leader Khaled Meshaal spoke by telephone to Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit, who briefed him on international efforts to make Israel "end this tragedy immediately," Egyptian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hossam Zaki said.

"Israel has a clear international obligation as an occupying force," Zaki said. "The collective punishment should stop immediately."

The European Commission on Monday also urged Israel to restart fuel supplies to Gaza.

"I have made clear that I am against this collective punishment of the people of Gaza," EU external relations commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner said in a statement.

"I urge the Israeli authorities to restart fuel supplies and open the crossings for the passage of humanitarian and commercial supplies."

"Neither the blockade nor the recent military strikes are able to prevent the rocket attacks. Only a credible political agreement this year, as foreseen at Annapolis, [Md.], can turn Palestinians away from violence," Ferrero-Waldner added, referring to U.S.-hosted talks late last year.

Gaza City was dark Sunday night after the Hamas government shut down the Palestinian power plant that supplies some of the electricity in the Strip.

Hamas spokespeople blamed Israel for the power shortage following the closure of the border crossings through which fuel for the power plant is brought into Gaza, but Israel said it is providing 75 per cent of Gaza's electricity and Egypt is providing another five per cent.

"There is certainly a shortage of fuel," an Israeli

security official said. "Nonetheless, it's clear that Hamas is blowing up the crisis for its needs, in order to take advantage of the pictures of darkness in Gaza for its public relations needs in the Arab world and the international community."

Four hours after the blackout, Hamas said that five patients died because of the cutoff of electricity in hospitals.

Hamas announced the shutdown of the power plant Sunday morning, which the director of Gaza's electric company, Rafik Maliha, attributed to a shortage of the fuel needed to run the plant.

Despite the blackout in Gaza City, southern and central Gaza — which receive electricity from Israel and Egypt directly — were not affected by the shutdown.

Prime Minister Olmert decided Sunday that the Israel Defence Forces would continue operating in the Gaza Strip, where troops have been targeting Palestinians firing barrages of Qassam rockets at southern Israel.

The Israeli Air Force attempted to assassinate an Al Aqsa Brigade senior official late Sunday night in an air strike in northern Gaza. The official was injured in the strike and one of his men was killed.



Lior Ben-Shimon, 5, was seriously wounded last week when a Qassam rocket hit her neighbour's home in Sderot where she was playing. More than 130 rockets were launched last week from Gaza into Israel. [Israelnet photo]

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Israel & the Jewish World

Israel tests new missile

Israel tested a classified new missile system. Israel's Defence Ministry

announced that a missile had been fired from the Palmachim Air Base in the Negev Desert as part of a propulsion-system test. There was no more information forthcoming, prompting the Israeli media to speculate the missile was an advanced version of the Jericho-2, which is believed to be able to carry

non-conventional warheads to distances of up to 1,000 miles. Israel has stepped up its development of strategic defence systems amid concerns that Iran could acquire nuclear weapons within a few years.

Israel Briefs

Condolences from Shalit

The father of captive Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit extended condolences to a Hamas official bereaved by Gaza fighting. Noam Shalit sent a condolence let-

ter to Mahmoud Zahar, a senior Hamas leader whose son, a gunman, was killed by Israeli forces near Gaza City this month. "May the day come when neither of our sides knows such pain," read the letter, quoted on Israeli television Channel 2. Zahar, who is considered a hardliner even by the standards of a Palestinian Islamist movement committed to destroying Israel, confirmed receiving the letter but declined further comment. Hamas has been holding Shalit's son Gilad since abducting the

conscript on the Gaza border in June 2006. The killing of Zahar's son raised concern in Israel that efforts to retrieve Shalit, perhaps through a prisoner swap, could be impeded.

Top West Bank terrorist killed

Israeli commandos killed the West Bank leader of the Islamic Jihad terrorist group. Special forces surrounded the hideout of Walid Obeidi in Kabatiya village near Jenin on Jan. 16 and called on him to surrender. But

Obeidi, who was long on Israel's wanted list for planning Palestinian terror attacks, came out firing his weapon and was shot dead. Two of his comrades were wounded and taken into custody. There were no Israeli casualties.

Gaucher's treatment tested

A worldwide trial of an Israeli enzyme treatment for Gaucher's disease is underway. The trial is looking at a new enzyme replacement drug for Gaucher's disease produced by an Israeli com-

pany from plant cells. It's being co-ordinated by Prof. Ari Zimran of the Shaare Zedek Medical Center in Jerusalem. Gaucher's, the most common hereditary Jewish disorder, is prevalent among Ashkenazim. Those who suffer from Gaucher's have insufficient levels of an enzyme responsible for breaking down extra fatty material, called lipids, in the body. They are treated with enzyme replacement therapy. The safety of the drug was established in animals and healthy human volunteers.

Authors & Poets

The C/JN is pleased to announce its

Annual Passover Literary Supplement

We invite our readers to submit unpublished, original works of fiction or poetry that explore Jewish themes. They should not exceed 2,000 words.

We must receive your submissions no later than Friday, March 14. E-mail submissions are preferred, but works can also be sent by mail or brought to our office. E-mail: info@cjnews.com. Mail: 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4.

Submissions will not be returned. The C/JN will not enter into any correspondence with participants.

C/JN Purim Art Contest

It's time again for our annual Purim Art Contest.

Who can enter: Children in grades 1 to 6 inclusive are eligible. The children of C/JN employees are not eligible.

Prizes: The judges will choose one drawing from two different students in each grade. These "winning" drawings will be published in The C/JN's 2008 Purim Poster. In addition, each of the 12 children whose drawings have been selected will receive a cheque for \$25.

How to enter: You may submit as many drawings as you want. However, they should not be too small nor too large. Please paint or draw bright, bold, colourful pictures. You may use markers, crayons, paint or pencils. Please send us your name, address, phone number, age and grade along with your drawings.

You may mail or deliver your drawings to: C/JN Community Contests, The Canadian Jewish News, 1500 Don Mills Road, Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4. If you want us to return the pictures to you, please provide a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Otherwise, we will be unable to do so.

The contest closes at 3 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 29, 2008. We will undoubtedly receive many wonderful submissions from children all across the country. But only 12 of the drawings will be chosen as the "winners." The judges will base their decisions on a number of factors such as: the use of colour, the imaginative quality of the drawing and the way it tells an aspect of the story of Purim. The judges' decisions will be final. The chances of winning depend upon the number and quality of submissions received.

How the winner will be announced: The children whose pictures are chosen will be notified by telephone before the start of Shabbat on Friday, March 7, 2008.

When the prizes will be awarded: The "winning" pictures will be published in The C/JN of March 20, 2008. Have fun and good luck.

Any litigation respecting the conduct and awarding of a prize in this contest may be submitted to the Régie des Loteries et courses du Québec.

Flap over World Jewish Congress president's letter to Olmert

By JACOB BERKMAN

JTA

NEW YORK — The president of the World Jewish Congress has yorled the organization's branch in Israel by writing to Prime Minister Ehud Olmert with a plea to allow Diaspora Jews a voice in any decisions on Jerusalem's future.

Ronald Lauder in his Jan. 8 letter, on World Jewish Congress (WJC) letterhead, wished Olmert success during U.S. President George W. Bush's visit to the region and expressed the hope of world Jewry that Israel can attain peace.

Lauder closed the letter urging Olmert that he should take into consideration "the prayers, the hopes and the views of Jews around the world when you discuss the future" of Jerusalem.

"While recognizing Israel's inherent prerogatives as a sovereign state," Lauder wrote, "it is inconceivable that any changes in the status of our Holy City will be implemented without giving the Jewish people, as a whole, a voice in the decision."

Among those complaining about the letter is Shai Hermesh, the chairman of WJC's Israel branch, which was listed at the top of the letterhead along with WJC's world headquarters in New York.

Hermesh said the letter was sent without any consultation with the Israel branch and contradicts the WJC's longstanding policy of keeping out of Israel's political affairs.

"Ronald Lauder is allowed to print a letter or do whatever he wants, but he should take into consideration that never, never, never in the past did Jews in the Diaspora make decisions for Israel," Hermesh told JTA in a telephone interview last Tuesday.

"We feel that Jews around the world are our brothers and their support is very important to us, but political decisions should be taken only by the Knesset and no one else, including the Israeli branch of the World Jewish Congress. That is totally unacceptable by us. Decisions should be taken only by the elected government and no one else."

The flap over Lauder's letter comes as right-wing and Orthodox groups in America are waging a campaign to keep Israel from sharing or dividing Jerusalem in any future deal with the Palestinians. The effort has reignited the argument over what role, if any, Diaspora Jews should have in deciding Israeli policy.

The goal of the letter, Lauder said, was not to pressure Olmert or Israel into taking a hard-line stand on Jerusalem, but to foster debate on what he sees as the most important decision facing the country.

Lauder added that he would not have taken a similar step regarding other territory up for discussion, including the Gaza Strip, West Bank or Golan Heights.

"The letter simply states that it was important to discuss Jerusalem with the Jews of the Diaspora because we all play a role and Jerusalem is a key factor," Lauder said.

The WJC was not going to take an official position on Jerusalem, he added.

"I was speaking for both the World Jewish Congress and the Jews of the Diaspora, and saying please listen to the Jews of the Diaspora," Lauder said.

The spat could signify a clash of personal political differences of WJC officials. Lauder has been a longtime supporter of hawkish factions and leaders in Israel, including Knesset opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu. Hermesh is a member of Olmert's Kadima party.

Lauder's letter comes after Olmert took heat in November for telling reporters that Diaspora Jews should not have a say in what Israel does regarding Jerusalem. Those remarks came as right-wing groups tried to put pressure on the prime minister in the lead-up to the peace gathering in Annapolis, Md.

Olmert later clarified that he welcomed comments from Diaspora Jews, but never rescinded his position that Israel alone is sovereign in conducting negotiations.

The issue of Lauder's letter was raised last week in a conference call Olmert held with members of the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish American Organizations.

Olmert, according to one member on the call, said he agreed with Lauder that Diaspora Jews should have a voice and Israel should at least listen to it before acting.

"Olmert completely agreed," said the member, who wished to remain anonymous because the call was closed to the press. "He couldn't have been more forthcoming in agreeing with Lauder's sentiments."

Moshe Ronen, chair of the Canada-Israel Committee (CIC) — the official representative of the organized Canadian Jewish community on matters pertaining to Canada-Israel relations — reaffirmed the CIC's desire for Jerusalem to remain the united city it has always been — "with the exception of the 19 years of Jordanian occupation."

"We believe that the democratically elected government of Israel has the right to pursue a course of action based on democratic confirmation by its citizens and that Diaspora Jewry have a right and obligation to participate in the process — albeit through a constructive and respectful engagement of the Israeli government."

With files from Andy Levy-Aizenkopf of The C/JN



Ronald Lauder

Israel & the Jewish World

Ms. magazine's rejection of ad elicits strong Jewish response

By SUE FISHKOFF

JTA

SAN FRANCISCO — The American Jewish Congress is ramping up its protest against *Ms.* magazine's rejection of its pro-Israel advertisement.

In a campaign launched earlier this month, AJCongress urged people to write, call or e-mail the prominent feminist publication to "register your complaint at their anti-Israel bias."

It also has enlisted the support of high-powered Jewish feminist speakers, three of whom appeared at a news conference last week.

The ad in question features photos of three prominent Israeli women leaders and the phrase "This is Israel."

AJCongress leaders claim *Ms.* rejected the ad because of its bias against Israel — a charge hotly denied by the executive editor of the first American feminist magazine, which debuted in the early 1970s.

"We only take mission-driven advertisements," Katherine Spillar told *JTA*.

"Because two of the women were from the same political party, we understood it as political endorsement," she said. *Ms.* "does not get involved in the domestic politics" of other countries.

AJCongress President Richard Gordon called that argument "specious," noting that in any parliamentary democracy, the foreign minister and parliament leader are going to be from the same party.

Gordon also noted that none of the women are running for office, and the ad does not suggest support for either of their parties.

He pointed out that *Ms.* ran a cover story about Jordan's Queen Noor in 2003, and a story in its most recent issue about Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), the speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, under the headline "This is What a Speaker Looks Like."

Gordon said the only difference he sees between Pelosi and the three women featured in the AJCongress ad is that

Pelosi is not Israeli.

"*Ms.* magazine obviously is trying to create a legal fiction after the fact to cover their bias at the time of the incident," he said.

Spillar said Tuesday that it is "unfair and untrue" to allege that *Ms.* magazine is anti-Israel. She said the magazine is running a two-page profile of Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs Tzipi Livni, one of the three leaders pictured in the AJCongress ad, in its Winter 2008 issue, which hits newsstands Jan. 29.

In a faxed statement, Spillar wrote that the magazine has covered the Israeli feminist movement and the country's women leaders in 11 articles in its past 16 issues.

But the AJCongress ad was "inconsistent" with the *Ms.* policy of not being politically partisan, and the slogan "This is Israel" in the ad "implied that women in Israel hold equal positions of power with men," whereas "Israel, like every other country, has far to go to reach equality for women."

Speaking later to *JTA* by phone, Spillar said she "puts the U.S. in the same category as Israel" in terms of having far to go to achieve full gender equality. But the AJCongress ad "was almost a country ad, and we don't take country ads."

Harriet Kurlander, the director of AJCongress's Commission for Women's Empowerment, said that when she originally tried to place the ad, a magazine representative told her that the magazine "would love to have an ad from you on women's empowerment, or reproductive freedom, but not on this."

In other conversations with magazine staff members, Kurlander said she was told that publishing the ad would "set off a firestorm."

Kurlander said the magazine should admit its "cover-up" and "simply print the ad."

Among the Jewish feminists speaking out on the issue was Blu Greenberg, the founding president of the Jewish Orthodox Feminist Alliance. Greenberg said that by not accepting the ad, *Ms.* is "aligning itself with the political far left that wants to delegitimize Israel altogether on the stage of world opinion."

"I wish I could believe that we're overblowing it, but I've been in numerous situations where I've seen the same thing — this total exorcism of Israel," she told *JTA*. "That's what we're all feeling right now."

She, along with authors Francine Klagsbrun and Phyllis Chesler suggested at the news conference that the magazine's refusal to run the ad was indicative of a pro-Palestinian, anti-Israel sentiment that is rampant within the feminist movement.

"One would have hoped that *Ms.*, known for its independence and for standing up to so many of the firestorms it created, would have stood up on this one," Greenberg said.

"I have seen too much of it in secular feminist circles to know that it is an undercurrent in significant parts of that community," Greenberg said.

Susan Weidman Schneider of *Lilith* magazine said she was "very surprised" by the refusal of *Ms.* to run the ad. But Schneider said that after speaking to the magazine's publisher, she believes the ad was likely rejected "out of a place of ignorance" and was not intended as "a willful slap in the face

to Israel."

Weidman Schneider, who was not at the news conference, said she considers Spillar's argument "possibly an ex post facto explanation."

She said she told publisher Eleanor Smeal that in retrospect, *Ms.* would have done better to suggest to the AJCongress that the group shape an ad reflecting a broader range of women's advancement in Israel if any perceived partisanship in the original ad was the impediment.

But beyond the fracas surrounding the actual ad, Weidman Schneider said she is disturbed by the "vitriol" she has seen on Jewish and feminist blogs over the past few days relating to the incident.

"I didn't expect the depth of anti-feminist sentiment that this incident has stirred up," she told *JTA*, noting that she has read comments referring to "femiNazis" and others suggesting the feminist movement is inherently anti-Israel. "I felt quite chilled."

JTA staff writer Jacob Berkman in New York contributed to this report.



Museum launches Holocaust archives

JTA

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum has launched a search service to access the world's largest closed Holocaust archive.

Survivors and others as of last Thursday may request information from the massive digital archive, which was transferred to the Washington museum this past November. The archives came from the International Tracing Service, based in Bad Arolsen, Germany.

Trained staff will search the archive, and will cross-reference with the museum's own archives and material that the tracing service has yet to share with the museum. The archives relate to wartime incarceration and concentration camps; still to come is material related to forced labour and postwar documentation. All the material should be in hand by 2010, museum officials said.

The material became available after a decade-long negotiations among the 11 countries responsible for the archives. All 11 nations now have copies of the archive.

Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust memorial, launched its own search service last week, too.

About 800 requests, most of them family inquiries, have been received so far by the U.S. Holocaust museum.

Applicants may make requests for information on the web at www.ushmm.org/its or by calling 866-912-4385. The museum is planning outreach programs to communities throughout the United States. More than half of the documents relate to non-Jewish persecutions.

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HEEBONICS

Young Jews reconnect through new Israel tour, Part I

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

It's not a new concept in the Jewish community. For almost a decade, taking groups of young Canadian Jews on organized tours of Israel has been a technique that has succeeded in connecting thousands of Diaspora Jews with the Holy Land.

For some birthright Israel participants, the free 10-day tour serves as a first taste of Israel, and many return home with the desire to become more involved in their Jewish communities and Israel advocacy.

But Debbie Osiel, the former program and marketing director for Canada-Israel Experience (CIE) and the current managing director for Jewish Urban Meeting Place (JUMP), felt there weren't enough options for Jewish youth to stay connected and get back to Israel.

So Osiel, 27, and the rest of the team at JUMP – a centre located at the corner of Yonge and Centre streets in Thornhill, that serves as a hangout for young Jews – decided to organize a subsidized trip to Israel and market it as a post-birthright program.

"Working at CIE, I had the advantage of seeing the demand for this trip. People used to call all the time because they wanted to go back, but it was too expensive," she told *The C/N* weeks ago.

Despite having just a few months to plan their inaugural trip, draw up a unique itinerary and spread the word to the Toronto Jewish community, JUMP managed not only to fill every seat of a coach bus with 47 participants, but they even had to turn away a number of hopefuls simply because of space constraints.

From Dec 27 to Jan 8 – for only \$899, which covered the flight, accommodations and most meals – Canadian Jews between 23 and 32 travelled to nooks of the tiny Middle Eastern country most hadn't seen on birthright or other organized tours.

With the help of tour co-ordinators in Israel, the JUMP staff worked hard to create an itinerary that offered the participants a deeper, more hands-on experience than they had through birthright.

The focus became experiencing and living Israel – not just seeing it. Each day of the 10-day tour had a theme, and all the themes attempted to offer a different element of Israel – the religious, the spiritual, the Zionist, the humanistic, the historic and the cultural.

Just as the itinerary reflected the many facets of Israel, so to did the dynamic of the participants. Some were religious, others nationalistic. Some had a strong sense of Jewish identity, others were searching for a connection.

Ronen Malik, 30, the Israeli tour guide, who has six years of experience and has led more than 30 birthright trips, recognized that it would be a challenge to connect with such a diverse group.

"It was a challenge. Even the staff members are so

different," Malik said as the trip was coming to an end.

"A month ago, when Debbie [Osiel] called me, honestly, I was afraid in the beginning. How was I going to find a balance between all of you?... Although everyone is from Toronto, the background of the kids over here is different. We have religious, we have non-religious, we have people who don't believe in God at all, so it was challenging for sure."

But the staff, consisting of two *madrichim*, Osiel and Shlomo Buzaglo, 24, as well as two young rabbis, Rabbi Dani Zwick, 29, and Rabbi Daniel Green, 36, pushed forward with an itinerary that challenged the participants on intellectual, emotional and spiritual levels.

The tour began at Maale Hahamisha, a kibbutz hotel

organization called Save a Child's Heart, which is based in Holon. Later the same day, they travelled to Kibbutz Shiller to pick tangerines as part of Table to Table's Leket project, which provides needy Israeli families with fresh fruit and vegetables.

They were treated to horseback riding in Ramot Menashe, ATVing in the Golan Heights, touring the grottos of Rosh Hanikra and a jeep tour in the Judean Desert near the Dead Sea, and they even got to try their hand at herding sheep and goats at Neot Kedumim, the biblical landscape reserve in Israel.

They got history lessons at the Ma'apilim camp in Atlit, where Jewish "illegal" immigrants who fled Nazi persecution were held by British authorities at the detention camp that operated from 1939 until 1948.

They visited the Acre Prison in Akko, where some of the founders of the Zionist movement, including Ze'ev Jabotinsky, were imprisoned in the 1920s and where nine members of the Zionist resistance movement were executed in the prison gallows.

But among the lectures, the history lessons and the sight-seeing, the *madrichim* understood that an Israeli experience wouldn't be complete without some free time for shopping, eating and sampling Israel's nightlife.

Whether the plan was to spend a couple hours at a shuk called Machane Yehuda, spend a Saturday night at a small, sleek bar in Jerusalem called Shlomzi Bar or celebrate New Year's Eve at one of Tel Aviv's hottest clubs called Whisky a Go Go, the JUMP staff made fun a priority, which helped balance the intense program-



Participants in JUMP's Inaugural Israel tour jump for joy for a group shot at a lookout point that offers a panoramic view of the holy city of Jerusalem.
[Sheri Shefa photo]

just outside of Jerusalem. Having arrived less than two hours before Shabbat, it was a perfect time to unwind after a long flight, have a beautiful Shabbat dinner, get to know the group and have some serious discussions.

Hearing Rabbi Zwick lecture to the group about the importance of Shabbat hours after they arrived in Israel made it a more meaningful experience for some.

With the first Shabbat as a group over, the tour began and the participants absorbed all they saw and heard.

The group heard from Arie Ben-Yakov, a hardened kibbutznik at Misgav Am on the border of Lebanon, and they met Avraham Lowenthal, a passionate kabbalist residing in Tzfat, the centre for Jewish mysticism. They heard from Amos Levitov, a soft-spoken Israeli PoW who shared his story about his 3½ years of torture, fear and uncertainty in an Egyptian prison, and they heard from Rabbi Asher Sinclair, a former Hollywood actor, producer and filmmaker turned rabbi.

They travelled to some of the most breathtaking lookout points in Haifa, Jaffa, Jerusalem and the Galle.

They took part in tikkun olam projects, visiting with and bringing toys to children from all over the world who are awaiting free heart surgery provided by an or-

ming.

But perhaps most important were the connections made between the 47 young professionals who came from the same city but truly represented the complex diversity that is the Jewish community.

One of the participants lived in Israel until he was five years old. He connects to Israel on a nationalistic level, but considers himself secular. Another was Canadian born, a product of the Jewish day school system, who didn't feel a desire to connect to her heritage until two years ago, and now considers herself a ba'al tshuvah.

Another participant connects both religiously and Zionist-like to Israel, but it wasn't until he was 14 years old that he learned he was Jewish. And another is an immigrant from a small town in Estonia that didn't even have a synagogue, a place "where you could get in trouble for being Jewish," who breaks into tears at the mere thought that there is a place in the world that belongs to the Jews and where she belongs to a nation.

Part 2 of this series will explore the deep connections made by the participants, despite having come from very different backgrounds.

Israel & the Jewish World

New Israeli spy satellite sends Tehran a message

By YOSSEI MELMAN

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The pre-dawn launch Monday of a new reconnaissance satellite further establishes Israel as one of the world's superpowers in space, and grants it an important further intelligence advantage over its rivals.

The primary intelligence contribution of the TECSAR satellite, manufactured by Israel Aerospace Industries, lies in improving capabilities of intelligence gathering on Iran.

Although planned several years ago and delayed a number of times of late, the launch again sends a message to Iran that Israel continues to maintain its superiority in the field of intelligence in space.

The message coincidentally accompanies last week's high-profile launch of an Israeli

Jericho surface-to-surface missile, also intended as a signal to the leaders of Iran.

The launch of an Israeli satellite on an Indian missile from a launch site in India bears a number of additional advantages. First, it enables Israel to establish a new point of view in space, allowing it photographic angles and reception of Iranian communications that were not available in prior satellite launches.

The direction of the launch – from the east and opposite to the earth's rotation – gives Israel increased coverage of sites in Iran. TECSAR's optical capability is based on SAR (Synthetic Aperture Radar) technology and on its cameras, which are more advanced than those employed by the Ofek intelligence satellites developed and used by Israel. Image resolution will be better, sharper and of higher overall quality.

The radar technology aboard TECSAR makes its photo and listening abilities usable under all weather conditions, including dense clouds, rain and storms, and at night as well as during the daylight hours.

Even before the Monday launch, Israel could take pride in being one of the world's superpowers in space, along with the United States, Russia, France, Britain, China and India. At the moment, Israel has three reconnaissance satellites in space: Ofek 5, launched in May 2002, Ofek 7, sent into orbit last July, and TECSAR. It also has three communications satellites of the Amos and Eros series. This satellite system furnishes visual and auditory intelligence, interception of media communications and reception of electromagnetic signals from radar.

The launch is also an expression of the growing co-operation between Israel and India in the security sphere as a whole, and in particular in the fields of missiles, radar

and satellites.

India is currently the most important export market for Israeli weapons systems, hardware, know-how and technology. A high-level delegation of Indian scientists and military officers, experts in the missile and space fields, is to visit Israel next month, in a further expression of the strategic co-operation between the two countries.

Although command, control and supervision of the TECSAR will be in Israel's hands, foreign media have reported that Israel will allow India access to some of the data sent back to ground stations. This is a sensitive issue for Israel, because it may spark anger in Pakistan.

On the other hand, Iran, which has close ties with India – in the past, India has supplied Tehran with materials and equipment for developing chemical weaponry – would be expected to be angry with India over the launch of an Israeli satellite.

Analysis

Effect of Iran sanctions limited, U.S. report says

JTA

WASHINGTON — Iran's global ties limit U.S. efforts to isolate the Islamic Republic, according to a report by Congress' investigative arm.

"Iran's global trade ties and leading role in energy production make it difficult for the United States to isolate Iran and pressure it to reduce proliferation and support for terrorism," said the review of 20 years of U.S. and

U.S.-led sanctions released last week by the General Accounting Office.

"For example, Iran's overall trade with the world has grown since the U.S. imposed sanctions, although this trade has fluctuated."

The report enumerated the sanctions' successes, their limitations, and the difficulties quantifying their effects.

"U.S. officials report that U.S. sanctions have slowed foreign investment in Iran's petroleum sector, denied parties involved in

Iran's proliferation and terrorism activities access to the U.S. financial system, and provided a clear statement of U.S. concerns to the rest of the world," the report said in its summary.

The report stated that the reported impacts might be overstated. It pointed out that since 2003, the Iranian government has signed contracts reported at about \$20 billion (US) with foreign firms to develop its energy resources, and that banks may be funding their activities

in currencies other than the U.S. dollar.

In addition, while Iran claims to have halted its nuclear weapons program in 2003, according to the November 2007 U.S. National Intelligence Estimate, it continues to enrich uranium, acquire advanced weapons technology, and support terrorism.

Finally, the report stated: "U.S. agencies do not systematically collect or analyze data demonstrating the overall impact and results of their sanctioning and enforcement actions."

Pope to change liturgy offensive to Jews

JTA

ROME — Pope Benedict XVI reportedly has decided to change part of the Good Friday liturgy that is offensive to Jews.

The decision was reported by Andrea Tornielli, the Vatican expert at the Italian daily *Il Giornale*.

The change would affect the Missal of 1962, which the Pope brought back into use. The prayer is not used in most churches, but certain congregations continue to use the old rite on Good Friday.

The prayer, which refers to the blindness of the Jews in refusing Jesus as the messiah, is part of a series of prayers for non-Christians.

The prayer reads: "Let us pray also for the Jews that the Lord our God may take the veil from their hearts and that they also may acknowledge Our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us pray: Almighty and everlasting God, you do not refuse your mercy even to the Jews; hear the prayers which we offer for the blindness of that people so that they may acknowledge the light of your truth, which is Christ, and be delivered from their darkness."

A reference to "perfidious Jews" was dropped in 1959 by Pope John XXIII.

When Pope Benedict brought back the prayer, the chief rabbis of Israel expressed their concern in a letter to the Pope, as did the Anti-Defamation League.

Poll asks if Diaspora should have input on Jerusalem

By ANSHEL PFEFFER

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JERUSALEM — Only 16 per cent of Israeli Jews think that Diaspora Jewry should be involved in decisions on the future of Jerusalem, according to a poll commissioned by the Shalem Center's Adelson Institute for Strategic Studies.

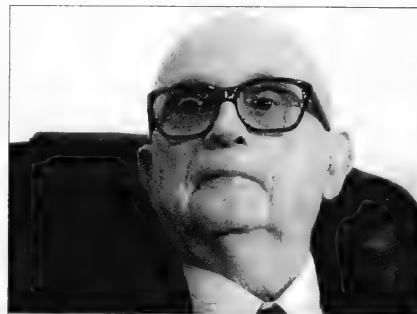
However, most Israeli Jews also oppose leaving the decision solely to the government: only five per cent of the 500 respondents thought the prime minister was entitled to decide Jerusalem's fate, and only 13 per cent were willing to let the cabinet and Knesset make this choice. Fully 34 per cent said it should be made by all Israeli citizens, and 32 per cent thought it should be made by all Israeli Jews.

Among the 16 per cent who said both Israeli and Diaspora Jews should decide Jerusalem's fate, religious Jews were prominent: fewer than nine per cent of secular Israelis chose this option, but the proportion rose to 29 per cent among religious Jews.

The data were presented during the first day of the Herzliya Conference held last Sunday in the Knesset.

Associates of Prof. Yehzekel Dror, president of the Jewish People Policy Planning Institute, said Sunday that Dror planned to use his speech to the conference to argue that Diaspora Jews should be consulted on such issues, though Israelis should make the final decisions.

In his address in the session on Israel-Diaspora relations, Dror was to argue that Israel and the Diaspora are becoming increasingly distant from each other. Existing data already show



Prof. Yehzekel Dror

an erosion in solidarity with Israel among the younger generation of Diaspora Jews, and Dror believes that existing programs are insufficient to reverse this trend, his associates said.

Dror, they added, blames this crisis on the Israeli establishment's view that Israel is by definition the centre of the Jewish people and its consequent rejection of the Diaspora. He therefore plans to argue that the role of Diaspora Jews in Israel's affairs should be upgraded. Instead of merely being a source of financial aid, they should become "consultants," his associates said.

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Israel & the Jewish World

Venezuela and Iran use oil to build alliance against West

By LARRY LUXNER

JTA

CARACAS, Venezuela — It's nearly impossible to find flour, eggs or fresh milk in the neighbourhood supermarket, but in Venezuela you can fill your car's tank for just 6 cents a gallon even as world oil prices hit \$100 a barrel.

That's not the only paradox in President Hugo Chavez's country, the largest oil exporter in Latin America.

Under its leftist president the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela — famous for miniskirts, beauty queens and plastic surgery — has aligned itself politically with the Islamic Republic of Iran, among the world's most conservative Muslim nations.

The growing friendship between Chavez and Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, despite the vast cultural differences of Venezuela and Iran, is of great concern to many because both leaders are attempting to use the oil wealth of their countries to spread abroad an anti-America, anti-West and often anti-Israel message.

"Chavez is making introductions for Iran throughout the region," warned Daniel Erikson, a senior analyst at Inter-American Dialogue, a U.S.-based center for policy issues relating to the Americas. "Iran is thereby able to use the entree provided by Chavez to multiply its contacts throughout Latin America."

Robert Bottomo, the publisher of the Caracas newsletter VenEconomy Weekly, says the Iran-Venezuela alliance has more to do with common adversaries than common values.

"It's all part of Chavez trying to promote himself as a leader of the Third World," Bottomo said. "Venezuela and Iran are both against the imperialists."

The Chavez government recently signed four agreements with Ahmadinejad, including joint ventures in a plastics mold factory, a binational bank and a \$1 billion binational fund, as well as a deal to train 200 Iranians as petroleum technicians.

This brings the number of accords signed with Iran to 190 and follows the establishment of regular flights between Caracas and Tehran on Conviasa Airlines.

"Some people call that route Al-Qaida Airlines," joked a Cuban-born industrialist who has lived in Venezuela since 1977 and a Chavez critic. "Cul-

turally, we don't share one drop of religion or revolution with Iran."

Venezuela says it produces 2.3 million barrels of crude oil daily, of which 700,000 barrels goes for domestic consumption. The rest is exported, mostly to the United States; trade ties persist between the two countries despite all the harsh rhetoric.

Venezuela's state-owned oil company, PDVSA, also owns the Cigo retail chain and several major U.S. and Caribbean refineries.

Over the years, Venezuela's membership in OPEC also has solidified its political ties with Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq and other leading Arab oil exporters. One of the more dramatic buildings in downtown Caracas is the 370-foot-high Ibrahim bin Abdul-Aziz mosque, a gift from Saudi Arabia.

At the same time, Chavez has downgraded his country's ties with Israel.

During the Second Lebanon War in 2006, Chavez recalled the charge d'affaires of the Venezuelan Embassy in Tel Aviv. Venezuela was the only country to take such a drastic step; not even Egypt or Jordan withdrew their ambassadors.

"Israel after a while had no choice but to take back its ambassador, too," said Rabbi Pynchas Brenner of the Unión Israelita synagogue in Caracas. "They now have relations again, but there is no Venezuelan ambassador in Tel Aviv. Relations are in the freezer."

Indeed, the issue of Israel's ties with Venezuela is so sensitive that the Israeli Embassy in Caracas refuses to discuss the subject.

"For the time being, I can't give you any comment," the embassy's second secretary, Eldad Golan, told JTA.

Golan was willing to confirm only that the two countries still have diplomatic ties and that Shlomo Cohen is still Israel's ambassador in Caracas.

The Chavez government's cultivation of close ties with Ahmadinejad and simultaneous marginalization of Israel has frightened Venezuela's estimated

12,000 Jews.

"Should anything happen to Iran, such as an attack by the U.S. or Israel, I think there would be repercussions against the Jewish community here in Venezuela," said one local Jewish leader who asked not to be identified. "You'd have hordes of people throwing stones and God knows what."

Venezuela long has been suspected of harboring Hezbollah terrorists, especially in the remote region of La Guaira, near the Colombian border, and on the duty-free tourist resort of Isla Margarita, home to a large Lebanese Shi'ite minority.

Ely Karmon, the director of the Institute for Counter-Terrorism in Herzliya, Israel, said recently that a relatively new organization, Hezbollah Latin America, has opened a clandestine office in Caracas to raise money to finance terrorist activities against Jewish targets throughout Latin America.

Iran's alleged involvement in terrorist attacks hasn't dampened Chavez's enthusiasm for friendship with Tehran — even to the point of trying to impede Argentina's probe into the 1994 bombing of the AMIA Jewish community center, which killed 85. Hezbollah agents acting on Iran's behalf are widely believed to have been behind the attack.

With the U.S. government viewing Chavez as public enemy number 1 in Latin America, and Chavez seeing the United States similarly — he called President Bush the devil at the United Nations in New York — the question is what influence the United States can have to rein in Latin America's most vexing leader.

Larry Birns, director of the Council on Hemispheric Affairs, says the United States should look to Venezuela's neighbours.

"The question is how will the United States handle the ring of small planets around Venezuela, like Bolivia, Ecuador and so forth," he said. "The U.S. does not have an alliance potential in South America to buttress its offensive against Venezuela."

Perhaps realizing that concern, the Bush administration recently created a "mission manager" to share intelligence on Venezuela and Cuba. The administration has five other mission managers: on North Korea, Iran, counterterrorism, counter-proliferation and counterintelligence.



Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez



Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

Arts & Travel

Nina's Home confronts emotional fallout of Holocaust

By **SHELDON KIRSHNER**
Staff Reporter

Richard Dembo's French language movie, *Nina's Home*, or *La Maison de Nina*, kicks off the Toronto Jewish Film Society's 2008 season.

The feature film, released in 2005, will be screened at the Al Green Theatre at the Miles Nadal JCC on Jan. 27. There will be two screenings, at 4 p.m. and at 7:30 p.m.

Set outside Paris shortly after the liberation of France in the summer of 1944, *Nina's Home* unfolds in the House of Hope, one of the residences established by the French government for Jewish children who survived the Holocaust in hiding.

The residence is named after Nina, a survivor whose parents were deported from Salonika, Greece, in 1943.

Nina is portrayed by Agnes Jaoui, a

Tunisian Jewish actress who brings warmth and intensity to the role.

The film opens as a brother and sister, Georges and Sylvie, make their way to the House of Hope, located in a clearing in a forest.

Film set outside Paris after liberation

They are picked up by a gardener who works for Nina, a rough-hewn man who spews out a stream of veiled anti-Semitic comments.

Presumably, his insensitive and inappropriate remarks are meant to convey the impression that the Nazis found fertile ground in France

for their racist ideas.

Nina is depicted as a capable and resourceful person, managing the residence with a deft hand and, when necessary, cadging food supplies from the American army.

And as hardened as she is, she flinches when she watches film clips of Nazi atrocities.

Life at the residence is quite serene and ordered, but when a group of young men arrive from the Buchenwald concentration camp in Germany, peering like aliens from the train, Nina suddenly finds herself at a loss.

The men are a disruptive influence, getting into fights with the French secular Jewish residents and demanding kosher food.

Dembo flits from gloom to glee. A boy is reunited with his father,

only to be told that his mother was murdered in Auschwitz. The heavy atmosphere is soon dispelled when Nina buys a milking cow for the nutritional needs of her charges.

The film tilts at seemingly sacred cows. The prospect of settling in Palestine is a source of consolation for one young man, but his girlfriend scuppers the idea.

"Pea farming in the desert is not for me," she says sarcastically.

The boys learn Jewish prayers, but one skeptic wonders why prayer is needed after

Auschwitz.

Georges and Sylvie, the pair who appear in the first minutes of the film, subsequently learn that their father, a soldier in the French army, was heroically killed in action.

He is posthumously awarded a medal at a brief ceremony they attend. But for Georges and Sylvie, it's a bittersweet moment.

Nina's Home is that kind of a film, alternately hopeful and depressing, reflecting the temper of its times.



Nina's Home reflects the temper of its times.



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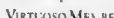
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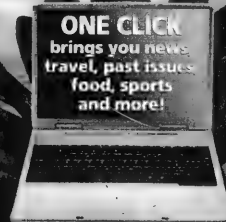
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Arts & Travel

Film looks at Nazi looting and destruction of Europe's art

By JOSEPH SERGE
Arts Editor

Last month, a Rhode Island federal court ruled that the forced sale of art by Jews in Nazi Germany was equal to theft.

Last September, a Montreal man claimed ownership of a Gustav Klimt painting he says was stolen from his Austrian grandmother during the Holocaust.

In the Netherlands, the daughter of a Jewish art dealer, Nathan Katz, is claiming 17th-century works owned by Dutch state museums, which she says were stolen by the Nazis.

These news headlines make the documentary *The Rape of Europe*, running at the Bloor Cinema in Toronto from Jan. 25 to 31, highly topical (bloorcinema.com).

The Rape of Europe tells the story of the systematic theft, plunder and destruction of Europe's art and culture during the 12 years of Nazi rule.



American GIs prepare to return Leonardo da Vinci's *Lady with an Ermine* to the Czartoryski Museum in Cracow, Poland, from which it had been stolen by the Nazis.

It had always been Hitler's dream to create a great art museum in Linz, Austria, as a monument to his legacy. To do this, Hitler set out to obtain - by purchase or plunder - the greatest art treasures of Europe.

Soon, art collecting became the main hobby of the Nazi elite. Advancing Allied soldiers in 1945 found more than 20,000 art works belonging to Hitler's second-in-command, Hermann Goering.

Organized looting from Jewish households by the Nazis began in earnest with the annexation of Austria in 1938. As Hitler's troops advanced across Europe, the works of the masters, including Leonardo da Vinci, Rembrandt and Rafael, were removed from galleries and private collections and shipped to Germany.

In France, the amount of artwork confiscated from Jewish-owned collections and galleries was so vast, they had to be stored in the Musée Jeu de Paume, used solely for this purpose.

Nazi plunder was not discriminating. Everything was taken - good, bad, valuable and worthless. Paintings, sculptures, furniture, china, Judaica. Nothing was left behind.

It is estimated that 22,000 pieces of art were shipped

from France to Germany. Concentration camp inmates with knowledge of art were used to sort through the huge piles. Goering is said to have taken 700 artworks from France for his opulent hunting lodge outside Berlin.

The plunder of cultural property was conducted in a systematic manner. In typical Nazi fashion, a department, the ERR, was set up to deal specifically with Jewish artwork collected in the occupied countries.

The advancing Soviet armies were not blameless. Trophy brigades were sent out to seek out art left behind by the retreating Nazis. Repatriation after the war stopped in the 1960s, and the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg recently admitted that 74 paintings looted from the Nazis' stash were in its possession.

Still holding a grudge, the Russian government ruled that captured German loot was considered Russian property.

Despite U.S. president Franklin D. Roosevelt's order to respect cultural and historic monuments, the advancing Americans were not blameless, either.

During their advance into Italy, the Allies were forced to destroy the ancient Monte Cassino Monastery, built in 592 CE.

The bombing of Florence was intentionally undertaken with extreme precision to avoid collateral damage to historic buildings. However, a similar bombing raid in nearby Pisa destroyed the Camposanto, a cemetery that dates back to the 12th century and contained hundreds of 14th-century frescoes. Restoration on this building and its frescoes is still underway.

Repatriation of stolen artwork is a complicated endeavour that is still going on today. Based on the book *The Rape of Europe* by Lynn H. Nicholas, this film, directed by Richard Berge, Bonni Cohen and Nicole Newnham, begins and ends with the story of Klimt's famed golden portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer, the wife of a wealthy Jewish Viennese sugar merchant, taken from Viennese Jews in 1938 and now the most expensive painting ever sold at \$135 million.

This film also examines the heroic deeds of the Louvre and Hermitage staff members to protect their priceless collections and the dedicated work of one curator in France who secretly catalogued all the looted work stored in the Musée Jeu de Paume storehouse.

The Rape of Europe, which was the closing film of last year's Toronto Jewish Film Festival, is short-listed for an Academy Award nomination. It is a fascinating and timely look at the deliberate looting and destruction of art and culture by Nazi Germany.

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Arts & Travel

Michael Holt's new album reflects his spiritual sensibilities

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Michael Holt took seven years to put together his latest album, *Windows*. But that's because he wanted it to be a thing of beauty, he said, something that would truly reflect where the artist's deep, spiritual sensibilities lay.

Anybody listening to the CD will likely agree it was worth the wait, and then some.

Holt, a former member of the popular U.S. indie group The Mommyheads, has crafted a sublime record that mixes his considerable talent and musical influences – including but not limited to the Beatles, Bob Dylan, Ravel, Inti Ilmiani, Ron Sexsmith and obscure Russian composer Alexander Scriabin – into a tasty, radio-friendly yet still challenging work.

Holt purposefully tried to meld classical and pop-rock forms together on the album and the outcome is inspiring – from the opening track, a gorgeous rendition of Scriabin's Prelude 15 for Piano that flows seamlessly into the plaintive Holt composition *Way Up Past* to the end tracks of the acoustic guitar ballad *Gold* and Holt's *Prelude for Sand*, a haunting composition for piano, cello and viola.

In between, Holt gives the listener some tongue-in-cheek fun with songs such as *All the Michaels in the World* – “it's about all the facets of myself who loved my wife,” he told *The CJN* – and *You Are Still Here For Me*, a pop ode to his dead grandparents and the happy childhood memories of time spent at his family's summer home in Cape Cod.

Much of the theme of the album deals with the ongoing separation between him and his wife of 11 years, Cora, a subject that is of deep concern and confusion to him.

“We still love each other, and we want to honour that love. I think people are able to be friends and feel love for their exes,” he said. “This album, lyrically, is about a marriage coming gracefully to a close. It's about asking what we all sometimes think, ‘Am I really into the person I'm with?’ [The song] *Gold* is about when we started seeing other people.”

Holt is the first to admit he's a man, and an artist in a state of reinvention,

finally finding his own true musical voice and more importantly, his true life.

“I had a near-death experience a couple of years ago that... made me ask, ‘Am I really living my life the way I want?’” he said. The answer was no.

Windows, he said, marks the beginning of his “real commitment to my own music. I concentrated on just making the album I wanted to make, sad and beautiful. I'm really into beautiful music right now.”

A native of New York City, Holt, who turns 40 this February, has called

to sleep when I was a toddler, making up my own melodies,” Holt said. “I started piano when I was three. But I'm mostly self-taught.”

Holt was also always interested in spirituality from an early age.

“I'm the first person in my family to believe in God,” he said.

While in college, Holt studied eastern religions and delved into Taoism and Buddhism. It's there, he said, that while experimenting with drugs, he had a revelatory moment where he discovered “the god within. The aspect of myself that is divine.”

But recently, after feeling overworked and stressed, Holt made a decision to observe Shabbat.

“I do it in my own way,” he said. “But I knew I needed to have dedicated down time. So I took Saturdays off. I didn't initially conceive it as the Sabbath. But that's what it's turned into. It's about the time to put aside the worldly concerns that keep your mind so occupied... and open up this space where you can appreciate life.”

Holt said plans are in the works for a Mommyheads reunion tour later this year. But for the time being, he's focusing on promoting his new solo effort.

While he continues to survive financially by giving private piano lessons, living off an inheritance from his grandparents and aggressively selling his CD on his seemingly relentless tour schedule, Holt's hoping to finally break out into the big time with *Windows*.

The album will be going out for distribution to CBC Radio soon, and with the added exposure, Holt hopes his music can reach a new audience.

“My goal is to get to a place where my music career can support itself, for it to become self-sustaining,” he said. “To be honest, I want more recognition. But in a more general sense I think the goal is to create more beauty and add it to the world.”

Mission accomplished.

New fans and old can catch Holt and his ensemble of 22 musicians at the launch concert for *Windows* on Jan. 25 at The Music Gallery, 197 John St., with opening act singer-songwriter Tanya Philipovich.

“It's gonna be an orchestral show. It'll be a lush ensemble... a fun, exciting extravaganza,” Holt said.

For more information, visit www.michaelholtmusic.com.



Michael Holt

Toronto home since 1999, when he moved there to accompany his Canuck wife back north after first meeting her while playing in Toronto on tour with the Mommyheads in 1991.

He comes from a family of Jewish, atheist, left-wing political advocates, he declares. His parents, grandparents and great-grandparents were all involved in the socialist movement, civil rights and union activity in the United States from the early days of the 20th century.

Though he didn't follow in the same political vein, Holt comes by his musical talent honestly. His mother was a folksinger/activist for a brief time, he said.

“I remember, I used to sing myself

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Arts & Travel



Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

ASHKENAZ FOUNDATION PRESENTS THEODORE BIKEL

Ashkenaz Foundation presents **Theodore Bikel** in his first Toronto appearance in more than 20 years. An icon of song, stage and screen, Bikel performs a mix of songs in Yiddish, Hebrew, Ladino, Russian and English. Bikel is backed by his long-time pianist and musical director, Tamara Brooks, as well as Toronto's own folk-roots fusion group Beyond the Pale.

Born in Vienna in 1924, Bikel's multi-faceted career began in Israel and in London. Featured in many films, television and stage productions, he originated the role of Baron Von Trapp in *The Sound of Music* on Broadway, and portrayed Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof* in more than 2,000 performances. He was also a renowned folk-singing troubadour who co-founded the Newport Folk Festival and was involved in the 1960s Greenwich Village folk scene.

Toronto Centre for the Arts, George Weston Recital Hall, 5040 Yonge St. \$45, \$60, \$75. Saturday, Feb. 2, 8 p.m. Ticketmaster, 416-872-1111 or www.ticketmaster.ca. For a patron package, phone 416-979-9901 or e-mail sam@ashkenazfestival.com. www.ashkenazfestival.com. Proceeds go to the Ashkenaz Festival and other Ashkenaz Foundation programming.

Poyln Book Launch: The Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation of Canada presents the first English edition of the Yiddish book *Poyln: My Life Within Jewish Life in Poland, Sketches and Images*, by **Yehiel Yeshua Trunk**. *Poyln* offers a moving portrait of Polish Jewry in the Nazi era.

The launch features **Prof. Piotr Wróbel**, co-editor of this new editorial series devoted to the history of Polish Jews, published by University of Toronto Press. Readings in English and Yiddish provided by **Rafal Sokolowski** and **Kalman Weiser** respectively, with klezmer music by **Jonno Lightstone**. Admission \$10, members and students \$7. George Ignatieff Theatre, University of Toronto, 15 Devonshire Pl. (south of Varsity Stadium). Sunday, Jan. 27, 7 p.m. www.pjhfToronto.ca

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Film on Nazi Art Theft: *The Rape of Europa*, Richard Berge's 2006 documentary (U.S.) with **Nicole Newnham** and **Bonni Cohen**, takes an in-depth look at the systematic theft and destruction of art at the hands of the Nazis, and the journey to rescue and retrieve these lost and missing treasures. The film spans seven countries and features interviews with experts, as well as rare archival footage.

The Rape of Europa is an epic chronicle that charts the 12-year attempt to eradicate the history of Jewish art and culture, and the efforts of monument officers from the U.S. army, archivists and art lovers to track down and return these stolen items to their rightful owners. Based on the acclaimed book by **Lynn H. Nicholas**. Opens at the Bloor Cinema, Jan. 25. 416-516-2331, www.bloorcinema.com

Israeli-Arab-Canadian Film: Canadian Friends of Peace Now presents the Israeli film, *Mashallah* (Hebrew and Arabic with English subtitles). Israeli cinematographer Eytan Harris' refined documentary unravels a complex story about murder driven by nationalism, so wittily that it almost seems a fascinating fictional feature. The organization also presents the Israeli-Palestinian-Canadian film group, *Voices Forward*. Sunday, Jan. 27, 4 p.m. Royal Theatre, 680 College St. \$5 or PWYC.

Names in the News: Five authors of non-fiction books have been selected as finalists for the Sami Rohr Prize for Jewish Literature.

Administered by the U.S.-based Jewish Book Council, the \$100,000 prize is the largest of its kind in the Jewish literary world and honours an emerging author in the field of Jewish literature who has written a book of exceptional literary merit. Last year's winner was **Tamar Yellin** for her novel, *The Genezah at the House of Shepherd*. (The prize is awarded to fiction and non-fiction works in alternating years.)

Current finalists are **Ilaana M. Blumberg** for *Houses of Study: A Jewish Woman Among Books*; **Eric L. Goldstein** for *The Price of Whiteness: Jews, Race and American Identity*; **Lucette Lagnado** for *The Man in the White Sharkskin Suit*.



Theodore Bikel

My Family's Exodus from Old Cairo to the New World; **Michael Makovsky** for *Churchill's Promised Land: Zionism and Statecraft*; and **Haim Watzman** for *A Crack in the Earth: A Journey Up Israel's Rift Valley*.

Arts in Brief

- **Amy Sky** performs with pianist **Stephan Moccio** in Hamner Hall, the Living Arts Centre, Mississauga. Tickets \$29 & up; dinner and show packages for two, \$180. Saturday, Jan. 26, 8 p.m.
- Toronto Jewish Film Society presents *Nina's Home*. The powerful fact-based drama features **Agnes Jaoui** as Nina, the head of one of the "houses of hope," established by the French government to shelter Jewish children after the Holocaust. Introduced by **Marcelle Lean**, director of programming, Cine Franco. Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, Al Green Theatre. Sunday, Jan. 27, 4 and 7:30 p.m. Rush seats on sale 15 minutes before screenings, \$15. Ages 18 to 29, \$10 for 7:30 screening only.
- A group theatre and dinner excursion has been arranged to see two short plays – *The Russian Play* and *Essay* – by **Hannah Moscovitch**. Factory Theatre, Tuesday, Feb. 5. Purchase tickets by Jan. 31 from the Miles Nadal JCC front desk. \$23 (dinner not included). 416-924-6211, ext. 0
- Encore Entertainment presents the Pulitzer Prize-winning play, *Driving Miss Daisy*, by **Alfred Uhry**. A rich, cantankerous and fiercely independent Jewish widow is forced by her son to hire a chauffeur, Hoke, whom she initially disdains; their evolving friendship is at the heart of this warm comic drama. \$27.50-\$26. Toronto Centre for the Arts, Jan. 31 to Feb. 10. 416-733-0558, www.encoreshows.com
- The New York City-based band **Out to Lunch** – whose front man, **David Levy**, emerged from the "funk scenes of Toronto and Montreal" – is touring locally to promote its CD, *Excuse Me While I Do the Boogaloo*. The band performs in Ottawa's Mercury Lounge on Jan. 31; Toronto's Drake Hotel on Feb. 1; Hamilton's Casbah on Feb. 2; Montreal's Le Divan Orange on Feb. 3; and Stayner's in Halifax, Feb. 5.
- *Rain – the Beatles Experience* recalls the "Fab Four" with video projections, period costumes, precise characterizations, chronological reminiscences and, of course, live performance of beloved tunes from *She Loves You* to *Hey Jude*, and more. \$35-\$75. Sony Centre for the Performing Arts, Jan. 29 to Feb. 3. 416-870-8000, www.ticketmaster.ca

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Arts & Travel

Mezzo-soprano bypasses academia for music career

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

When Lauren Segal was nearing the completion of her master's degree, she needed to make a rather unique decision about which career path to pursue.

She could remain in academia and earn a PhD in physics. Or she could parlay her beautiful mezzo-soprano voice into a life of opera and classical music.

Fortunately for audiences, she chose the latter.

"I definitely love physics – it's fascinating," said Segal.

"But I was pulled towards music, because I have so much love and passion for it."

Segal will be showcasing her talents in the upcoming Canadian Opera Company (COC) production of *From the House of the Dead*, a powerful drama based on a Fyodor Dostoyevsky novel, which he wrote from his own experiences in a Siberian pris-

The opera runs from Feb. 2 to 22 at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts in Toronto.

In the deeply emotional production, Segal plays the part of Aljeja, an innocent boy who, like many of his fellow prisoners, creates diversions to cope with the desolate conditions in which he is confined.

"The character I play represents hope and beauty, so it has been interesting to try and find the balance between the oppression he faces, along with all of the hope," Segal said. "I am one of the only women in the story, so it has been exciting to adapt masculine traits for my character."

Segal recently graduated from the COC Ensemble Studio.

**Lauren Segal**

a dynamic training program for young opera professionals that provides advanced instruction, hands-on experience and career development opportunities.

She was one of several hundred people to audition for only a handful of spots in the program.

"It has been an incredible training experience," Segal enthused.

"It's very intense with coaching for vocals, acting, diction and dancing."

Born in Johannesburg, South Africa, Segal came to Canada when she was 10 and started singing while she was an elementary school student.

She didn't start studying classical music until she was in university, but as she began her formal training, she demonstrated a clear penchant for it.

She is the winner of two Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions Encouragement Awards.

"Winning those awards was great encouragement for me," Segal said. "I am heading in the right direction."

"It showed me that I am heading in the right direction."

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Muslim beauty queen plays Anne Frank in Frankfurt

JTA

FRANKFURT — A Muslim former beauty queen is playing Anne Frank in a new stage production in Germany.

Asli Bayram, a daughter of Turkish immigrants who won Germany's national beauty pageant in 2005, has since turned to acting and plays Anne Frank in a one-woman show that opened this week in Frankfurt.

According to the Israeli newspaper *Yediot Achronot*, the tale of the Jewish teenager who documented her family's doomed efforts to hide from the Nazis during World War II holds special resonance for Bayram. Her father was shot dead by a German right-wing extremist when she was 14, an attack that she witnessed and which left her seriously wounded.

"By means of my work I want to prevent such terrible things, and to act against extremist ideology," *Yediot* quoted Bayram, now 26 and a law-school graduate, as saying.

"People must always be reminded that they have to keep an eye on what goes on around them, to prevent such phenomena," she added.

Bayram's portrayal of Anne Frank has been received warmly by Germany's Jewish community as well as professional drama critics, *Yediot* reported.

Recently, Segal appeared with the COC as part of the Opera Under the Stars Concert in Ottawa and made her main-stage debut as *Siébel* in *Faust*.

Recent concert performances include Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Bruckner's Mass in F minor and Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass*.

As for the future, this budding star wants to stay the course.

"Being happy and supporting myself through music, here in Toronto, is what I enjoy," she said.

"As long as I continue to enjoy this, I will keep doing it." For tickets to *From the House of the Dead*, log onto

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Books & Authors

Commentary magazine forged a niche for itself in American letters

Commentary Magazine 1945-59, by Nathan Abrams, published by Vallentine Mitchell.

By **SHELDON KIRSHNER**
Staff Reporter

It is quite a claim, but a plausible one nonetheless. According to The Andrea and Charles Bronfman Center for the Media of the Jewish People, *Commentary*, a monthly journal published in New York City, has been the "most influential" Jewish publication since the appearance of the first Jewish newspaper in Amsterdam in the 17th century.

Nathan Abrams, the author of *Commentary Magazine 1945-59*, almost agrees with that assessment, allowing that it was "one of the most influential" magazines of our times during that period.

Although its circulation was relatively limited, *Commentary* was a "must read" for American conservatives, often sharpening the national debate on a wide array of political and cultural issues. *Commentary* was also a voice for many young and upcoming writers and intellectuals, ranging from Philip Roth and James Baldwin to Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Irving Howe.

Widely considered a beacon of the neo-conservative movement, *Commentary* was immensely influential, far surpassing smaller periodicals such as *Partisan Review* and *Dissent*.

Yet strangely enough, as Abrams—a British academic—points out, it has never been the object of a monograph or book, at least until now. With this meticulously researched and felicitously written volume, the gap has been admirably filled.

Commentary's guiding spirit was its first editor, Elliot Etelson Cohen, who was born in Iowa in 1899 and raised in Mobile, Ala., the son of a small dry goods merchant.

The youngest freshman in Yale University's history, Cohen

majoring in psychology and philosophy. As an undergraduate, he joined the Menorah Society, an association of intercollegiate clubs for Jewish university students formed in 1906 in reaction to anti-Semitism. Burning with a passion for writing, he edited the *Menorah Journal*, which, as Abrams observes, he fashioned into the template of *Commentary*.



Norman Podhoretz, a former *Commentary* editor



Elliot Cohen, *Commentary's* first editor

Cohen also had his heart set on being a professor of English at Yale, but his hopes were dashed when one of his teachers told him, "Mr. Cohen, you are a very competent young man, but it is hard for me to imagine a Hebrew teaching... at Yale." Having been rejected, he turned to literary journalism as a freelance writer.

A liberal, Cohen became a Marxist and a Trotskyist during the Depression, joining a host of Communist-front organizations. But for reasons cited by Abrams, he moved away from communism, finding lifelong salvation in true-blue conservatism.

In 1934, with his wife pregnant with their first child, Cohen took a position as director of public information of the New York Federation of Jewish Philanthropies. He disliked the job, but it enabled him to form relationships that would be of use to him later in his career.

A monthly, *Commentary* was founded by the American Jewish Committee (AJC), a major organization that was established earlier in the century to counter anti-Semitism and fight for the rights of Jews. The AJC envisaged a magazine of the highest quality whose content would range from the universal to the Jewish.

Cohen was hired in December 1944, taking a pay cut to be its founding editor. Several months later, he brought out the inaugural edition, which featured articles on, among other topics, the prospects for rebuilding Jewish communities in war-ravaged Europe, the new United Nations, the decline of the American theatre, the recent British elections and

anti-Jewish demagogues in the United States.

The articles, studies in universalism, were written by such luminaries as the historian Salo Baron and the art critic Harold Rosenberg. They were heavily edited, by Cohen, who was determined to avoid parochialism.

Although he was primarily concerned with politics, Cohen felt he had a responsibility to publish features on the general state of culture, as well as short stories by such emerging voices as Isaac Bashevis Singer and Saul Bellow.

Unlike many of his contemporaries, he was intensely interested in the Holocaust, a subject generally downplayed before 1960. And so *Commentary* was the first U.S. magazine to print excerpts from *The Diary of Anne Frank*.

A byproduct of Cohen's interest in the Holocaust was his fixation with American anti-Semitism and race hatred. This, in turn, engaged him in the African-American struggle for civil rights. In this respect, Cohen was following the lead of the AJC, which believed that Jewish rights could only be protected when the rights of all other citizens were defended.

With the passage of time, however, *Commentary*, strangely enough, began to link the civil rights struggle with communism.

Cohen's anti-communism reached "obsessive levels," Abrams notes. He considered it his prime obligation to expose what he thought was the greatest threat to human freedom—totalitarian communism. To him, the Soviet Union was as evil as Nazi Germany. Only U.S. military might could stop the tide of communism. Almost every article in *Commentary* "was refracted through the prism of the Cold War," and ironically, Cohen marginalized writers who dissented from his view.

Cohen promoted a bolder concept of Jewishness. As Abrams puts it, "Cohen did not want a culture born of apologetics, separatism or mediocrity... He rejected defensiveness and victim status [and] called for a positive approach to Jewish history."

Since Cohen was not a Zionist, *Commentary's* early coverage of Zionism was distant and even embarrassed. But after the proclamation of Israeli statehood, his attitude mellowed and his editorial direction changed.

He now carried more articles on Zionism and Israel and argued that the Jewish state was essential in the U.S. campaign to contain Soviet expansionism in the Middle East, and that the United States should be more supportive of Israel.

Its focus on the Holocaust notwithstanding, *Commentary* supported West Germany's integration into the western alliance. Cohen believed that "the future of western democratic civilization" rested on the new Germany, and that Jews should be "realistic" about it. Abrams has no problem with Cohen's position, but claims that *Commentary* tended to be "apologetic" when reporting on outbursts of anti-Semitism in West Germany and public approval of the return of former Nazis or collaborators to influential jobs.

By 1951, *Commentary's* circulation had risen to 20,000 from 4,000 in 1945. (It stands at 27,000 today.) Abrams says that Cohen's "blend of cosmopolitanism, cultural sophistication, anti-communism, energy and open Jewishness" was appealing.

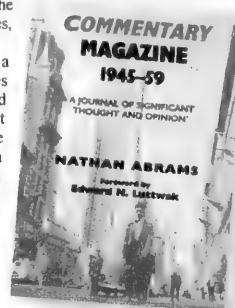
Time, in a glowing piece, described it as "one of the best magazines in the United States," and the *New York Post* opined that, in anyone else's hands, it "might have become just one more of the tediously sectarian magazines which are produced in the hundreds."

Yet, as the 1950s wore on, *Commentary* lost its impetus and readership dwindled, due in part to its "boring predictability," Abrams writes.

Cohen, who had always suffered from depression and would ultimately commit suicide, was hospitalized in 1956, and a bruising succession struggle ensued.

Norman Podhoretz, a young scholar of English literature from Brooklyn whom *Commentary* discovered in 1952, replaced Cohen and reigned supreme until his retirement in 1995.

Podhoretz—whose son, John, will succeed incumbent Neal Kozodoy as editor next year—abandoned Cohen's hardline anti-communism, but eventually, *Commentary* became a bastion of neo-conservatism, thus coming full circle.



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Sports & Leisure

East Coast Hockey League all-stars set sights high

By **PAUL LUNGEN**
Staff Reporter

We all know about the well-trodden path young hockey players whose last name isn't Crosby take to the National Hockey League. First, have a good junior or college career, then get drafted, attend camp, get sent back to junior or the American Hockey League, work hard, turn some heads and hope for a call-up.

Simple enough, if not particularly easy. But for those who never get drafted? It gets even harder as the odysseys of two young players, one from Toronto, the other from Winnipeg, attest.

Oren Eizenman, the Toronto native, and Jacob Micflikier, the Winnipegger, started the season in the East Coast Hockey League (ECHL) - the "AA" circuit that used to be known for bench-clearing brawls and as the last stop for players past their "best by" date.

So far this season, both skaters have impressed in the ECHL - which today is known as a development league and a feeder for the AHL and the NHL - and both were rookie selections to the league's all-star game. Eizenman, who plays for the Fresno Falcons, was named to the National Conference team in the Jan. 23 game, but Micflikier, with the Stockton Thunder, will have to sit this one out. He was sent home to Winnipeg for a couple of weeks to recover from a broken leg and torn ligaments suffered during a call-up to the Springfield Falcons, an Edmonton Oilers affiliate located just west of Boston.

Micflikier, 23, a left-winger, got into one game, showed lots of energy on the forecheck and was practising with the team the next day when he caught his skate in a rut, fracturing his fibula and rupturing the deltoid ligament in his ankle.

He hopes to play later this season, but he's not sure whether he'll resume where he left off or be forced back to the ECHL and asked to prove himself all over again. Before his call-up on Dec. 27, Micflikier scored 10 goals and added 23 assists in 27 games with the Thunder, leaving him 18th in league scoring.

"I consider myself a playmaker," he said on the line from Winnipeg. "I try to create opportunities out there and use my quickness to get to the puck and create chances for my linemates."

At only five-foot-eight and 180 pounds, he knows he's small by pro standards and so he's added a little aggression to his skill set. He'll mix it up in the corners and go to the net - a style expected of much larger players. "I've made that part of my game. That way, coaches won't see my size as a liability," he said.

In his one game with Springfield this season, he started on the second line, but also skated on the power play and was given plenty of ice time. After the game, he was told by his coaches they were impressed with his efforts, but the next day, during practice, his skate caught in a rut in front of the net.

After a visit with family in Winnipeg, he'll return to Springfield, where the team's medical staff will design a rehab program for him. He hopes to get into some games at the end of the season as he did last year, when he joined Springfield for nine games to close out the campaign. Micflikier, who played for four years with New Hampshire Wild Cats of the NCAA, scored three goals and added one assist in that span and impressed enough to be offered a contract with the team's affiliate in Stockton.

Eizenman, a centre, also has an NCAA pedigree, playing with RPI Engineers for four years, while adding stunts with the Israeli national team at tournament time. He was named to the all-rookie Eastern College Athletic Conference (a division in the NCAA) team and scored 99 points in 129 games for the Engineers. He was never drafted and signed a free-agent contract with Fresno, an unaffiliated ECHL franchise.

Continued on page 62

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Winnipeg skater injured during call-up to AHL



Jacob Mieflikier

Continued from page 61

In 33 games with the Falcons, Eizenman had 19 goals and 19 assists, to place him 15th in league scoring. He was also named rookie of the month for December, during which he scored 16 points.

Contacted at his home in Fresno, Eizenman said playing in the NHL is still his goal. It's one shared by many in the ECHL, and the league touts the fact that over the past 20 years 341 of its players have gone on to play in the NHL.

To join those illustrious alumni, Eizenman, 22, knows he has to play well and turn some heads.

Eizenman's coach thinks quite highly of his player. Matt Thomas, who hails from Mississauga, said Eizenman is "a very good player" who surprised him a little by showing early on that he's also "an impact player."

"One thing that separates him from other players is that he has a very good head on his shoulder. Others come out of big-time college and think they should be an NHLer. As much as Oren thinks that's true, he knows he has to prove himself."

On the ice, Eizenman has lots of speed, good vision, makes accurate passes and knows what's going on around him, Thomas said. "What separates him is that he truly understands what he needs to do to get better. He knows he has to go out and earn the opportunity" of playing in the NHL.

Thomas believes Eizenman should continue to improve and will eventually get

noticed by one of the big clubs. He might even get called up early this year for a look by an AHL team.

That would suit Eizenman fine and would be a welcome stepping-stone en route to the NHL. "It's definitely a goal for anyone playing at the ECHL or the AHL level. To work your self up and get as high as you can get," he said.

Canada wins 14 medals at Pan Am Maccabi Games

By DORIS STRUB EPSTEIN
Special to The CJN

Canadian athletes are home from the 11th Pan Am Maccabi Games, held in Argentina last month, with one gold, five silver and eight bronze medals. Canada fielded its largest ever delegation to the games, 170 people, said Maccabi Canada President Allen Gerskup.

Leading the Canadian contingent at the opening night ceremonies in Buenos Aires was flag bearer Marnie Krell of Calgary.

"It was absolutely amazing — fireworks, music, dancing in an amphitheatre, an outdoor setting with 15,000 spectators cheering us in," said Gerskup. "[It was] so emotional, many were in tears including me."

Twenty countries, mostly Latin American were represented. In all, there were 5,000 participants.

"Our delegation was small by comparison," said Gerskup, "but we felt important. We are such a distance away that we were looked at as kind of exotic. Everyone wanted a piece of our clothing — anything with Canada on it."

"It was cool to see a different country and especially to meet Jewish kids from all over the world," said 16-year-old Robbie Epstein. "I felt so proud to represent Canada. We [the boys' youth basketball team] won the silver medal, but I was disappointed because we were so close to winning the gold. I'm hoping to make the team for Israel in 2009."

David Goldstein, 40, catcher for the gold-medal master's softball team, is still reveling in the experience. "It was my first time and an amazing experience, especially at my age. I

thought this could only happen to the young."

All Maccabi Canada participants, including the coaches, were volunteers. The organization is entirely self-funded and receives no financial assistance from any organization. It relied on individuals such as Robert Lantos, Gerald Schwartz and Ned Goodman for support, said Gerskup.

"But never has any kid been denied the chance to play because of money," he declared. "Somehow we find the money."

"Our guys played their hearts out, each and every game," said Michael Epstein, coach of the youth basketball team. "The Maccabi experience was outstanding. What could be better than playing basketball in an international forum with Judaism as the common bond amongst everyone?"

Regional Maccabi Games are held every four years in South America, Europe, and Australia. The largest and most exciting of the international events is the Maccabiah Games, which are held in Israel. The next Maccabiah will take place in July 2009.

"My goal is to bring more people into the organization," said Gerskup. "Sports is the vehicle, and through it comes pride in Jewish identity and a living connection with Israel. Canada will always participate in the Maccabi Games."

Athletes and teams who won medals include:

- Gold (1): masters mens' softball.
- Silver (5): youth boys' basketball (ages 13-14); youth boys' basketball (ages 15-16); Todd Phillips, Toronto, masters swimming, 100-metre freestyle and 50-metre breaststroke; David Grossman, Thornhill, swimming, 100-metre backstroke.
- Bronze (8): gymnastics, Sarah Vizel, Brantford/Dallas; beach volleyball, Marnie Krell, Calgary; chess, Harris Kaufman, Toronto; swimming, Todd Phillips, Toronto, 50-metre freestyle; tennis, Monika and Mike Yuval, Montreal, masters mixed doubles; junior boys' basketball team.

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Why buy when I can rent?

To buy or to rent – that seems to be the question on everyone's minds these days.

For me, it's a no-brainer. If I rent, I get to live where I want. If I buy, chances are I'd have to live on a farm in rural Ontario where the land is cheap and modern-day luxuries are nothing but an urban myth.

The smartest decision, of course, would be to take advantage of my parents' big hearts and scrimp and save until I can buy something tiny to call my own.

But I've always been impatient, and right now, I can't help but feel that buying is more trouble than it's worth.

After all, if I am to enjoy the twenty-something single life, do I really need to be burdened with property taxes and home repairs?

Renting rid me of most responsibilities while allowing me the benefit of living in the community of my choice.

It also allows me to put off the future for just a little while longer.

Buying a house comes with an expectation that I should fill it with a cute husband and even cuter kids.

Sure, a condo is always an option, but then it becomes a matter of "accepting" rather than "expecting."

You might expect to fill a house one day, but buying a condo might make me feel like I accept the fact that I might be single for a long, long while.

It's a silly way to rationalize things, I must admit, but something tells me I shouldn't tempt fate.

I look at many of my friends who have been in home-buying mode lately, and almost all of them are thrilled when they tell me about their purchase.

Still, I can't help but think of one friend who called me and sounded extremely dejected.

"Hi, I'm moving to Barrie," she said.

It turns out she was moving to Richmond Hill, but to this urbanite, it might as well have been Orillia or some other quiet town up north.

When I asked her why she was settling for something so far away, she said, "Because it's a good investment?"

I could tell the phrase was meant as a statement of fact rather than as a question, so I let it go.

Another friend of mine said that while she had to sacrifice location, it was well worth it to satisfy her expensive tastes.

"In our case, we can't even afford a crappy house south of Steeles Avenue," she said.

"Young couples are craving new homes with all the upgrades – hardwood, staircases, the whole shebang. That can only happen north of Steeles at this point in time, so we say OK and play in our new lovely homes up near the North Pole!"

I don't think she minds too much, though.

When I asked her when she was coming down to see my new pad on Bloor Street, she told me she'd visit when her newborn daughter goes out on her first date – in 25 years.

I guess for some people, suburbia has more appeal than the downtown life.

Choosing to rent does make me feel like I'm quite a few steps behind my more mature friends who are investing in their future, rather than a fleeting good time.

On the other hand, I feel pretty lucky to be able to enjoy my fast-paced lifestyle for at least a few more years.

I don't doubt there will be a time when I will want to exchange the city's bright lights for the lights coming out of the new 24-hour Wal-Mart.

But for now, I think I'll bask in my youth for just a little while longer.

Sandie Benitah

20 Something



NO-BAKE PEANUT BUTTER-TOBLERONE CHEESECAKE

Ingredients

- 1 1/4 cups **Oreo** Baking Crumbs
- 1/4 butter, melted
- 2 pkg. (250 g each) **Brick Cream** Cheese, softened
- 1 c. **Smooth Peanut Butter**
- 1 c. sugar
- 2 bars (100 g each) **Toblerone** Swiss Milk Chocolate, chopped, divided
- 1 1/2 cups thawed **Whipped Topping**, divided

Directions

MIX crumbs and butter; press firmly onto bottom of 9" spring-form pan. Refrigerate 10 min. **BEAT** cream cheese, peanut butter & sugar on medium speed until well blended. Stir half of chocolate into cream cheese mixture. Gently stir in 1 c. whipped topping. Spoon over crust. Refrigerate 3 hrs. **MICROWAVE** remaining 1/2 c. whipped topping & chocolate in small microwavable bowl on HIGH 1 minute; cool slightly. Pour over cake. Refrigerate until ready to serve.



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Dear Ella,

It's another new year, and once again my husband has made a useless resolution that I know he'll never keep. Sure, I smile and say, "Good for you, dear" and I try to appear supportive, but I know inevitably that his resolve will only last a month or two before it fades away.

Every year we go through this, and every year I play along. The reason I play along is because Marty's resolutions are my resolutions. If he wants to lose weight, I do, too. If he wants to exercise

more, I do, too. If he wants to tighten up the spending, I do, too. You get the picture, right? He can't make a commitment on his own. He has to take me with him for the miserable ride, and every year I play this game, but it's getting old and boring, and I hate being set up for failure. How do I get out of this gently? I don't want to discourage him from trying. I just don't want to be part of it.

Resolution Rescue

Dear Resolution Rescue

It's very commendable for you to have joined your husband in his resolutions year after year, but it's not necessarily helpful. Marty is coming from the mindset of "there is strength in numbers" or "misery loves company" – I'm not sure which one. He obviously needs support to make his commitments work, and who better to support him than his spouse?

That being said, a resolution that has any chance of working

needs thought, planning and preparation. You can't just jump on the resolution bandwagon and expect to be successful.

If Marty is really serious about his resolutions, he can certainly get support from someone who is experienced and trained to give it. If it's weight loss, he can join a weight loss group, or if he needs one-on-one attention, he should try a dietician. If it's exercise, he can join a fitness club where he will meet people who are serious about achieving the same type of goals.

As his spouse, you can support him by encouraging him and cheering him on at every little successful step along the way. By doing this, he has your support without you actually having to go along for the ride. Perhaps you may even benefit without officially joining his cause.

May you both have a successful year in whatever you do.

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN, email: eb@cjnews.com. But Ella is not a professional counsellor. She brings to the questions posed by readers her unique brand of earthly wisdom. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional.

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

The sage Nachmanides described as an inverted bow the rainbow that God placed in the sky to express God's covenant with Noah: "[God] had not made the rainbow with its feet bent upward because it might have appeared that arrows were being shot from heaven... It is indeed the way of warriors to invert the instruments of war which they hold in their hands when calling for peace."

Your child may feel fear in the presence of a stranger and cry uncontrollably. The tears pour out of her eyes. Your heart crumbles. You feel compelled to wrap your entire being around his little body and protect him through the same powerful inner force that allows a terrified mother to lift a car off her baby.

We, the Jewish people, are painfully aware of the importance of ensuring our children are safe. We are because the reality that 1.2 million of our children were murdered in the Holocaust

A piercingly loud peace

caust stabs wildly at our soul. Our consciousness seems to be raised to higher levels and the fear we harbour for the safety of our people is greater when the issue at hand is children.

But our responsibility to protect our little ones must not only be directed toward our own progeny. We must also take care of those living up the street and others living in countries far enough away that they seem unreal. Consider the following and understand why we are responsible for the children.

According to UNICEF, in the past 20 years, children under 16 have fought in at least 16 wars in 25 countries. In the last decade, two million children have lost their lives because of war.

Armies and soldiers care little about the ages of their enemy. It is standard practice to torture children as part of collective punishment for communities or as a way of extract-

ing information about others. Torturing children! I can think of nothing more inhumane.

Children are frequently tortured for entertainment's sake. They are often forced to kill a sibling. My breath is short as I write this.

Women and girls are regularly sexually abused and raped in war zones. In Bosnia, Herzegovina and Croatia, it was policy to rape teenage girls and force them to give birth to "the enemy's" children. In Rwanda, almost every young girl who survived an attack by the militia was raped. Many became pregnant. Many were ostracized by their families. Many abandoned their babies. Some of them committed suicide.

When atrocities such as these are committed against children, Jew and non-Jews together must create a vibrant movement in the world called peace. It must be loud enough to permeate the spirits of everyone who has the ability to make peace. We must take care of all the world's children

It is not enough to be quiet role models for goodness. We must wade out into the world and convert those who will listen and act on our ability to be peaceful. The motivation for such an aggressive pursuit of peace must be the reality that two million children are dead because of war.

We cannot live in such a criminal world! Of course, we must arm ourselves with weapons and fight wars when called upon to do so. But we must always fight on a second front as well – that of respect, understanding and decency toward others. The children of the world cry out to us. Imagine their terror.

It is time we create an aggressive movement centred on the universal idea of loving your fellow human beings as yourself. An honest and wisely thought out movement for peace is good for the Jews. It is paramount for our world.

Remember your children when they wince in fear.

Discuss this article at <http://avrumroSENSWEIGideas.blogspot.com> or e-mail avrum@veahava.org. (Sderot/Datfur?)



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The News in Brief

CANADA

Hate Arrest Praised

REGINA — Canadian Jewish Congress lauded Regina police for laying hate charges last week against a man who was also fined in 2007 for posting hate online. Police charged Terrence Tremaine, 59, of Regina, with wilfully promoting hate after CJC and Ottawa lawyer Richard Warman made a complaint to police in 2006. CJC said. Police searched Tremaine's home last July.

The former University of Saskatchewan math teacher has been associated with the National Socialist Party of Canada, on whose website he allegedly made the postings, and was fined \$4,000 last year based on a human rights complaint from Warman. CJC co-president Sylvain Abitbol said that the postings blame Jews "for virtually all the ills that have beset the world in the last 200 years, from the founding of communism to the [Sept. 11] attack against the United States."

BB Teams With OU

TORONTO — B'nai Brith Canada will join a number of U.S. Jewish social service agencies in co-sponsoring a March 3 Orthodox Union webcast on "how to take an interview," the OU said last week. The webcast is a project of the Orthodox Union Job Board, which helps people find employment. An acting coach will help a live audience work on body language in order to learn "how to express confidence during the interview process," the OU said. It's the first in a series of workshops to be webcast at www.ou.org/jobs.

Israel Seeks Early Bonds Redemption

NEW YORK — The government of Israel is asking 144,000 holders of long-term Israel Bonds to voluntarily redeem the debt instruments early.

The move is part of an effort by Israel to replace its high-cost, long-term bonds with bonds that mature earlier. Israel Bonds no longer offers bonds with a maturity exceeding five years, and it has reduced the sale of bonds that defer interest payments until maturity.

In a statement, Israel Bonds spokesperson Raphael Rothstein said, "Israel's Finance Ministry recently adopted a debt management program aimed at ensuring continued economic strength. A key component is the reduction of long-term debt, including changing the structure of the country's debt portfolio to securities with shorter maturities and bonds paying interest on a current basis."

"A second element of the program is reducing the amount of bonds maturing in certain specific years in order to better balance its repayment obligations."

The goal is to retire \$500 million (US) in debt by Feb. 29 and improve Israel's credit rating, which would save as much as \$1 billion in annual interest charges, the New York Jewish Week reported. (Countries with better credit ratings can borrow at lower interest rates.)

Israel has given Israel Bonds a \$1-billion (US) goal for 2008, "a major responsibility underscoring the nation's ongoing reliance on Bonds funding," Rothstein said.

WORLD

Philly Shul Arson

PHILADELPHIA — A fire at a Philadelphia shul has been ruled an arson. The Jan. 18 blaze — started with rags, officials said — damaged a classroom in the Germantown Jewish Center. Firefighters kept the blaze from spreading. Swastikas were painted on the building two weeks earlier.

event, the black leader said those who fight for their own rights are only as honourable as when they fight for the rights of all. The Jan. 18 attack on Samuel Balkany, 16, is being probed as a hate crime. Balkany said five teens in Brooklyn's Crown Heights area kicked and punched him while yelling anti-Semitic slurs.

guilty to charges of anti-Semitic hate crimes. Police arrested Ivan Ivanov after finding weapons during a Jan. 20 search of his home. Ivanov, 37, who had been suspected of spray-painting anti-Semitic graffiti on houses, cars, playgrounds and two shuls in his area last fall, implicated himself during the search. After a judge set bail at \$150,000 and ordered the Bulgarian national to surrender his passport, his lawyer told reporters Ivanov is Jewish.

Beating Condemned

NEW YORK — Rev. Al Sharpton condemned the beating of a yeshiva student by five black teens. Speaking in Harlem at a Martin Luther King Day

Jewish Man A Suspect

NEW YORK — A Jewish Brooklyn man pleaded not

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Ve'ahavta helps solve ancient medical mystery

By **ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF**

Staff Reporter

The earliest recorded cases of what we now know was syphilis in the old world date to 1495 in Europe, when Columbus' men returned to Italy after their pioneering voyages to the New World.

Shortly thereafter, sex in Europe was never the same, as a new venereal disease laid waste to Renaissance Europe. Nobody knew how or why.

They do now.

Toronto's Jewish, non-profit humanitarian organization, Ve'ahavta, has helped clear up an old mystery for the global medical community.

Doctors working on relief projects in Guyana for Ve'ahavta have helped confirm that the sexually transmitted disease syphilis was spread to the old world from the new more than 500 years ago.

In 2005, Ve'ahavta doctors collected samples of a disease called "yaws" – found only in certain regions of South America and Africa – for their peers back in North America. Tests proved that both yaws and syphilis share a common bacterial family, *treponema pallidum*, although yaws is not known to be sexually transmitted.

Sarah Zelcer, director of international programs for Ve'ahavta, explained to *The C/N* the genesis of the finding.

"Our Guyana medical project was one of our first projects," she said. "And Dr. Michael Silverman [an infectious disease and tropical medicine specialist] who was one of our founding directors, had been going down to Guyana [since the mid-1990s] on mini-medical missions and discovered yaws still in existence."

But the discovery of the relationship between yaws and syphilis was almost never made, Zelcer explained.

Having decided to treat yaws with penicillin capsules, Silverman had nearly eradicated the disease in the indigenous population. In fact, he said the samples collected in 2005 were the last cases his team has seen since.

Still, the samples were enough for Silverman's colleague, Dr. Kristin Harper at the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta who used a phylogenetic approach – study of the evolutionary development of the disease – to confirm yaws as the source

of syphilis. At the time, Harper was trying to find the source of syphilis, and she was missing only a sample of yaws to examine.

The recent publication of the discovery has made medical headlines worldwide.

"All the syphilis we see today is from the interaction of Columbus' men with the Amerindians," Silverman told *The C/N* last week.

Continued on page 29

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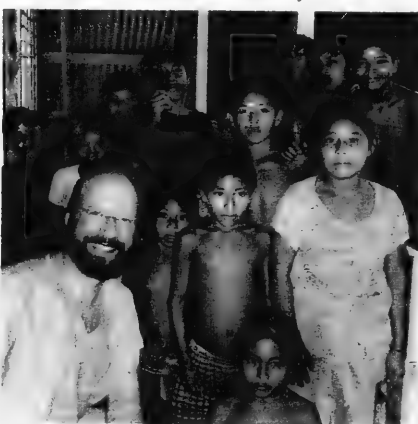
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Dr. Michael Silverman poses with Guyanese children on a recent Ve'ahavta mission.

Greater Toronto Area

Songbook of music and history

was an affirmation of the driving force and creative energy of Jewish identity and a movingly beautiful testament to the truth that Jewish youths can, and indeed, do bear the responsibilities of their peoplehood.

Born in the disorienting aftermath of the Yom Kippur War, Boston based Safam was both an invitation to and an inspiration for youthful Jewish engagement in the roiling, mostly anti-Israel atmosphere that

hung like noxious gas over campuses across North America. Much like today.

Yasser Arafat, with a pistol holstered to his hip, mocked conscience and decency when he addressed the United Nations General Assembly. Though his chief preoccupation was the murder of Jews, he was held in high regard by many

expressions of engaging musical talent and profound cultural insight. Collectively, however, their work represents the social history of more than three decades of Jewish life in North America. For example, to single out but a very few of their more than 100 songs, *Leaving Mother Russia*, written in 1978, became the fist-pumping rallying cry for the struggle to free Soviet Jewry; *Amnesty*, in 1983, eerily predicted the fall of the Kremlin; *Tribute*, in 1984, heightens the eternal, trans-generational reach of the *Kaddish*; *Falasha Nevermore*, in 1986, was for many of us our introduction to the plight of the Ethiopian Jews; and *Nachamu Ami*, written in 1991, has now become the classic musical rendition of the prophet Isaiah's uplifting words. But there are so many more such seminal songs in this collection.

The recent publication of *Safam Anthology: The Complete Collection* is thus an event to be celebrated. The work is a collection of the group's music from 1974-2007, more than 100 songs, almost all of them the original compositions of Robbie Solomon and Joel Sussman. It contains the music and chording for each of the songs, expanded album notes, the lyrics and an extensive index.

The attention by the publishers to the high-quality production values of the songbook – 363 pages of glossy-finish paper and heavy cloth binding – assures it will be a long-lasting addition to the musical storehouse of any home. In some respects too, the *Safam Anthology* is a primer of Jewish assertiveness for the generation of the children of Safam.

For more information about the anthology, e-mail Safam@Safam.com or call 1-866-897-2326.

—MBD

From the editor's desk

Edmonton sits at the near centre of Alberta, astride the banks of the North Saskatchewan River. The rolling hills and the deep river valleys around the city comprise some of the most fertile farmland in Canada's golden West.

The prosperity of the city though, much like the prosperity of the entire West, owed more to its people's strength of character and generosity of spirit than to the bounty of the natural resources that lie, like buried treasure, hidden beneath the earth's surface.

The West is rich in good people.

Helene and Max Sussman were two such very good people. In the middle of the last century, they brought their honesty, their goodness, their inclination toward hard work and their lovingly kept Jewish traditions to Edmonton from points much further east.

Helene died last year; Max some 24 years earlier. No glass and steel skyscrapers bear their names. No tall monuments of granite and polished chrome attest to the fact that they once lived.

But a mere monument of glass and steel, or granite and chrome is a far inferior tribute to the memory of who Helene and Max Sussman were than the deep goodness, profound Jewish soul and vast musical and lyrical talent of their son Joel, who with his friends Robbie Solomon, Dan Funk and Alan Nelson, founded the musical group Safam more than 30 years ago.

Joel left Edmonton at the age of 21, after completing his undergraduate studies at the University of Alberta, and headed to Israel. He studied Hebrew for three months in an ulpan in Kiryat Shmonah and then worked with underprivileged youth in the then young but burgeoning port city of Ashdod.

It would be a transformative year for the young man from Edmonton, altering the course of his life forever. Not to overstate the point, it led him to the calling, the place and the people who would join with him to form Safam.

Safam was – and is – much more than a folk-rock band of singers and musicians who write and perform Jewish music. It

Some of their songs are "political," some are liturgical, some are soulful, but they are all artful. Individually they are



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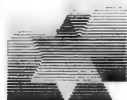
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FROM HOVE TO HOME

A joyous Rabbi Tina Grimbberg, above, leads members

of Congregation Darchei Noam, Toronto's only Reconstructionist congregation, in a Torah procession from the premises the shul has been renting on Hove Street. The Jan. 27 celebration continued at the congregation's new home on Sheppard Avenue West. See story in next week's CJN.

[Frances Kraft photos]



B'nai Brith expulsion hearings adjourned

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

A disciplinary committee of B'nai Brith Canada considering the proposed expulsion of more than 14 members adjourned last week without making a decision.

The three-person committee reserved its judgment after a hearing that lasted almost four hours, said lawyer Rochelle Cantor, who is representing the 14 long-serving B'nai Brith members. Cantor said the tribunal "conducted the hearing in the manner they saw fit to conduct it. I'm not certain if they are finished."

Noting the hearing was closed to the public, Cantor said little about what transpired, repeating only earlier concerns she had raised that B'nai Brith had not disclosed the specific facts about each member that warranted expulsion. She pointed out, however, that B'nai Brith called no witnesses at the hearing.

At least 14 members were mailed letters in late November informing them they faced removal for conduct "unbecoming a member of BBC [B'nai Brith Canada] and contrary to the best interests of our organization."

Among the allegations that accompanied the letter were that the members circulated information at the 2006 annual general meeting that "contained serious and unsubstantiated allegations against the organization and leadership."

B'nai Brith's executive committee, which referred a complaint to the disciplinary committee, also alleged an organization called Concerned Members of B'nai Brith Canada circulated e-mails that included "defamatory allegations of wrongdoing, both financial and otherwise."

Cantor said she had not yet presented her case: "As far as I am concerned, the hearing is not over."

Cantor, whose father is one of the B'nai Brith's members facing expulsion, said she planned to call anywhere from 20 to 40 witnesses who would testify that members' conduct was not unbecoming a member of the organization. She pointed out those facing expulsion have been members of B'nai Brith an average of 40 years. One, Lou Ronson, is the organization's longest serving member, having joined the organization 68 years ago.

Approximately 60 supporters and potential witnesses gathered at the B'nai Brith building on Hove Street the night of the hearing. They were greeted by three uniformed police officers. Their presence, along with the disciplinary hearing itself, was the subject of a heated e-mail message circulated to a local lodge.

In the e-mail message, N.H. [Nate] Salter, past president and chair of the board of directors of Forestdale Heights Lodge stated: "I have been a loyal B'nai Brith member since 1955, and in the 53 years since I joined as a proud Jew, I have never heard about members of this organization committing acts of violence or civil disobedience. Yet at a meeting called on Monday, Jan. 21, wherein a so-called tribunal was being held that could have a deleterious effect on our president as well as others... paid police officers [were] on duty."

"To me this is the ultimate in disrespect to our lodge and our members, when we have taken the time to appear at the tribunal in support of our president. Did [B'nai Brith] think that a group of middle-aged Jews were going to storm the meeting and do acts of violence? What an insult to our members when [B'nai Brith] calls in police to restore order when no order has ever been breached."

Ronson said the "policemen had a good time." They kibbized with the supporters. "They had nothing else to do. There was nobody creating any fuss or anything."

Continued on page 45

In recent weeks, *The CJN* has devoted coverage to what can only be described as a public smear campaign against B'nai Brith Canada and its parent organization, B'nai Brith International. This attack campaign is being spearheaded by a tiny handful of disgruntled B'nai Brith members. The damaging and defamatory statements made by these individuals – which *The CJN* has repeatedly chosen to cover – does not reflect the overwhelming support that we have received from our loyal grassroots members, friends and donors from across the country, who have rallied behind us.

B'nai Brith Canada has fully observed due process and abided by its governing constitution in trying to put this matter to rest. The B'nai Brith International Court of Appeals ruled that there was no basis whatsoever to the complaints of this group. Despite the clear judgment rendered by a court of their choice, this fringe group has chosen to pursue a vendetta against B'nai Brith. It would appear that they have opted to put their own personal

issues above the welfare of the organization in an attempt to impede our ability to carry out the important work we do on behalf of the entire Jewish community.

B'nai Brith Canada's disciplinary committee, operating under the organization's constitution, convened last week to hear complaints launched against these individuals by the executive board.

This body provided the opportunity to the disgruntled members to present their views in a peer review setting.

Following *The CJN's* extensive coverage of these individuals' grievances, B'nai Brith learned that demonstrators were being asked to turn out in force. Off-duty police were therefore engaged in order to ensure security and decorum. In the end, only a handful of family members and friends turned out for the hearing.

Pending the review of the disciplinary committee, which is expected to render a decision shortly, it is inappropriate for either of the parties to further comment publicly at this time.

BBC's statement to *The CJN*

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Greater Toronto Area

Holocaust survivors group links with CJC

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

A grassroots organization that represents Holocaust survivors has joined forces with Canadian Jewish Congress to better serve the interests of more than 17,000 survivors across Canada.

Sidney Zoltak, co-president of Canadian Jewish Holocaust Survivors (CJHS), said his group's association with Congress will permit the organization to do its work more efficiently. "We now have a home, a phone number and a staff person," Zoltak said in a telephone interview from Montreal.

Zoltak, who shares the presidency with Nate Leipziger of Toronto, said CJHS earlier had a good working relationship with UJA Federations Canada, but it was ad hoc and limited.

"It's a better fit with Congress as [Congress CEO] Bernie Farber sits on the Claims Conference board [as does Zoltak]. I have a relationship that is closer than before. We speak to one another, we consult with each other. We're on the same page, working in the same direction," Zoltak said.

"Bernie is our adviser... I hope this relationship continues for whatever time is needed to do whatever we have to do."

CJHS was founded in 1999 to advocate for the welfare of its members and to represent Canadian survivors at the Claims Conference, which negotiates with European states for increased benefits for survivors.

"We were not getting our share," said Zoltak, who added that the organization has held talks with the governments of Poland and Germany regarding compensation issues.

One of the group's first tasks was to create a registry of survivors, which now includes approximately 9,200 names. The organization's potential membership was once 20,000 survivors, but that number has dwindled to around 17,000, Zoltak said.

An estimated 3,000 of that number are living in poverty. CJHS works to ensure that compensation funds go directly to the sur-

vivors who are entitled to it and to agencies that provide services to survivors.

The Cummings Jewish Centre for Seniors in Montreal, as well as Circle of Care and Baycrest in Toronto, receive funds to serve elderly survivors, he said.

Recently, CJHS negotiated with the Jewish federations in Toronto and Montreal to match funds received through the Claims Conference, he added.

Melanie Simon, Congress' national social policy co-ordinator, is the staff person who will work with CJHS. One of her tasks for the coming year is to create with CJHS a national list of services that are available to survivors and to reach out to communities outside larger centres to locate people who could benefit from services.

Among CJHS's objectives for the year ahead are:

- increasing public awareness about issues that concern survivors;
- co-ordinating volunteers to update the CJHS database of members;
- involving children of survivors in issues of importance to CJHS.

Zoltak said that "we want to engage members of the second generation to step in, in association with our organization, to add youth, intelligence, know-how and to continue our work."

He said there is also room on the national stage for survivors to add their voices to debates concerning the broader Jewish community, as is the case in the United States.

"I think the survivor community has an important message to deliver. Sometimes survivors are neglected and disregarded by the leadership of communities. We want to be part of the leadership of the Jewish community in Canada," he said.

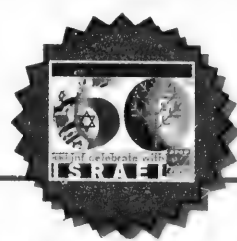
"I know we have an important role still in expressing our opinions," particularly on issues of anti-Semitism, racism and reasonable accommodation.

"A survivor can give a personal history of surviving racism," Zoltak said. "It is real, and I think it is more forceful than just a statement said by somebody."

GIFT GIVING

Participants on a recent 10-day, post-birthright Israel tour organized by Jewish Urban Meeting Place (JUMP) brought toys and school supplies to children who have come to Israel from Africa, Asia, South America, Europe and the Middle East for free, life-saving heart surgery courtesy of an Israeli humanitarian organization called Save a Child's Heart. For the full story, go to page 32.





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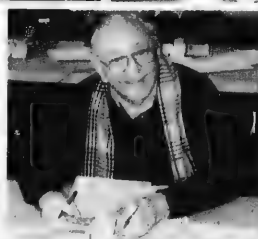
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Portrait of contrasts

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour issued a statement on Sunday in honour of the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust, which read in part: "This day provides the international community with a sober moment of reflection and remembrance. We must honour the memory of those who fell victims to the most horrendous manifestations of discrimination, hatred and intolerance. In doing so, we reaffirm their dignity as human beings, and our collective failure to extend to them the protection to which they were entitled."

"As we continue to be confronted with expressions and manifestations of anti-Semitism, this day is a call on the world's conscience and a reminder of the acute necessity to confront intolerance, bigotry, prejudice, ignorance and hatred, early and unequivocally. We can truly honour the victims of the Holocaust by pursuing all efforts to extend the real protection of international human rights law to all those who fall victim to its violations."

Alas, it saddens us enormously to observe that the high commissioner's words sound hollow. They seem to be nothing more than an empty, pro-forma concession to the protocolary demands of her office, devoid of gravitas or sincerity.

This conclusion, unfortunately, is inescapable, for Arbour's actions belie her words. The manifestations of anti-Semitism to which she demonstratively points her conscience are unceasingly aimed at Israel, the "Jew" among the nations and, as all anti-Semites obsess, the state of "the Jews."

Last week, for the third time in its brief two-year history, the UN Human Rights Council, whose mission she shares and whose work she supports in a broad sense, rebuked Israel for alleged human rights violations in Gaza. Syria, the internationally well-known, even staunch, defender of the human and governmental rights of the Assad family and their Alawite kinsmen, introduced an anti-Israel resolution that passed by a vote of 30 in favour and one opposed, with 15 abstentions and one delegation absent. Arbour lent credence to the false notion that Israel was to blame for the plight of the Gazans. Speaking to the 47-member council in Geneva and referring to the "level of desperation" of the Palestinians in Gaza, she said Israel must lift restrictions on delivery of humanitarian aid. Only Canada opposed the Syrian proposal.

Adding further moral emphasis to its vote at the Human Rights Council, Canada also announced last week that it would not take part in "Durban II," the UN's world conference against racism, slated for 2009, that's being organized by such poster countries for human rights protection as Libya, Iran and Cuba. Foreign Minister Maxime Bernier and Secretary for State and Multiculturalism Jason Kenney rightly noted that the conference had already "degenerated" into a travesty.

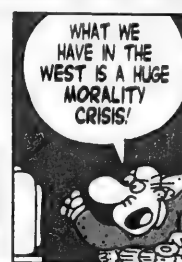
The government deserves high praise. Its actions against anti-Semitism – confronting "intolerance, bigotry, prejudice, ignorance and hatred" – paint a stark portrait in contrast to those of the high commissioner.

25 years ago in The CJN

The issue of Sabbath observance reached the Supreme Court of Canada when a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church charged that Sears Canada's insistence that she work on Friday night and Saturday, her Sabbath, violated her human rights. A similar case brought by a member of another Protestant church was being heard in Quebec. Jewish groups were monitoring the cases closely.

Editorials & Letters

Dry Bones
TALKBACK



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Frivolous human rights complaints

Kudos to Canadian Jewish Congress co-presidents Sylvain Abitbol and Rabbi Reuven Bulka for injecting a dose of rational thinking into the debate about the investigations into frivolous human rights complaints playing out in Canada ("Some human rights complaints are frivolous," C/JN, Jan. 24). They hit the nail on the head – human rights commissions must be reminded that not all complaints are equal, and investigations must be reserved for the most serious of cases that may have actually subjected people to real hate and contempt.

Maclean's magazine was taken to task for its publication of an excerpt of a book by Mark Steyn, and Ezra Levant is the subject of a complaint for his decision two years ago to publish examples in the *Western Standard* of the so-called "Danish cartoons," which featured what some believe are derogatory images of Muslims and the Prophet Muhammad.

The Steyn and Levant cases represent an abuse of the system, and, as Abitbol and Rabbi Bulka suggest, it's up to the commissions to set a higher standard.

R. Burstin
Thornhill, Ont.

Israel and the Liberal Party

Israel's right to exist within defined and secure borders has been a foundation of both Canadian foreign policy and that of the Liberal Party of Canada for nearly 60 years.

This commitment began with the support of Canada's then Liberal government of Israel's admission to the United Nations in 1948. Canada's subsequent careful scrutiny of UN General Assembly resolutions and our traditional refusal to support resolutions that are primarily intended to single out Israel for discriminatory treatment must continue. The integrity of Canada's reputation at the United Nations will only be maintained by supporting resolutions rooted in international law. Those resolutions must constructively contribute to the goal of a negotiated two-state solution and reflect the values and principles that Canadians want to promote on the world stage.

Canadian diplomats should continue to build on Canada's long-standing efforts to recommend an alternative peace process, which will end divisiveness and strengthen the relevance and integrity of the United Nations. It was stated in Canada's statement to the 2005 UN General Assembly plenary, that "this alternative process should be based upon, an inclusive and thorough resolution on the peace process – free of divisive rhetoric, accurate, detailed in approach and balanced in outcome."

The Liberal party is also committed to building a growing economic relationship between Canada and Israel. On Jan. 1, 1997, the Liberal government of the day was proud to bring the

Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement into effect, removing tariffs from most manufactured products. While Canada and Israel have historically had strong commercial relations, this agreement has generated significant business opportunities for Canadians to compete in this growing and dynamic market.

The relationship between Canada and Israel is epitomized by the deep bonds of friendship and family ties that have strengthened the labour and human rights communities in both our countries and changed the lives and hopes of thousands of young people around the world.

Of course, Canadian Jews have been at the heart of this relationship, but Canada's support for the idea of Israel and its affirmation of human values has found deep resonance across religious and cultural communities.

That is why the Liberal policy on Israel and the Middle East is based on the following core principles. To that end we will continue to:

- proudly support, as a cornerstone of our foreign policy, the right of Israel to exist in peace and security;
- call for a two-state solution, of an independent and democratic Palestine alongside an independent and democratic Israel;
- support the right of Israel, like any other state, to be free from threats or acts of force;
- condemn terrorism – from whatever source, for whatever purpose, in whatever form;
- support the push for democracy, human rights, good governance and the rule of law throughout the Middle East;
- push for fairness in the UN General Assembly, where one-sided resolutions serve neither peace nor the United Nations; and
- combat racism, anti-Semitism, hatred and intolerance.

When Israel's right to exist is threatened, it is an attack on the values of every democracy. It is in this context that Israel's fight for existence is our fight. Her struggle for peace and security is our struggle.

Bob Rae
Foreign Affairs Critic
Liberal Party of Canada

Out of the Cold project

We want to offer a correction to your article about the efforts of the Jewish community to respond to the ongoing plight of the homeless and hungry ("Shuls bring guests in from the cold," C/JN, Jan. 17). Beth Shalom Synagogue and Beth Tzedec Congregation have co-operated in our Out of the Cold project for almost a decade. Our partnership uses the location of Beth Shalom and the volunteer efforts of both synagogues. Despite the enormous financial and time demands, our shuls are proud to represent this expression of chesed to our city.

Rabbi Aaron Flanzraich
Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl
Toronto

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman,
Ehud Goldwasser, Guy Hever,
Yehuda Katz, Eldad Regev, Gilad Shalit

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info@cjnnews.com

Perspectives

Jewish Cuba: an unexpected treasure

By RENA GODFREY

Tears rolled down my mother's cheeks as eight beautiful, smiling Cuban Jewish children walked hand in hand down the aisle toward the bimah of the Beth Shalom synagogue in Havana. They were welcoming the Shabbat Queen, singing *Shalom Aleichem*.

Seventeen years ago, this heartwarming Kabbalat Shabbat service would not have been possible. In fact, between 1961 and 1991, this synagogue could barely summon a minyan.



Rena Godfrey

In Fidel Castro's regime, religion was not abolished outright. Adela Dworin, president of the Casa de la Comunidad Hebrea de Cuba (known as Patronato), explained, "If a Cuban Jew or Christian wanted to belong to the Communist party, get a job in government or go to university, [he or she] didn't want to openly show an affiliation toward religion. Only the elderly attended synagogue in those years, because they had nothing to lose."

This year, my mother wanted to take her children and grandchildren on a vacation, in honour of her 70th birthday. After some research, she decided on Cuba, as she had never been there and had often heard of the beauty of Havana and the Jewish community that resides there. She chose an all-inclusive resort in Varadero, where everyone could eat and drink as much as they wanted. We expected what most sun-deprived Canadian vacationers crave – the sun, the sea and the beach. What we didn't count on were the unexpected gifts – learning first-hand of a people and their way of life, which is entirely different from our own, and the chance to connect with a small yet resilient Jewish community of 1500, committed to its own survival.

After days of sampling all there was to eat at the resort buffet, and dancing the merengue by the pool, we were ready for something more. Havana was calling, and once we left the gates of the resort, the real Cuba was waiting for us.

As a writer, I couldn't resist this opportunity to meet the Jewish community and interview its leaders. Like any savvy Internet user, I Googled "Jews in Cuba," got onto their website (www.jewishcuba.org), e-mailed the contacts about my trip and my desire to help their community, and then waited for a reply. After a few weeks without a reply, I contacted the Canadian Jewish Congress, who promptly e-mailed me back with the correct contact information and suggested that I call Michael Soberman, national director of the Canada-Israel Experience.

Soberman is in close contact with the Jews of Cuba and has sent approximately 50 Cuban youths on Taglit-birthright Israel trips over the past five years. On my behalf, Soberman immediately contacted William Miller, vice-president of the Patronato, and the connection was made.

Miller supplied us with an extensive list of the Cuban Jewish community's most needed items, ranging from syringes and Tylenol to men's underwear and Shabbat candles. I was taken aback by the long list of medical supplies requested, as I had always thought that Cubans were well taken care of when it came to their medical needs. Even my brother, who is a doctor, questioned the long list of medicines desired.

Little did we know then of the crucial role that the Patronato's pharmacy plays in the lives of both the Jewish and the non-Jewish communities in Cuba.

As Dworin explained, "Health care in Cuba is generally good. When you're in the hospital, you're well taken care of, but when you're about to leave, the doctors will ask you if you have relatives abroad who can help with sending money or medicine. There just isn't the supply of everyday medicines available."

In perfect and articulate English, Dworin's soft-spoken voice carried me back to another time in Cuban history, when Cuba was a safe haven for European Jewry. Dworin is one of two children born in Cuba to parents who emigrated from Pinsk, Poland, before World War II. For many Jews, like Dworin's father, Cuba was intended as a stopover on their way to America. With the war fast approaching, Dworin's father could not save the rest of his family from their demise, and decided to remain in Cuba.

Dworin loved growing up in Cuba as part of the Jewish community of 15,000. She attended Jewish elementary school

and high school, and then went on to law school. She pointed out that there was, and still is, no anti-Semitism in Cuba.

"At the beginning of the revolution, the Jews welcomed Castro, as [Fulgencio] Batista was a ruthless dictator, and the Cubans needed a change."

However, with the revolution also came dramatic changes in government policies that many found intolerable. Castro's government confiscated all private businesses and, as a result, in 1961, 90 per cent of Cuban Jews, who belonged to the upper and middle classes of Cuban society, fled. Dworin, then a law student, refused to leave. Cuba was her home, and she and her family remained. Dworin continues to live in the family house in Vedado,



COMUNIDAD HEBREA DE CUBA
1906-2006



Photo montage of community's history [Jeff Weisbrot photos]

a suburb of Havana, blocks away from the Patronato.

Havana is a majestic city, with magnificent buildings still standing but in need of extensive repair, fossil-like remnants of a once-thriving and international Cuban city. Much like the city, the Cuban people are beautiful, highly educated and resilient, but life is hard.

"You won't find anyone starving in Cuba, people walking around without clothes or children begging in the streets, but since the col-

lapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, and in combination with the American embargo, everyday life is difficult for most Cubans," Dworin said.

She gratefully acknowledges and thanks the Canadian Jewish Congress for being the first Jewish community to pledge its support to the remaining Cuban Jews. In 1961, the CJC's Alan Rose promised to maintain a constant connection to Cuban Jewry by facilitating an annual Passover food drive, which has been ongoing for the last 47 years.

"It's not just about receiving the gefilte fish, matzah and hagaddot. It's about showing our children that they are Jewish and staying connected to other Jews."

According to Dworin, the Passover food drive was also instrumental in strengthening the barely visible Jewish community prior to 1991. After 1991, Castro changed his policy on religion, allowing everyone to worship openly.

When intermarried couples came to pick up the Passover foods, Dworin and the late Dr. Jose Miller, then president of the Patronato, asked those who were non-Jews if they wished to convert to Judaism. The response was positive, as being Jewish also meant having access to a support system that was direly needed.

"As Jews, we are privileged, in that we care about each other," Dworin proudly said.

Miller also contacted the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), asking it to send youths from Argentina to teach the young Cuban Jews, so that they could in turn teach the rest of the community about Jewish life. The plan worked, and Miller's legacy is a now thriving Jewish community.

Miller's grandson, William, a Jewish convert himself, is passionate about keeping the flame alive among Cuban Jewry. He is an electrical engineer, runs the ORT computer centre for 120 students, the Sunday school for 70 kids, rikudim and a summer camp, all housed in the Patronato. A van generously donated by a group from New Jersey transports the children to and from

school and helps the elderly and sick get to and from the hospital. The Patronato is the centre of Jewish life, complete with a youth group, a women's group and a seniors' group.

While visiting the pharmacy, William Miller picked up a bottle of medicine and turned to me: "Yes we need your medicines, but we also need to have face to face contact with the Jewish communities from abroad, so that the donors can really see where their donations are going."

Miller is currently making arrangements for Canadian volunteers to come to Cuba to help restore the other synagogues in Havana that are in need of repair. There are five synagogues in Cuba: three in Havana, one in Santiago and one in Camaguey.

Unfortunately, I didn't get a chance to visit the other synagogues in Cuba, but this is not my last trip to this fascinating country. I'm hooked and plan to return.

While lighting the candles at the Kabbalat

Shabbat service with the 70 or so Cuban Jews, I kept thinking to myself that we (Jews in the Diaspora) need the Jews of Cuba just as much as they need us. They need our physical, emotional and monetary support, and we need them to remind us of our good fortune. Living in a prosperous country such as Canada means that most of us are not concerned about whether we'll have enough food to feed our families for the week, or whether we'll be able to purchase a new pair of shoes for our children.

Let us remember that for many of us, at one point in our lives or our grandparents' lives, life was not always as good as it is now, and not too far away is a community in need.

Rena Godfrey is a Toronto writer.

Adela Dworin,
Patronato presidentWilliam Miller,
Patronato vice-president

Opinions

The desire to be a Jew

To be a Jew/Is to desperately desire/
That our descendants/ Desperately
desire/To be a Jew.

That poem, written by my husband, Rabbi Howard Joseph, sums up two facets of being Jewish — it emphasizes the generational commitment and the personal or existential aspect.



Norma Banniel
Joseph
in Montreal

For many Jews, religion is about finding personal meaning and fulfillment. They're convinced that this is the best way to live life to the fullest.

Religion is for now. For example, Shabbat transforms my universe each week, and I can't imagine life without it, or without the spiritual cleansing of Yom Kippur, the renewal and enticing dialogue of prayer of Rosh Hashanah, and the family rituals on Passover. Judaism fills my life with significance. Religious Jews declare that they act primarily because they feel commanded by God.

Nonetheless, their rituals are infused with personal meaning that they relate to individually. Both the subjective and divine combine to generate a desperate desire to be a Jew.

The clearer focus of the poem is on continuity, a totally different mode of being Jewish. It speaks of a desperation for the next generation, and it marks the reality for many Jews. We're desperate that our descendants be Jewish, and we're desperate that they should continue that desperation to be Jewish.

We crave continuity. Why?

I believe it's more than a reaction to our peculiar national history of longevity despite anti-Semitism and genocide. I believe it's part of our spiritual and biblical heritage.

Genesis begins with Creation, but death stalks the story. God tells Adam, "You must not eat of the fruit, for as soon as you eat of it, you will die." Death is not a direct punishment, although it's a consequence. The snake says, "You won't die."

How can we understand this tale?

I don't propose to simplify this complex story or make light of it.

But in truth, it holds a key to our own desperation as Jews. For leaving the Garden of Eden, our species leaves paradise, and we come to know our full humanity as finite, imperfect and mortal beings. As individual humans, we die, but our species does not. In fact, reading Genesis 3 carefully, one can find a promise of immortality imbedded in the punishment.

Man is told, "By toil shall you eat," but you will eat. And woman is told that "in pain shall you bear children," but there will be children. So suffering is our personal lot. We are finite, but we shall eat and have children. We shall survive. So there is a promise and a hint of immortality in our finitude.

Is our desperation for descendants our response to the challenge of Genesis? Through our Jewish children, we, as Jews, survive death.

Courageous women challenge Islam to face truth

Nonie Darwish, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Irshad Manji are brave women, as was the murdered Iranian-Canadian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi. They are some of the few women who have told the world what it's like to be a Muslim woman today, not only in a Muslim country (as in the case of Hirsi Ali and Darwish) but also in the West, where women like Hirsi Ali live under the threat of death.

Recall that she is the woman who was forced to go into hiding after the murder of Theo van Gogh, her filmic collaborator and critic of Islam.

Others are stepping forward: Marina Nemat, a Christian Iranian woman and Zahra Ghahramani (Iranian-Kurdish) have recently published accounts of their torture in the Evin prison, where Kazemi perished.

I don't condemn the practice of Islam *per se*. But I do stand horrified when it has come to be a religion of terror, oppression, suicide and murder. For those who would excuse the repressive countries these women come from — and others as well — I have no time.

A four part discussion series, "Manufacturing Islam," is taking place here at the University of British Columbia's St. John's College. It featured a keynote address by Zarqa Nawaz, producer of the CBC sitcom *Little Mosque on the Prairie*. (Unfortunately, the dialogues are on Saturday, so I could not attend.)

In her talk, as reported Jan. 14 in the *Vancouver Sun*, Nawaz replied to critics who say the show should deal more directly with Muslims

engaged in armed conflict by noting that *Seinfeld* failed to deal with the contentious issue of Jewish settlements in Palestinian territory.

It would be refreshing to have someone who produces a feel-good show about Muslims in the Canadian heartland say, "I don't defend Muslim terror bombers, rapists and people who kill women and children. I denounce Muslims who bomb and kill. It's shameful and un-Islamic, and I condemn it unapologetically."

Instead, she deflects the question away from extremism by mentioning a show about a Jewish comedian.

Back to those courageous women. Some, like Hirsi Ali, have undergone female genital mutilation. The Jan. 20 *New York Times* ran a picture essay on female mutilation in Indonesia, where 95 per cent of girls are "purified" through this horrendous rite. Right now, my ears are filled with the screams of these innocent girls. Where are the Muslim voices that will defend them?

On Jan. 14 on the supertime CBC news, a Palestinian woman was interviewed about her work with abused women in the Palestinian areas. The real problem, according to her, was the Israeli occupation. Once that's gone, women will somehow become miraculously safe from honour killings and beatings meted out righteously by their husbands.

So it's not an interpretation of Islamic law that allows beating and killing — it's the Jews' fault. How silly of me not to understand this.

More excuses for not facing the facts: Simon

Fraser University professor and former CIA agent Graham Fuller claims: "A world without Islam would still see most of the enduring bloody rivalries whose wars and tribulations that dominate the geopolitical landscape" (*Vancouver Sun*, Jan. 18). Without Islam, the Middle East would see Orthodox Christians taking up the gun. To him, western colonialism caused the rise of terror in the Muslim street.

I agree that the colonialism of the 19th and 20th centuries did terrible harm. But let's look closely. The Arab Middle East has tried Pan-Arabism, which was killed by rivalries among states and leaders. It tried secular nationalism, which, along with state socialism, ruined economies and left broken promises of triumph in its wake. And now it's turning to radical Islam, which is the new messianism in countries that lack the civil institutions necessary for democracy. The trend is spreading throughout the Muslim world.

Former *New York Times* journalist Ari Goldman, now a journalism professor at Columbia University, argues that the media don't portray moderates in Islamic thought. But it scares me that the leaders of North American Muslim organizations have not been able to articulate a position that distances them from terror, mutilation and rape, or take to task Muslims who perpetrate horrors in the name of Islam.

"The relentless quest for national deliverance" that Fouad Ajami describes in his book *Dream Palace of the Arabs* has taken an ugly route. Rather than examine their own repression of women, Muslim societies today seem to be lost in a nightmare.

Canada's many diaspora groups pose challenges

The word "diaspora" has many meanings. Although it has a Greek origin, it most commonly refers to the dispersion and scattering of people from their original homeland and the resulting communities they form in foreign lands. "Diaspora" originally referred to the Jewish community that was scattered after the Babylonian captivity. More recently, it has been used to describe the Jewish communities outside Israel that are dispersed throughout the world.

Of course, there is no longer a homogeneous Jewish community anywhere. North American Jews trace their origins to Russia, to eastern Europe, to Latin America and elsewhere. Anthropologically, there may at one time have been a single Diaspora, but now it's hard to pinpoint a single, common worldwide Jewish community. Yet we're all described as members of the Diaspora.

As Jews in the Diaspora, what, then, do we have in common? We share a common religion, although we choose to practise it in many different ways. We share a common heritage or history that dates back thousands of years. We even, to some extent, share a certain traceable genetic commonality that is evidenced, for example, by the prevalence of certain medical conditions in the Jewish population (such as Tay Sachs disease).

Recently, it has been speculated that Kohanim may even share genetic characteristics dating back thousands of years to the time of Aaron. Moreover, for all our differences of opinions, we share basic common values stemming from the messages and lessons of the Torah and the

Talmud. We also share a dark history of oppression. Whether or not we, ourselves, lived in Europe or had relatives who lived in Europe, the experience of the dark days of the Holocaust is part of our collective makeup.

Probably the most accurate description of Jews is that we are members of many diasporas with some degree of commonality, but many differences as well.

Others have appropriated the term "diaspora," as we know it, from the Jewish experience.

Many other religious and cultural communities now want to be recognized as part of their own diaspora. In a sense, it's a badge of honour, a celebration of their origins, or simply a means of reinforcing community cohesiveness and pride.

For example, we recently witnessed members of the Pakistani diaspora united in their opposition to the political turmoil and oppression in their former homeland. We are called upon by the Armenian diaspora seeking world acknowledgment of an unrecognized genocide suffered a century ago. Chinese communities throughout the world are about to celebrate their annual new year festivities. Maintaining links to and celebrating traditions from a homeland is a widespread phenomenon.

In Canada, these various diasporas exist not always because people faced oppression and exile in their respective homelands, but often because they chose to seek better lives in new lands with new opportunities.

Although individuals in the various Canadian cultural communities may use the term diaspora,

we would rather refer to the various communities within our borders as constituting the multicultural heritage of Canadians. Since 1982, multiculturalism has been given constitutional status through section 27 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which guarantees the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians. Official government policy since the early 1970s has recognized and promoted multiculturalism. The federal Department of Canadian Heritage funds programs supporting this policy. In Alberta, the provincial anti-discrimination statute is called the Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act.

All of the foregoing is a reflection of the long-standing Canadian desire to have our society evolve into what is now a truly multicultural mosaic rather than an American-style melting pot. Some people have expressed objection to this policy, favouring the American approach. However, thriving multiculturalism is the normative and legally protected description of the Canadian way of life.

But a nation with many diverse cultures, with many so-called diasporas, is not without certain problems and concerns. There are issues of adaptation, of acceptance and accommodation by the majority segment of the population, and, on the darker side, issues of hate, discrimination and intolerance. These issues essentially relate to the ability of cultural or diasporic communities to maintain their respective identities in the face of pressures and discrimination they sometimes encounter. The challenge for the various diasporas within Canada is to achieve a balance between their cultural integrities and their Canadian identity.



Jean M. Gerber
in Vancouver



Gerald L. Gull
in Edmonton

Scholar questions Holland's wartime image

Holland has had a benevolent image in Jewish circles, perceived as a tolerant and humanistic nation whose population courageously resisted a brutal Nazi occupation and selflessly helped its Jewish citizens evade arrest and deportation. In this connection, Holland's glowing image is also burnished by the saga of Anne Frank, the precocious Jewish teenager who poured her heart out in an extraordinary diary.

Holland's image is continually buttressed by stories in the media of ordinary Dutch burghers who rescued Jews in their hour of duress.

Last October, the Associated Press reported that Hendrikus and Martha Snapper, a deceased couple, were posthumously honoured by the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial authority in Jerusalem for having sheltered a Jewish family, Levy and Rosa de Hartog and their five children, in the town of Naaldwijk. In November, the *New York Times* published an obituary of Johtje Vos, a woman from the village of Laren who is credited with having saved 36 Jews.

From a broader perspective, 25,000 out of 140,000 Jews were rescued by the Dutch during World War II. Yad Vashem has paid tribute to 4,717 rescuers in Holland, which, after Poland, has more "righteous gentiles" than any other jurisdiction.

Yet 70 per cent of Dutch Jews perished during the Holocaust. Of 105,000 Jewish deportees, only 5,200 survived. Holland's deportation rate is thus higher than any other western European nation.

Diane Wolf, a University of California sociologist who has written a book on this topic, *Beyond Anne Frank: Hidden Children and Postwar Families in Holland*, is distressed by these stark statistics.

Having done the research, she said that Holland has the dubious distinction of being the only western European country whose Jewish deportation and murder rate was comparable to that of eastern Europe.

"What exactly does this mean in human terms?" she writes. "It means that although Holland's prewar Jewish population was less than half that of France's, more Dutch than

French Jews were deported and killed, in both absolute and relative terms."

"If you were a Jew in France, you had a higher probability of surviving," she added in an interview during Holocaust Education Week.

She ascribes Holland's poor record to several factors.

As in Poland, but not in France, the Germans administered Holland through a system of direct rule. "That made it more dangerous to resist," explained Wolf, who headed Davis' Jewish studies program from 2000 to 2001. "There was almost full collaboration by the Dutch civil service and police. Adolf Eichmann said, 'The Dutch are a pleasure to work with.'"

A small minority of Dutch joined the resistance movement and assisted Jews, but a similar number were pro-German and basically unsympathetic to the plight of Jews.

Significantly, the vast majority of Dutch lay low and went about their business as if nothing had happened, she observed.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, the Jews of Holland were not as well integrated into Dutch society as commonly believed.

As a result, few Jews knew Christians well enough to ask for help when they most needed it.

"Jews were seen as a separate group, and on the whole, there was not much interaction between Jews and non-Jews," she writes. "Dutch mainstream society was always very aware of who was Jewish, even if Jews were highly assimilated."

Wolf, whose mother was born in Anne Frank's hometown, Frankfurt, Germany, claims that both the Dutch monarchy and the government-in-exile exhibited "complete indifference" to the fate of their Jewish citizens by virtue of their "lack of concern" over the deportations.

The Dutch railways deported Jews to the Westerbork concentration camp, while Dutch Nazis and local police were involved in the roundup of Jews.

"There was no dearth of Dutch willing to help the Nazis," she said.

As for Anne Frank, Wolf is unequivocal. "The Dutch betrayed her," she said, alluding to the man who informed the Germans

where she and her family had gone into hiding in Amsterdam.

During the Nazi interregnum, 5,000 Jewish children, mostly under the age of five, were hidden. Brought to safe havens by members of the resistance, they were passed off as non-Jews so that they and their foster parents would not be exposed to Nazi retaliation.

"They underwent massive identity makeovers in their moves from their natal Jewish families to their life-saving Dutch gentile families, in which their names, places of origin, histories and religions were radically revised," she states.

Dutch rescuers usually hailed from working-class and middle-class backgrounds and were motivated by altruism, religious beliefs or financial gain, said Wolf, who discovered

the topic when a Dutch colleague told her about Dutch state involvement in Jewish family reunification after the war.

In general, the children were well treated, though some were subjected to anti-Semitic slurs.

Their problems really began after Holland was liberated from the Nazi yoke in 1945. As one of Wolf's 70 interlocutors admitted, "My war began after the war."

In her estimation, 3,500 hidden Jewish children survived. The rest were betrayed and murdered.

Most of the hidden children were reunited with their biological parents, often in gut-wrenching scenes in which they failed to recognize them and desperately wished to remain with their foster parents.

"It was a traumatic experience for everyone concerned," said Wolf, adding that some parents, whether biological or foster, resorted to kidnappings to reclaim the children.

Ultimately, hundreds of them ended up

with their gentile foster parents, much to the indignation of the Jewish community.

In cases where one of the biological parents had died, a child's fate was determined by a central government committee, headed by a strict Calvinist who felt that Jews had to be "saved" from Judaism. The committee's Jewish membership was composed of assimilated Jews, she said, noting that Orthodox Jews and Zionists were excluded.

The sometimes cavalier manner in which these children were treated mirrored broader attitudes toward Jews as the war wound down, Wolf explained.

Refusing to create separate welfare organizations to deal with the rehabilitation of postwar Dutch Jews, the Dutch government-in-exile hewed to the belief that Jewish survivors should be helped by Dutch or inter-

national Jewish charities. Dutch authorities claimed they did not want to emulate the Nazis and make an exception of Jews, arguing that special treatment could stoke the fires of anti-Semitism.

Wolf does not buy these arguments, saying that they smacked of insensitivity and, perhaps, anti-Semitism.

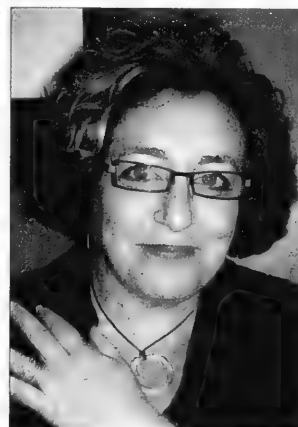
"All in all," she writes, "the reception Dutch Jews got when they returned or reintegrated into society was mostly unexpected and quite negative."

In summing up, Wolf claims that the history of hidden children in Holland is not a pretty story, shattering the myth that the majority of Dutch resisted Nazi tyranny and helped Jews.

Similarly, Holland's postwar policies toward Jews, including its miserly attitude toward the repatriation of Jewish property, were at best insensitive and at worst anti-Semitic.



Sheldon Kirshner
in Toronto



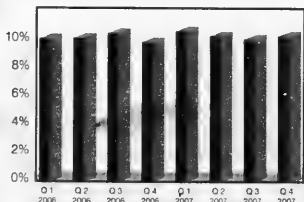
Diane Wolf

[Sheldon Kirshner photo]

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Greater Toronto Area

Shul merger talks called off

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Preliminary merger talks between the Lodzer Centre Congregation and the Pride of Israel Synagogue have ended, after Lodzer members expressed objections at a Jan. 20 meeting to learn about the possible alliance.

"While our members understood some potential benefits of a merger, it was vital to our membership that we preserve the uniqueness of our shul," synagogue president Judy Hazan said in a Jan. 21 news release.

The release said that meeting attendees "insisted that the Lodzer Centre's small size (275 families) and its connection to the Holocaust (the synagogue was built by survivors from Lodz, Poland) must be preserved so that 'we will never forget' this important aspect of our Jewish heritage.

"The members' consensus was to continue building on their strengths" including a growing young families group that holds child-friendly Shabbat services twice a month, the release said.

Lodzer members want to stay independent

Although there was no formal vote at the meeting, which was attended by about 120 people, the merger committee felt there was no point pursuing the option, given the degree of opposition among members, Hazan told *The C.J.N.*

Members are "passionate that [the Lodzer] is a monument to the memory of their families," she said.

"They want that building, those bricks, those windows, just the way they are."

"The good thing that came out of the process was a shaking up of things and a commitment to make our shul work," she said. As a result of the meeting, she added, new people have joined committees in "key areas" including fundraising, programming, marketing and financial.

"That's going to make a big difference."

In a November letter to congregants, which outlined reasons for considering the merger, Hazan wrote that the shul's building, located on Heaton Street near Bathurst Street and Sheppard Avenue, needs repairs and expansion to accommodate more of the programs that the synagogue would like to offer.

As well, she wrote at the time, the costs of paying the rabbi, cantor, ba'al koreh and a leader for the congregation's young family service are higher than the synagogue's income from dues, High Holy Day tickets and fundraising.

Both synagogues are unaffiliated, but have services that are Conservative in style. The Lodzer Centre is egalitarian, while Pride of Israel is more traditional.

Joe Goldstein, Pride of Israel's chairman of the board, said that it's "business as usual" at his 450-member synagogue following the news.

"We are always open to negotiations with any organization that approaches us regarding a merger," he added.

The shul, an outgrowth of a sick benefit society established in 1905, has seen its membership decline significantly over the past few decades. In 1999, there were 750 families. It has been at its current building on Bathurst north of Steeles Avenue since 1968.

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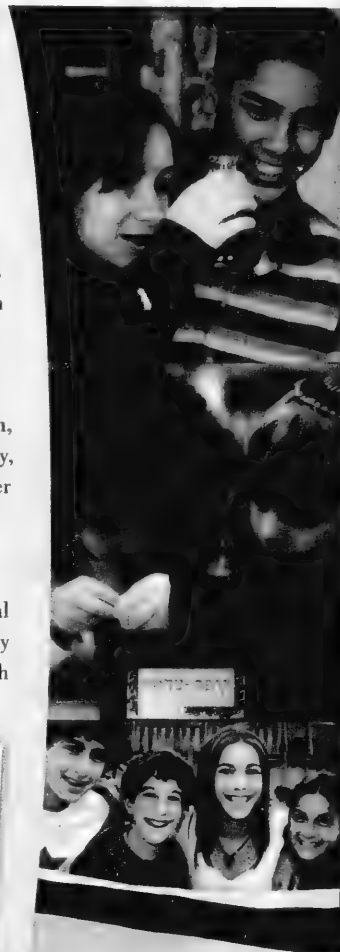
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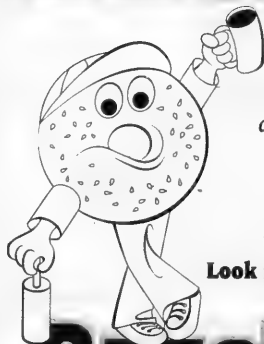
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Greater Toronto Area

Hamas scores PR victory amid Gazan misery

Recent events in Gaza were played out front and centre in the international media. The focus was mainly on the downtrodden Palestinians, although the security threats to Israel were given at least some coverage.

On Jan. 23, the barrier separating Gaza from Egypt fell (after a well-planned demolition by Hamas), and thousands of Gazans jubilantly crossed the border.

As Kevin Peraino wrote in "The PR War in Gaza," (Jan. 23 Newsweek.com): "It's hard to imagine a more vivid postcard of Palestinian deprivation than the scene this morning at the sun-bleached crossing between Egypt and the Gaza Strip."

Peraino noted: "Over the last few weeks, the Islamists have looked much more adept at playing the public-relations game, using powerful television images to stoke international sympathies."

Similarly, in "Hamas exposes Israeli weakness in Gaza," Jan. 23, Reuters reporter Adam Entous wrote: "Hamas has exposed Israel's inability to rein in the Gaza Strip, proving it holds the power to blow open the border and turn a crippling Israeli blockade into a public relations nightmare for the Jewish state."

Many Israeli analysts concurred. For example, in "The real Gaza disengagement" (Ynetnews, Jan. 24), Alex Fishman remarked: "Hamas not only broke through the economic and diplomatic siege, it also scored international points and forced pro-western Arab regimes to show solidarity [with it]... Yesterday, it was Egypt's turn to fall into the trap laid by one of the most sophisticated productions ever seen in the Middle East: Hamas wrote, directed, and produced it in conjunction with the Muslim Brotherhood and their main channel – al-Jazeera. The target audience: The Arab world, Israel, the United Nations and Europe."

Fishman went on to argue that the Gaza breach was not just another public relations setback for Israel, but also the beginning of a new dynamic in which Egypt will have to assume more responsibility for Gaza – something Israelis are skeptical of given Egypt's very poor record of preventing heavy arms smuggling into Gaza.

Prior to the border breach, Israel had imposed a blockade on Gaza in response

to an unceasing barrage of rocket fire on Israel's southern communities.

Most media outlets ran pictures of Palestinian civilians – with a special focus on children – in Gaza City carrying candles to provide light in the night darkened by Israel's withholding fuel to the city's electricity-generating station.

Often minimized was the fact that although Israel supplies 70 per cent of Gaza's electricity, it did not cut back on all of it, and there was still power in the rest of Gaza. Despite this, the drama provided the perfect backdrop for the European Union and humanitarian organizations to accuse Israel of "collective punishment."

Nevertheless, the *Globe and Mail* Jan. 22 editorial, "Blame it on Hamas," captured the cynical nature of Hamas' policy. It argued that Israel's "gesture" of easing the sanctions would not "in any way encourage Hamas to order its thugs to rein in their attacks on civilian targets in Israel."

The paper wrote: "The villains in the tawdry drama being played out at the expense of the impoverished and downtrodden Gazans should be obvious. But in case it's not, here's a hint: It's not Israel."

The *Globe* noted that Israel was trying to find a non-lethal way to pressure Hamas to stop the rocket fire, but had to incur the wrath of the United Nations and other organizations that condemned the blockade.

The editorial quoted Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni: "Israel is the only country in the world that supplies electricity to terror groups which in turn fire rockets at it."

Also, many TV news reports showed Qassams being fired so that viewers could understand the plight of Israeli civilians. In a Jan. 22 report (shown on NewsWorld) the BBC ran an interview with an Israeli woman living in the path of the Qassams, who said: "Two days without electricity? It's not so bad. It's a very passive way of saying to Gaza, to Hamas, this has to stop. There has to be a way of stopping it, and I think that instead of [Israel] throwing bombs on Gaza, stopping electricity is a very humanitarian way of saying, 'Stop the rockets!'"

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

According to Reports

By
PAUL MICHAELS



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Poster promoting ISRAEL APARTHEID WEEK at the University of Toronto depicting Israel as a police state comparable to South Africa.

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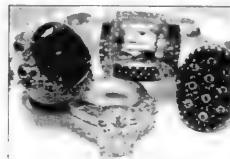


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Jewish Life

What the slave can teach us

By RABBI AVRAM ROTHMAN

Parshat Mishpatim, which we are reading this week, has among its many thought-provoking ideas one that I find particularly odd, but also poignantly important in these times.

The parashah tells us that at the end of six years of work, a man who has acquired a Jewish slave – as a way, for example, for the slave to pay restitution for a theft – must allow the slave to go free. However, if the slave indicates that he would prefer to remain a slave, even after his debt and time have been served, he may do so with the enactment of a very odd ritual. The master is required to take an awl and use it to bore a hole through the ear of the slave while standing against the doorpost of the home.

Rashi, apparently bothered by this ritual, asks what the significance is of such an odd action? What is the message in drilling a hole into a person's ear that has some relevance to being a slave?

Rashi answers the question by quoting from the Talmud: "The ear that

heard on Sinai 'You are to be slaves to Me' and nevertheless chose to sell himself into slavery (acquiring a different master for himself) and then chose to remain in servitude when he had the opportunity to go free is deserving of punishment."

Well, that's all well and good, but I certainly have a problem with this. It was not his ear that was at fault, but his brain.

The ear is a receptacle for hearing sound, but it's his brain that did not actualize what he heard. The ear did its job, while the brain, clearly, did not. Perhaps they should have punched a hole in his brain, rather than his ear, since the slave certainly heard what had been said at Mount Sinai, but he simply didn't allow it to enter into his brain!

The answer is, in fact, it's the ear's fault, because the message remained only in the ear. The trouble with this person is that he heard, externally, but he did not listen. He didn't internalize the message of, "They shall be slaves to Me; not slaves to other slaves." That was his sin. The message remained only in the ear. It literally went in one

ear and out the other.

How clearly we see this in today's TV-watching, moviegoing and sports-following society. We in many ways have become a society of spectators, even in relation to our own lives. We don't allow messages to enter our psyche, but rather we let them sit, externally, in our ear, not entering our brain.

We watch life, even our own lives, and believe that there's nothing we can do to change. We are what we are. But in reality, if we only allow the messages of the Torah, our Jewish tradition, to enter from our ear into our consciousness, we will be able to free ourselves from our own bonds of slavery, slavery to what we allow ourselves to remain as, rather than who we can become.

Taking the Torah's messages from our ear and bringing it into our brain – that is, truly listening to the message, not just passively hearing it – teaches us that we can become as great, as good and as spiritual as we want to be, and become the person we truly want to become.

Rabbi Avram Rothman is spiritual leader of the Thornhill Community Shul in Thornhill, Ont.

Holding tight with open arms

Parents' weekend at my son's university convinced me of one thing: I am definitely not as old as those other parents.

They look old enough to be my parents. They look so uncool, so parental.

At one point, however, I saw my son looking at me looking at him, and it hit me like a brick: through my son's eyes, I definitely looked as old as those other parents. This was made even harder because my son goes to my alma mater, and I kept thinking it was me and my friends in the library, me and my friends in the cafeteria, me and my friends in the dorm – but actually it's me and my friends who will be at our 30th reunion this June.

That's the truth, and hey, it hurts a bit.

When we send our kids off to college we send ourselves off, too, in a sense. Just as the bar mitzvah represents a rite of passage for the whole family – changing the family dynamic and reminding us that we don't have a "baby" anymore –

so, too, does sending the first child off to university hold up a mirror of aging to both us and our kid.

They have to learn that they, too, are growing older. They must budget their time and their money,

develop their own serious relationships – though we may not

always be thrilled with the people they choose – and determine their own Jewish life, observances and attitudes. This may be exciting for them, but boy is it scary for us.

Watching my son at university, I felt exactly the same way I felt on his first day of junior kindergarten: utterly proud and utterly

lost. How do I relate to this kid who is no longer a baby? How do I relate to this boy who is now a man?

The two most important things I think I've given my son are roots and wings.

When it comes to roots, parents of young children should prepare now so that they feel confident that their child is firmly rooted in their family and in Judaism when she/he

goes off in the future.

And when it comes to wings, we should recall the story of a man who once found the cocoon of a butterfly with a small opening. He watched the butterfly as it struggled to force its body through that little hole, but it seemed to stop making any progress. He decided to help it. He took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining cocoon. The butterfly emerged with a swollen body and small, shrivelled wings. It was never able to fly.

In his kindness, the man did not understand that the struggle required for the butterfly to get through the tiny opening was God's way of forcing fluid from its body into its wings so that it would be ready for flight. It couldn't be helped to do this.

Likewise, parents must be careful not to help so much that their kids cannot endure a struggle. The late Rabbi Milton Steinberg called this "holding tight with open arms."

All during parents' weekend, I felt the blending of love and loss that defines parenthood. And so did all those other old, uncool parents just like me.

IDEAS ON IDENTITY



By Rabbi
Elyse
Goldstein

Jewish Life

Long gone are the days when teachers were those who could find no other employment. Thank God our Jewish schools have many talented teachers who could be successful in a host of other professions that offer higher salaries. Yet *The CJN* (Jan. 17) reported that suggestions have been made that "options for lowering the cost of education include decreasing teacher salaries."

Emotions aside, it behooves us to examine the perspective of Jewish law on this issue.

Jewish law prohibits receiving compensation for the performance of mitzvot. Torah observance links man to the Divine: "The same way I [God] [taught Torah] for free, so too you [are to teach for] free" (Bechorot 29a). Interestingly, a similar issue exists regarding doctors who perform the vital tasks of tending to our physical health.

While such a volunteer system may have been viable when parents were the main teachers of Torah (and as a result, sadly, most Jews remained ignorant), clearly it's impossible to expect those who dedicate their lives to teaching (or healing) to do so for free.

The Talmud (Ketuvot 105a) records that judges were to be compensated from public funds. Noting that a judge who accepts payment for his judgments renders those judgments null and void, the Talmud asserts that payment is not

What should we pay teachers?

actually given for rendering judgment but as *shekar batala*, what we today call opportunity cost.

By eschewing other forms of employment and making themselves available to serve the public, they have no other means of support and thus must be compensated from the public treasury, much as civil servants are today. That the public and not the litigants themselves compensate the judges has the added benefit of justice having no direct correlation to income, something that is, sadly, not always the case today. Since public servants are being paid out of public, and thus charitable, funds, following the principles of tzedakah, they would be paid, the Talmud notes, according to need. Those with larger families would receive greater levels of compensation (a big baby bonus).

The concept of paying public servants according to a charity scale does not resonate well in our egalitarian culture (and might very well be illegal in Canada). Equal pay for equal work irrespective of personal circumstances is the way our marketplace operates (in theory). In any event, such a need-based payment scale only applies to those who are permanently on call for public service and thus

have no opportunity for other employment.

Whether such a salary system would apply even in theory to modern-day, full-time teachers is quite debatable. For better or worse, teachers are often expected to seek other employment to make ends meet, yet no doubt a teaching schedule severely limits their options. (It's worth noting that Jewish law generally prohibits moonlighting, recognizing that it would impair a person's ability to properly perform his or her regular job.)

Nonetheless, all who engage in teaching Torah, whether part time or full time, are entitled to payment in lieu of wages that they could have earned elsewhere. Calculating such an amount is no simple matter. Does it mean paying them what they could actually earn in practice, which might be very little, or what they theoretically could have earned, which could mean six- or even seven-figure salaries?

Public service salaries, including those of teachers, are not, and perhaps should not be, able to compete with those in the private sector. Yet by not offering salaries that are at least in the same ballpark, we lose many people who would contribute greatly to the Jewish community. And for that we are all the poorer.

Send comments to rabbijay@torahinmotion.org

Money Matters



By Rabbi Jay Kelman CA

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By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

In a couple of weeks, Israelis will take centre court as Israel hosts Sweden in the first round of one of tennis's premier events, the Davis Cup.

Last fall, all eyes were on Dudi Sela as he faced world No. 6 Fernando Gonzalez. As the

Jerusalem Post put it, "In what is arguably the greatest tennis match to be played in Israel, Sela, who was then ranked 99 places below his Chilean opponent, defeated Gonzalez 4-6, 7-6 (5), 5-7, 7-6 (7), 6-3 in a five-hour-long David versus Goliath match-up... Neither Sela nor Israeli sport would ever be the same afterward." [tinyurl.com/zuhtw5]

A little over the top? Not when you watch the crowd explode after Sela's historic match point. [tinyurl.com/2644v4] And thanks to that win, in a couple of weeks, Israel will play host to Sweden in the first round of the 2008 Davis Cup World Group. In honour of that upcoming meet, let's look at some of Israel's tennis greats.

Israelis – and Jews in general – have had a strong association with the game. Wikipedia lists 50 Jewish players [tinyurl.com/yuxxmt] and JewishSports.org profiles more than 50 more. [tinyurl.com/2znev] A current note of note is Shahar Peer, who is ranked 17 in WTA standings and will represent Israel this week in the Fed Cup against defending champion Russia. [tinyurl.com/29d4p92] I found a lovely clip on YouTube of Peer talking about career and playing tennis with some kids in New York City. [tinyurl.com/2envev] You can watch her in action as she wins the Istanbul Tennis Cup. [tinyurl.com/2zhpsp]

The Jewish Highway



Another bright light is Anna Smashnova. JewishSports says "Smashnova not only has one of the great names in the history of tennis, she is also Israel's top female tennis player." Smashnova has been in 13 finals and has won 12 of them. [tinyurl.com/2f76e7]

Looking back into the record books, two of Israel's most famous players are Amos Mansdorf and Shlomo Glickstein. Glickstein is Israel's all-time leader in total wins, singles wins (31), and doubles wins (13). One of the highlights in his career came in November 1979, when "Glickstein managed to stretch John McEnroe to three sets in the first round of the Stockholm Grand Prix after losing the first set 6-0 in five minutes. "Shlomo realized," noted [coach Ron] Steele, "that the giants of the game were only human." Glickstein learned that aggressiveness pays off." [tinyurl.com/3xyub6]

Amos Mansdorf reached an all-time career high of 18th rank in the WTA and defeated such top players as Wimbledon champion Michael Stich and then-fourth-ranked Boris Becker in other tournaments. [tinyurl.com/37hx3h] The late Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin once said that Mansdorf was the person he most admired. [tinyurl.com/yuvxps]

Many of Israel's tennis superstars got their start at the Israeli Tennis Center. According to its site, the centre operates the largest children's tennis program in the world "changing the lives of more than 350,000 families, five per cent of the population."

There are 14 centres in the country from Kiryat Shmona to Arad. [tinyurl.com/3cm2jp] For the latest tennis news in Hebrew, check out One.co.il, [tinyurl.com/2bxtvx] as well as the Israel Tennis Association's Hebrew-only site. [ita.one.co.il]

When Israel takes to the court on Feb. 8, it will be the country's first appearance in the Davis Cup since 1994. But Israel's association with the competition goes all the way back to the early months of the state when Israel played Denmark in April 1949. Its best Davis Cup performance came in 1987 when it reached the quarterfinals. In order to claim the cup this time, Israel must advance to the quarterfinals in April, the semifinals in September and the finals in November. [tinyurl.com/3x22yb]

That may sound daunting, but the *Jerusalem Post* is excited about Israel's chances. In a recent overview of the sport, it proclaimed that with athletes such as Sela and Peer, "The 2008 season promises to be one of Israeli tennis's greatest ever." [tinyurl.com/3ezuum]

Whenever I write my columns, I try to find some connection between the topic at hand and Judaism. This week is no different. So let me leave you with these words. [tinyurl.com/23p6c3]

Q: How do we know that tennis is mentioned in the Bible?

A: "And Joseph served in Pharaoh's court."

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.



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Fraser Institute offers tuition grants to needy families

By **FRANCES KRAFT**
Staff Reporter

Children First: School Choice Trust – a program of the Fraser Institute, a conservative think tank – is in its sixth year of offering grants to low-income families for tuition at private schools, including religious schools.

The program, which began in 2003, covers half the cost of tuition, at any Ontario private school that is registered with the provincial ministry of education, up to a maximum of \$4,000.

They are available as early as junior kindergarten and are renewable until students complete Grade 8, subject to funding availability.

In Ontario, the program, which is funded by the W. Garfield Weston Foundation, supports about 1,000 children at more than 200 private schools. Recipients include 57 students at 13 different Jewish schools, mostly in the Toronto area, according to Michael Thomas, director of the program.

Jewish day school tuition in the Toronto area ranges from about \$10,500 to more than \$14,000 per year in the elementary grades.

There are also two students receiving grants at Jewish schools in Calgary, where the program was instituted more recently.

Other sources of funding – such as subsidies or family support – for the remaining portion of tuition do not affect eligibility, said Thomas.

If grantees remain eligible for the program, they are allowed to renew their grant every year until Grade 8. That means there are about 300 openings for new grantees in Ontario, Thomas said.

Sometimes students leave the program if they move out of province or transfer to the public school system, he noted.

Family income is the sole deciding factor for grant eligibility, although with many

more applicants than available money, new grants are awarded based on a lottery.

To qualify, household income "must not exceed amounts equal to twice the poverty line as defined by the [Fraser Institute's] Basic Needs Index," to the program's website says.

More specifically, for a family of four to qualify for the coming school year, 2007 income would have to be less than \$52,817. Likewise, for a family of three, \$45,469; two people \$37,411, five people, \$59,653; and six or more in the household \$66,091.

Thomas noted that some parents have come up with "really creative solutions" to pay for the portion of tuition not covered by the grant. He recalled two cases (not at Jewish schools) in which parents worked on a volunteer basis at their children's schools in exchange for tuition credit.

"Children First helps families who have different needs, whether it's a desire for smaller class sizes to help their kids catch up, developing artistic talents, or just wanting a safe school that teaches values important to the family," Thomas said in a news release.

The impetus for the program, Thomas said, was research conducted by Claudia Hepburn, the institute's director of education policy, on student performance when parents have greater choice of schools.

Among its findings were improved student literacy and improvement in performance of public schools, Thomas said.

Although many scholarships exist for post-secondary education, the Children First program was the first of its kind in Canada and is the only one of its kind in Ontario, said Thomas.

He followed with interest last fall's provincial election, when funding of faith-based schools was a key issue, but "because we're a registered charity, we remain non-partisan and don't take positions on those kinds of debates."

However, he added, "certainly there would have been a benefit to many of our families [if government funding of faith-based schools had been implemented], and it would have allowed us to help more families attending other schools." He noted that approximately 75 per cent of Ontario's 800 private schools are faith-based.

Grant applications are available online at www.childrenfirst-grants.ca. Applications can also be submitted by registered mail or by calling 1-866-924-8881.

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RECESS BUDDIES TO THE RESCUE: Grade 4 "recess buddies" Carly Stern, left, and Rachel Kaplan, right, pose with Grade 1 student Madeline Roll, centre, from Associated Hebrew Schools' Kamin campus in Thornhill, where Grade 4 students learn how to help Grade 1 students resolve conflicts, learn new games, help each other, and make friends on the playground during recess time.

Teacher brings the outdoors to school

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Harry Shuber is a whitewater canoeist, sea kayaker and expedition guide who plays hockey twice a week.

He is a fan of the Red Hot Chili Peppers and has played electric bass in bands at Toronto clubs since he was a high school student at the Toronto French School in the early 1990s.



"They are
our teachers..."

But Mr. Shuber, as his students call him, maintains a certain formality in his Grade 7 and 8 classroom at the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School.

Neatly dressed, with a patterned tie complementing his black shirt – typical attire, he says – Shuber, who is also the school's middle school curriculum development co-ordinator, said in an interview last week that he believes a "visible difference" between students and teacher makes the students feel more at ease.

But he added that regardless of what a teacher is wearing, "kids realize if there's substance or not."

The 32-year-old Toronto native brings an eclectic background to the classroom. Before

A lesson from the teacher:

"The most important thing is believing deep down that you really can positively impact whatever situation you happen to find yourself in."

completing his bachelor of education degree at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto, he received a BA in history from U of T and a post-graduate certificate from Humber College's eco and adventure tourism program. He also spent a year studying for a bachelor of music degree at McGill University, majoring in jazz performance.

With a resumé that includes tutoring, coaching basketball, and working at Camp Northland-B'nai Brith, Shuber said that pursuing a teaching career was always something that interested him.

After a five-year-stint at Arlington Middle School, Shuber joined Paul Penna's brand new middle school in 2006 as curriculum development co-ordinator and a teacher of core subjects, including math, social studies and language arts.

Last June, he led the school's first annual canoe expedition to Algonquin Provincial Park.

Thematic study units during the year build toward the trip. A map of the park hangs on his classroom wall, and numerous thriving plants represent Shuber's attempt to "bring nature in."

Several times during the interview, he mentioned the importance of developing critical thought in students – "having them question,

question, question," he said.

However, he added, they have to do the work necessary to be able to question. "You want them to be engaged and move along the passive-to-active continuum."

Shuber – who said he is "incredibly excited about" his work – believes that spontaneity, humour, respect, dealing with situations that arise, and "keeping young people on the edge of their seats" so that they want to know what is next are all important aspects of teaching.

As a teacher, he said, "you've got to be incredibly well prepared... All of what you'd like to see in a student, you should see in yourself."



Harry Shuber

New Israel Fund of Canada
הקן החדשה לישראל

and



Present



Professor Gerald Cromer
Religious Pluralism in Israel:
An Issue For All Jews

Monday, February 4th at 7:30 PM
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Religious pluralism is usually regarded as solely an issue for Reform and Conservative Jews because of their lack of equal rights in Israel. Professor Cromer argues that it should not be of concern only to these groups. In fact, in an open society, a more pluralistic approach is ultimately advantageous to all Jews.

Gerald Cromer is Professor of Criminology at Bar-Ilan University where he has published in the areas of political extremism, political violence and terrorism. Professor Cromer is a founding member of Kehillat Yedidya, a modern orthodox congregation that has a long history of a more active role for women in the ritual and organizational aspects of the community and is involved in other nascent liberal Orthodox groups in Israel. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the New Israel Fund and involved in the Fund's work in the area of pluralism.



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Health & Lifestyles

Brain injury survivors display courage day after day

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Courage isn't always about fighting fires and saving lives. Sometimes, the simple act of living day to day is the truer mark of valour.

That's what a high-powered Toronto audience of nearly 150 people learned last week at the city's fourth annual Hawaiian Oyster Odyssey fundraiser, held at a mid-town restaurant in support of the Brain Injury Society of Toronto (BIST) and the Brain Injury Association of Canada (BIAC).

Howard Brown, a founding director of the national charity – his cousin, Steven Sieber, succumbed to a traumatic brain injury in 2001 at age 46 after being hit by a car in 1977 – is also the voluntary fundraising chair of the association and the inspiration behind the yearly event.

"This is the height of [tikun olam] in action," Brown told *The C/N*. "There are many support organizations out there already for other causes, but we're bringing awareness to a community who need our help and our advocacy. My cousin is no longer here, but what better way to honour his memory than this fundraiser?"

As for why organizers chose a "Hawaiian Oyster" theme, oysters contain zinc, a mineral thought to help the brain maintain "peak performance." The Hawaiian theme reflects the most coveted prize of the event's annual silent auction – a pair of tickets to Hawaii courtesy of Air Canada.

Guests were bedecked with leis and treated to 1950s surf music, as well as an oyster-shucking contest and Hawaiian punch. They were encouraged to bid lavishly on

items in the silent auction to benefit the two organizations.

But most importantly, attendees heard from the evening's VIPs, as one by one, the gala's hosts – all young survivors of brain injuries – stood up to recount their life-altering stories and appeal for financial aid in order to increase awareness of this debilitating condition.

According to BIAC, more than 50,000 Canadians sustain brain injuries every year, which are the "number 1 killer and disabler of people under 45."

Symptoms of brain injury include loss of emotional control, memory loss, impaired reasoning skills, speech impairment, nausea, confusion, chronic headaches

and various cognitive impairments. And every sufferer manifests their symptoms uniquely, making brain injury difficult to treat and diagnose.

The worst part for many is the realization of what they've lost and seeing that reflected in the eyes of their friends and families. The crushing depression that can follow – as their old, vibrant selves are replaced by an unrecognizable, altered version – is common among survivors.

Megan Patterson, past-president of BIST, who breathes using a tracheostomy tube, recalled her injury to *The C/N*. "I was in a coma for two weeks after my car accident,"



Howard Brown and Ontario Health Minister George Smitherman share a smile at the Brain Injury Association of Canada fundraiser in Toronto.

she said. "It's 11 years later, and I'm getting through it with the amazing support of my family and friends. I now volunteer to help make things easier for other victims. But I wish I'd had someone who would've helped mentor me through this earlier on."

Patterson, 31, hopes to address this need by rolling out a program of brain injury peer mentoring with BIST later this year.

Danny Betts, 31, another BIST volunteer, had his life changed in an instant.

"At 29, I slid off a motorcycle 40 feet into a [parked car] and was diagnosed with severe traumatic brain injury," he recalled with stilted speech and a sad look on his face. "Since then, my perception of reality has changed. Most days, I can't remember

what I ate for breakfast [or] if I even had breakfast. I was once an up-and-comer. Now, I'm having a very hard time."

Also in attendance was Sarah Briggs, 33, a former member of the national ski team. In 1994, at 19, Briggs endured a catastrophic wipe-out on the slopes of Mont Ste. Anne in Quebec and had a bright future almost completely snuffed out.

"My face took the full impact of the fall, and then I slid face-first down nearly 30 feet of slope. I had 11 hours of reconstructive surgery, spent 13 days in the hospital. Most of the time, I feel very lucky to be alive," Briggs said. "Afterwards, I thought my life would go back to normal. Nothing was further from the truth. I've had [electro-convulsive therapy], suffered depression, had a psychotic episode... and had to withdraw from my teaching work. I was crushed."

But Briggs vowed to the audience that she is still fighting to get her life back.

"I'm discovering there are many things I can still do. This is my focus now instead of [focusing] on all the things I was told I could not do," she said.

According to Brown, last week's Toronto fundraiser brought in nearly \$100,000, and since 2005, similar BIAC events have raised more than \$500,000 in communities across Canada.

BIAC's Oyster Odyssey campaign started with one event in 2005 and this year features 10 galas scheduled for major urban centres coast to coast. Each will benefit the local community's brain injury society.

Brown and his wife, Kim Cohen – who together run Toronto PR firm Brown & Cohen Communications & Public Affairs Inc. – have used both their personal and business contacts to attract big-name donors and supporters to the events.

On hand to express their support were numerous politicians, businesspeople and philanthropists, including Ontario Minister of Education Kathleen Wynne, Minister of Health and Long Term Care George Smitherman, Willowdale MPP David Zimmer, MP Carolyn Bennett and former Toronto mayor David Crombie.

"There's a humbling [feeling] that this could be any one of us," Bennett said after listening to Briggs' story. "As a family doctor, I remember knowing patients before their injury and then watching the courage they had to get through afterwards."

Said Brown: "We have two objectives. To build community and show brain injury survivors that their voice is heard," he said. "That's why it's important that [politicians] get to hear their stories first-hand."

Cohen concurred, adding: "At the end of the day, you take satisfaction from all the people and sponsors who made donations to help people who are not otherwise helped."

For more information about brain injury and BIAC's work, visit www.biacc-acle.ca.

*'This is
the height of
[tikun olam]
in action'*

New project will send bikes to Israel for kids in need

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

Just for fun last year, 54-year-old transplanted Montrealer Yehoshua Wolman decided to take a course in bicycle mechanics and repair given by the Toronto District School Board.

When he learned that his teacher overhauled and refurbished bikes and sent them to Cuba and Africa, he decided "let me do something for my people too."

He has established an organization called bicycles4israel, which aims to take used bikes, fix them up if needed, and ship them to Israel. He intends to raise funds to pay for the shipping.

In Israel, Wolman said, many people use bikes to get from one place to another. "They are not just a luxury."

"I will take any bike – kids' bikes, street bikes, women's and men's." Even if the bikes can't be salvaged, he said, he can sometimes use the parts.

Wolman said he can also use lights, mirrors, helmets, water bottles for bicycles, and their cages, horns and bells. He will even have the bikes or accessories picked up.

Once the bicycles are refurbished, he will send them to Israel. An individual from the Israeli Cycling Federation will distribute them to needy children.

Wolman said one thing he needs now is to find storage and working space. At the moment, he has 10 or 15 bikes in a friend's garage and some on his balcony.

"But a balcony isn't very good in the winter," he said dryly. To contact Wolman, call 416-689-7200 or e-mail bicycles4israel@gmail.com.



Yehoshua Wolman starts fixing a bicycle that will be given to a child in Israel.

Guest Voice

75 years since Hitler came to power

By ALEK SILVER

"Black January" is the term used by historians to describe the infamous day in January 1933 when Adolf Hitler and his Nazi party came to power in Germany – and not through a coup or a revolution.

The Nazi party nominated more candidates than any other political party for the 1933 election. The nomination of Adolf Hitler came from the almost senile German president, Field Marshall Paul von Hindenburg, who, by all accounts, did not realize the fatal mistake he was making and the tragedy he was bringing to the world by giving Hitler the opportunity to ascend to the highest position in the country. And the rest, as the saying goes, is history.

Hindenburg's political advisers, who urged him to nominate Hitler, miscalculated. They thought that they would be able to tame and control the "wild beast" by giving him the power to lead his nation.

The beast, however, would not allow anybody to tame him. On the contrary, once he became Germany's chancellor, he became more bloodthirsty, venom-spitting and power-hungry with every day, killing anybody who stood in his way.

There are still people alive today who remember the large headlines "screaming off" the front pages of the newspapers on Jan. 30, 1933, when it was announced in the Bundestag (parliament) that Hitler had been elected chancellor of the Third Reich.

Not all nations condemned the election results. Those countries that had fascist regimes and histories of anti-Semitism welcomed Hitler to power, not realizing that the long arm of the beast would also reach them. But one thing was realized at the time: world politics had changed.

The truth is that the parliamentary system in Germany dissolved after 1930. Although presenting a democratic face to the world, Germany was ruled by a dictatorial regime with secret laws.

In the early 1930s, the world was in a crisis, with unem-

ployment rampant. After Germany's defeat in World War I, the German masses were suffering under the consequences of the Treaty of Versailles, and feeling the shame that came with the country's problems. Crooked German politicians looked after their own interests, rather than the welfare of the people. The German people were docile, however, giving credence to the demagogic slogans of their politicians. The nation was looking for a scapegoat for their woes.

In this atmosphere, Hitler came to power. Millions of Germans erupted in jubilation the day Hitler became chancellor of Germany. They marched in the streets, singing anti-

Semitic songs to military bands. They were led by uniformed Nazi ruffians with swastikas on their sleeves, flaming torches in their outstretched fists and shouting "Heil Hitler." The mass demonstrations were initiated and staged by the notorious Dr. Josef Goebbels, who later became the Nazi propaganda minister.

Hitler gave the German people what they wanted most of all – a scapegoat. He laid at their feet a "sacrifice" in the form of the Jewish nation.

Hitler's plans to annihilate the Jewish race had not been kept secret. He had written about those plans in detail in his manifesto, *Mein Kampf*. He also wrote

about his plans for enslaving the Slavic nations of Europe to give his countrymen more *lebensraum*, living space. Hitler's plans were for a large Germany under the slogan, "Today Germany, tomorrow the whole world."

Looking back 75 years, it is now very clear that the election of Hitler as chancellor of Germany brought about the most horrible tragedy in world history. The tragedy was for his own country, for the world – and most of all – for the Jewish nation that lost more than six million people. Unfortunately, the Nazi and anti-Semitic ideologies are not yet extinguished, and Jews around the world, as well as world leaders, must stand on constant guard against them.

Alek Silver compiles and edits "Yiddish Vinkl" for The CJN.



Nazi thugs in Berlin burn books on May 10, 1933.

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and family**

on the passing of

Eva Feldberg
beloved wife, mother and grandmother

"May the family be comforted among the mourners of Zion"

Jerry Werger
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on the passing of their

beloved mother and grandmother

Renee Nadal

"May the family be comforted among the mourners of Zion"

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On Campus

Orthodox gay rabbi speaks about religion, homosexuality

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Rabbi Steve Greenberg, the first openly gay Orthodox rabbi, was in Toronto last week to discuss the conflict between homosexuality and Judaism and to offer a "poetic" way to interpret the biblical texts that are understood to condemn same-sex relationships.

His lecture, titled "Gayness and God," at the Wolfson Centre for Jewish Campus Life, sponsored by groups including Hillel and Kulanu Toronto, was attended by more than 100 people on Jan. 22. He is a senior teaching fellow at a think-tank called the National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership.

Before delving into the different ways the verse in Leviticus – which states: "a man shall not lie with another man as with a woman; it is an abomination" – can be interpreted, Rabbi Greenberg shared his story about his introduction to Orthodoxy.

Coming from a Conservative family in Columbus, Ohio, it wasn't until he went to a Shabbat service at an Orthodox shul and met an elderly rabbi that he realized Judaism was so important to him.

The rabbi offered Rabbi Greenberg, who was 15 at the time, and three of his friends, the opportunity to study Torah with him each Shabbat morning. He later began to go to shul each morning to dawn.

"I became Orthodox because this world was so precious to me," he said.

Two years later, he enrolled in a yeshiva in Gush Etzion, near Jerusalem.

While in school, he found himself attracted to a fellow yeshiva student. Struggling internally with his feelings, he sought the advice of Rabbi Yosef Shalom Eliashiv, a posek in Jerusalem, one of the most respected arbiters of Jewish law in Israel.

Rabbi Greenberg, who hadn't had any physical relation-

ships with women at that point, said to him, "I'm attracted to both men and women. What should I do?"

Rabbi Eliashiv responded, "You have twice the power of love. Use it carefully."

Rabbi Greenberg said he felt like an enormous weight had been lifted off his shoulders.

"Had I said, 'Can I have a boyfriend?' I'm sure the answer would have been no. I don't want to make it seem like he was permitting anything. He understood that he needed to tell me that my inner life was not ugly. That's what I needed to hear, and that is exactly what he told me."

He said that in the years that followed, he moved to New York and dated women, which became increasingly difficult for him.

In 1983, he was ordained as a rabbi and every year on Yom Kippur, when he read the verse in Leviticus that said that a man lying with a man is an abomination, his heart would break.

"Every year, for nine years, I would sit in the corner of the synagogue... I'd put my talit over my head and I would weep."

He said in the 10th year, he was out of tears and decided that he wanted to get an aliyah to the Torah during the reading of that verse. When he was called to the Torah and the verse was read, a calm came over him

that was completely unexpected.

"It is totally out of the blue, and it dawns on me that my willingness to be vulnerable to the text requires it to be vulnerable to me and to everybody else... Whoever reads that text – if they haven't heard my story, our stories, the thousands upon thousands of stories, the people who live every day with that verse around their neck, crushing their spirits and their thoughts, and their hearts – then they don't know what the verse means... How could they know what it means?"

He said it was then that he realized that it was his responsibility to go to Israel, study the Torah and figure out what the verse means.

What he learned, he outlined in his book, *Wrestling with God and Men: Homosexuality in the Jewish Tradition*. He said that it is not a halachic response, but a poetic one.

Rabbi Greenberg presented a list of rationales for the prohibition in Leviticus.

Among the rationales, the argument that the idea that Jews should only have sex for the purpose of reproduction, is not legitimate.

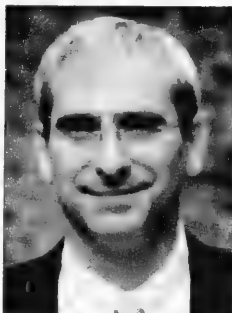
"You still have the obligation of reproduction, but the sex act of itself does not need to be reproductive. It needs to be relational, connected... So to claim that the Torah prohibits sex between men because it isn't reproductive, can't make a great deal of sense."

The second rationale is based on a story in the Gemarah that explains that homosexuality could cause a man to stray from his wife.

"Homosexuality is a problem because married men wander from their marital bed to fool around with men... The reason is because we force everyone to marry. When you have a rule that every one marries, somebody is going to marry a kid who is gay or lesbian and their lives are going to be really hard. And then people will either suffer, cheat on their spouses... So the solution to that problem is... don't force gay people into marriages."

Rabbi Greenberg also argued that the verse is more misogynistic than homophobic.

He said that in biblical times, to punish and humiliate a man was to "penetrate him like a woman."



Rabbi Steve Greenberg

YIDDISH CORNER

Edited by: ALEK SILVER

יידיש - ווינקל

העגאט פון: אלעק סילבער

א ניי בוך און א וויכטיקער געבוירן

טאג פאר הערמאן טאובע

פון אלעק סילבער (פאראנטא)

דער נאמען הערמאן טאובע וועט אפשר נישט זיין שטארק באקאנט אין קאנאדע, אבער אין די פאריניקטע שטאטן פון אמעריקע איז ער שוין גאר שטארק באקאנט. ספעציעל איז ער באקאנט אין דער הויפטשטאט וואשינגטאן ווו ער איז שוין א חושב פאר די לעצטע 40 יאר. זיין וואלט געקענט אנשרייבן א האלבע צייטונג וועגן יידן אקטיוויטעטן, סטטיקייט און אנטייל נעמען אין א גרויסער צאל יידישע און נישט-יידישע אט-סטיטוציעס אין ארגאניזאציעס. איינע פון זיי איז דער "יידישע היסטארישער מעזעס" אין וואשינגטאן. ער איז אויך א סך מאל אויסגעצייכנט געווארן מיט באערונג פלאקן, "אדארדס" און כבוד באגרינגונגען פון רעגירונגס אינסטיטוציעס.

זיין ניי בוך – דאס 2004 איז ערשט ארויס אין ענגליש אונטערן נאמען: *Surviving Despair*, וואס קען אין יידיש איבערגעזעצט ווערן ווי איבערלעבן יאיש' אדער איבערלעבן פארזויגלונג. ווען איד האב גענומען דאס בוך אין האנט און אנגעהויבן לייענען, האב איד נישט געקענט עס אוועקלייגן ביז כ"ב נע-קומען צום סוף. די סיבה ווערט באלד פארשטענדלעך. דאס בוך איז נישט נאר געברייט אויף אמהע פאקטן, עס איז א בוך פון אמת וואס פאקטן.

איד בין נישט קיין ליטעראטור-קריטיקער און איד וועל איד נישט אונטערגענעם דאס צו טאן. מען קען אבער באלד ארויסלייענען, אז הערמאן טאובע האט אנגעווארן אויפן פאפיר "אין ווערטער, וואס די פערזאנען האבן אים איבערגעגעבן און וואס זיינען אריין אין טאובעס הארץ. ווי א שרייבער און ריכטער האט ער דאס איבערגעגעבן אין א שפראך, וואס לייענט דאס ווי א נאטורלעך. דורך טאש צוגעבן זיינע אייגענע אנאליטישע קאמענטארן, איז טאובע געווארן אן ערד צו די עדות, וועלכע האבן אים געגעבן די דאזיקע גכתי'עדות. נאכאמאל איז דאס בוך איצט איבערגעזעצט און ארויסגעגעבן געווארן אין יאפאניש דורך א יאפאניש פארלאג. היינטיקע צייטן איז דאס א זעלנדיג.

איצט וויל איד שרייבן וועגן מיין פריינד הערמאן

טאובע. וועלכער פיינער איצט זיין 90סטן געבוירן-טאג. וויל איד באלד פון אנהייב אונטערשטרייכן, אז עס איז פאר מיר א גרויסער כבוד, וואס ער נעמט מיין אריין אין זיין געזעלשאפט פון פריינד. הערמאן (הערשל צבי) און זיין ליבע פרוי שושנה (סודא) האבן א שיינע טאג-צווייגטע משפחה און א טייל ווילט אין ישראל. זיי האבן 5 קינדער, 8 איבערגעגעבן און 2 אור-אייניקלעך. זאלן זיי לעבן און זיין געזונט. הערמאן און שושנה זיינען פון די אמתע שעסטיקע בצרכי צבור באמאנע.

באלד נאך זייער אנקומען אין אמעריקע האבן זיי אונטערגענומען א מיסע צו העלפן די שארית הפליטה, וואס איז געבליבן ביים לעבן, מיט וואס נאך זיי קענען לעקציעס, פארלעזונגען, פנים-א-פנים געשפרינקען, עס איז אונזיגט געווען צו שווער פאר דעם טאובע פאר-פאלק. די דאזיקע מיסע האלטן זיי נאך אן ביזן היינטיקן טאג און עס איז ביי זיי געווארן דער עלטערע געבאט אין די לחות פון לעבן.

מיין הארץ איז פול מיט, ווינשעוואנדיג, אז מיין פריינד הערמאן, קודם כל דארפן מיר פארזיין, צו דאס לעבן זאל אים געבן די 30 יאר, וואס זיי זיינען אים שולדיק צו די 120 יאר. נאך דעם איז מיין וואונטש פאר גע-זונט, נחם, פרייד און ווידער אמאל געזונט. זאל ער און זיין שושנה נאך קענען אויספירן זייער מיסע פאר לאנגע יארן. מיין טייערער פריינד: Happy Birthday!

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On Campus

Rabbi collaborated on film on Orthodox gay Jews

Continued from page 22

Women were beneath men in value and power and so sex is associated as an act of humiliation, he said.

"The best way to humiliate a man is to insinuate that he was taken by another man... That is how the verse in Leviticus can be framed - do not have sex with another man if it humiliates and debases him."

He said that by viewing homosexual sex within a different frame "it opens up the imagination that sex between men is loving, com-

mitted, generous, and just has nothing to do with that abomination."

During the question-and-answer period, an audience member asked Rabbi Greenberg about his thoughts on gay observant Jews who choose to be celibate.

"I am not against a person deciding that celibacy is the most appropriate way to go. I just don't think it can be demanded on someone. The rabbis understand that a man who isn't married is poverty stricken. He is considered an *ani*. Why? Because to be

without a partner for love, intimacy and companionship is to really be poor... Given the Jewish understanding of what it means to be partnered and in a relationship and how central that is for Jews, I don't think that it would be something the tradition could reasonably demand."

Rabbi Greenberg, who collaborated on the film, *Trembling Before God*, a documentary about Orthodox gay Jews, said he hopes that his interpretations could provide a way for gay people to read the verse and still feel like they

belong to the Jewish community and are embraced by God.

He said that Orthodox rabbis don't have to agree with his rationale, but Orthodox synagogues should adhere to three principles that would make observant gay Jews feel more welcome.

First, a rabbi should never speak in humiliating ways about homosexuality in the pulpit.

Second, gay people shouldn't expect an Orthodox congregation to rally behind them as social and political allies.

"The reason is because the Halachah isn't there yet, but it is also because it took me 15 years to get where I am and I'm not going to go to some straight fellow in an Orthodox synagogue and say, 'Right now, you've got to accept everything that I accept about myself...' I'm a member of the shul, not for political liberation. I'm a member of the shul to be part of a sacred community."

Last, a gay person should never feel like they have to lie about who they are.

"We have been obligated to shame ourselves, and it's causing incredible damage to not be real about who we are... We get to be real, the way that every one else is real. We get to be human in shul. Not lying, not demanding advocacy, but real."

Rabbi Greenberg came out of the closet in 1999, the same year that he helped found Jerusalem Open House, Jerusalem's first gay and lesbian community centre, where he serves as the educational adviser.

McGill Hillel helps form anti-hate coalition

By EZRA GLINTER

Special to The C/JN

MONTREAL — Thanks to Hillel McGill, dozens of campus groups are now working together to fight racism and other forms of hatred.

Launched on Jan. 21, the Student Coalition Against Hate includes 26 student groups including Queer McGill, the Black Students Network and Amnesty McGill.

Spearheaded by Hillel, the coalition aims to combat hatred and prejudice by using the combined strength of its membership to promote lectures and other events.

"Each club on campus stands for something very worthwhile, but separately we only

appeal to a certain number of people. Together we have a much stronger and louder voice to speak with," said Eric Goldberg, president of Hillel McGill and founder of the Coalition Against Hate.

"The initiative was to find like-minded clubs to join with Hillel and to speak out about these very universal issues."

Ariel Pulver, the coalition's president and Hillel's social outreach co-ordinator, also stressed the benefits of broad co-operation among student groups.

"There are all these groups - McGill's a pretty active campus - but attendance at events is often small and limited to people who are already interested. By creating this network and cross-promoting each other's

events, we can ensure a broader platform," she said.

Pulver said the coalition also creates an opportunity for Hillel to work more closely with other student organizations.

"We're trying to do something big and inclusive to form positive relationships with other student groups and to foster a positive atmosphere on campus," she said.

The launch featured a talk by Frank Chalk, a professor of history at Concordia University and the head of the Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies.

Although the coalition is currently unique to McGill, it plans to help set up similar organizations on other university campuses.

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And now for something completely different:

HEEBONICS

New Israel tour offers young Jews a chance to reconnect, Part 2

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

It's not hard to have a good time on a 10-day tour to Israel that's filled with the perfect balance of education, spirituality and fun.

But it's the people you travel with that can turn a good trip into a great one.

On a recent subsidized trip to Israel, organized by Jewish Urban Meeting Place (JUMP), a new social networking group that encourages young Jews to stay connected to their community, 47 Jewish young professionals and students, representing all levels of Jewish involvement came together to rekindle their love affair with the Holy Land.

Travelling from the north to south, east to west, the participants were challenged emotionally, intellectually and spiritually, but also socially.

Despite the fact the JUMP staff makes it a priority to group participants based on age so they can travel with their peers, and despite the fact that all but one of the participants came from the Toronto area, their backgrounds and experiences couldn't have been more diverse.

Still, they were able to find common ground in the connections they made with Israel.

Doron Simacov, 26, was born in Israel and lived there until he was five years old before moving to Toronto, but being a secular Jew, he said he tends to feel an affinity with Israel on a nationalistic level.

The aspect of the tour that resonated with him the most was a meeting at Kibbutz Misgav Am in the Upper Galilee with Arie Ben-Yakov, a 67-year-old kibbutznik who made aliyah in 1961 and is an Israeli war veteran who was unapologetic about his Zionist views.

Ronen Malik, 30, the group's Israeli tour guide and a reservist in the Israel Defence Forces, also shared his dramatic story of war and survival when he served in the Second Lebanon War.

"The main thing that I realized is how Israel survives... The reason such a little place on the map survives is because people are so passionate about it," Simacov said. "They want all Jews to live in Israel and they have so much love for the country. That's what keeps it going."

Keri Saltzman, 26, may connect to Israel in a way that differs from Simacov's experience, but it's just as significant.

Born and raised in Toronto, she is a former Jewish day school student who said she didn't truly begin to explore her heritage and culture until two years ago.

She said her eyes were opened when she travelled to Israel with Aish Hatorah and studied at a seminary for three months. She now considers herself a ba'al tshuvah.

Saltzman said she knew the JUMP trip wasn't going to be framed as a religious tour, but she respected the fact that the madrichim, Debbie Osiel and Shlomo Buzaglio, didn't shy away from incorporating religion into the experience.

"I think it took courage to have the discussions that

we did, to bring in the religious aspects and to have two rabbis on the trip," she said, referring to Rabbi Dani Zwick and Rabbi Daniel Green.

"They created a forum for people to learn without feeling threatened or overwhelmed."

What sticks out in Saltzman's mind as a defining moment of the trip was when Malik told the group that while Japan belongs to the Japanese and China belongs to the Chinese, Israel doesn't belong to the Israelis. It belongs to the Jews.

"That hit me straight in my heart. It just reminded me that this is my home,

too, even though I'm not a born Israeli and I didn't serve in the army... That Jewish bond extends beyond the land itself. It is just that much stronger," Saltzman said.

Polina Litvak, 28, has never taken the Jewish state for granted. Having grown up in Estonia when it was still part of the Soviet Union, she wasn't part of a thriving Jewish community.

"There wasn't a synagogue or anything, but we did go to community events."

She said that while she doesn't remem-

ber being a victim of overt anti-Semitism, "you could get in trouble for being Jewish, but you could also get in trouble for openly attacking Jews... I think my parents just did a good job of protecting me."

Litvak was 13 when the Soviet Union began to crumble. When her father began encountering problems with the law, they made the decision to secretly immigrate to Canada.

"We had to pretend to buy a vacation to Cuba because... If you were openly immigrating, there was a possibility that they wouldn't let you on the plane," she said.

When the plane stopped to refuel in Newfoundland, the Litvak family disembarked the plane and headed to the Canadian immigration office to seek refugee status.

Today, Litvak is a Canadian citizen, and a proud Jew. Although she had travelled to Israel once before, she said this trip opened her eyes to what being Jewish really means.

As she recalled a Shabbat service at the Kotel, she was moved to tears.

"There were so many groups of Jewish people, but they were all in the same place... It wasn't just a service, it was different kinds of people coming together to one important place and it just moved me personally," she said.

"It was more for me a feeling that these people are accepting of me," she said, her voice quivering with emotion. "It's more like a sense of family that is greater

than my immediate family. I belong to a nation."

For Kenneth Rose, 26, his story about forging a connection with Judaism and Israel is exceptional.

It wasn't until Rose was 14 that he learned he was Jewish.

When his parents immigrated from Argentina to Canada in the 1970s, they decided that rather than raise their children as Jews, which might expose them to the anti-Semitism they had experienced in Argentina, they chose not to tell them about their heritage.

But when Rose's mother was diagnosed with cancer in 1996, and after she had recovered from complications after her initial surgery, she decided to tell him and his sister that they were, in fact, Jews.

Rose said that he slowly started to become involved in the community. He became a member of a Jewish youth group, he joined a synagogue, and during his first Shabbat service,

he had a bar mitzvah.

In the years that followed, with the help of his mother, Rose incorporated Jewish traditions into his home. He became shomer Shabbat and started keeping kosher.

"But after my mother passed away three years ago, I went through a rebellious phase and I questioned God," he said. "But now I'm back and I go to synagogue, not every Saturday, but some Saturdays, and I keep all the holidays."

Rose added that programs like the JUMP tour help him stay connected.

"Being back there really rejuvenated my spirit. I'm longing for Israel, and I can't wait until the next time I get to go back."

But there is another reason Israel will always have a special place in his heart: during the tour, Rose decided to ask Candice Chatz, a JUMP participant and his girlfriend of three years, to marry him.

While it may be difficult for the 47 participants to come to a consensus about the defining moment of the tour, most would agree that an important element would have been

missing without their tour guide.

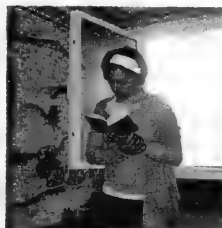
"Ronen was the highlight. He exemplifies in so many ways a mensch... I just felt that he was able to connect with all of us in our own way and give us the history and the religion and the culture just by being who he is," Saltzman said.

"There is no one face to Israel. There are many faces, but he exemplifies what it means to be a Jew - his commitment to his family, his commitment to his country, and his commitment to his religion."

For more information about future JUMP trips, call 905-482-1814.



Kenneth Rose, left, with his fiancée, Candice Chatz.
(Abe David photo)



Keri Saltzman takes a moment to pray at a mosaic shul in Akko.
(Revi Laufer photo)



Polina Litvak explores the grottos at Rosh Hanikra.
(Alison Manel photo)

Celebrating Tu b'Shvat



Mindy Klein teaches nursery students at Netivot HaTorah Day School the significance of the four glasses of varying shades of grape juice consumed as part of a Tu b'Shvat seder that included parents. [Rebecca Ansel photo]



From left, Joanna Mansfield, Lori Wasserman and Alexandra Sipos-Kocsis were among the 150 participants in this year's Tu b'Shvat seder run by Torat HaTeva, a Jewish environmental organization. The Kabbalah-based event at Anshei Minsk Congregation explored Jewish texts and teachings relating to trees, food and the natural world, and featured organic fruits, nuts, juice and cookies, as well as drumming, singing and dancing. [Joanne Frisch photo]



Grade 2 and 3 students at the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School came together for a special Tu b'Shvat seder.

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish News



Congratulations to Shirley & Ben Lipton on your 60th anniversary. With love and best wishes from your family and friends.



Mazel tov to Dr. Ralph Fen on your 80th birthday from your children, grandchildren and the rest of us who love you.



Happy first birthday, Ari Ryan. Parents, Reesa & Corey Margolese. Grandparents, Arlene & Allan Margolese, Ruth & Leonard Rosen. Great-grandmothers, Ruth Margolese, Fay Rose, Tillie Berlin.



Happy fourth birthday Emma-Belle Freid. You're our sweetheart. Love and kisses from Mommy & Daddy.



Fern & Steve Weingarten and Ruthie & Joe Bloom and thrilled to announce the engagement of their children Lauren & Matt. Proud grandmother is Grace Weingarten.



Happy first birthday Rylee. Love, Mommy, Daddy, Bubbie, Zaidy, Mama, Papa and the rest of the Beder and Freedman families. We love you!



Happy first birthday Shoshana Fay Bernzoger. Love, Mommy & Abba.



Happy first birthday Caleigh Madison Sperling. Proud parents Matthew & Jenna Sperling, Pa. Thrilled bubbie & zaidie, Mel & Brenda Sperling. Health and happiness.

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*What's
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By REBECCA NADLER



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What's New deadlines: Monday, Feb. 4, is the deadline for the Feb. 14 issue and Monday, Feb. 11, is the deadline for the Feb. 21 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, Jan. 31

CHALLAH BAKING

Join The House and learn the secrets of challah baking with **Shira Lipner**. 8 p.m. \$10, for ingredients. RSVP required, cayla@thehouse.toronto.com or 416-482-9025.

Friday, Feb. 1

OPEN DOORS, OPEN MINDS

Temple Kol Ami presents "Open Doors, Open Minds," an interfaith lecture about the Baha'i faith during Friday night services. 7:30 p.m. 905-709-2620 or www.templekolami.ca

Saturday, Feb. 2

SHIR LIBEYNU'S SERVICE

Congregation Shir Libeynu holds monthly Shabbat service meetings at 10:30 a.m. at the Miles Nadal JCC. Read and discuss the weekly Torah portion. Kiddush following service. Free child care. 416-465-5488 or shirlibeynu@yahoo.ca

Sunday, Feb. 3

STEM-CELL RESEARCH

Join Beth Tzedec Men's Club at 9 a.m. morning services and perform the mitzvah of putting on tefillin. Men's Club members and

clergy will be available to instruct and assist you in this mitzvah. The service is followed by breakfast and **Rabbi David Bauman**, of Beth Emeth Synagogue, speaking on "Superman vs. Frankenstein: Jewish Issues of Cloning and Embryonic Stem Cell Research." 416-781-3511

A HEALING SERVICE

The Toronto Healing Project offers a healing service with **Rabbi Ronald Weiss** and **Yehudit Shier Weisberg**. 3-4 p.m. at Lipa Green, room 421, 4600 Bathurst St. Wheelchair access and free parking. 416-944-3359.

Monday, Feb. 4

OTTAWA LECTURE

Ottawa Torah Institute Yeshiva High School hosts **Rabbi Eliezer Ben-Porat**, the school's dean, speaking on "Is Alternative Medicine

Kosher? A Jewish Ethical Perspective." 7:15 p.m. in the Soloway Jewish Community Centre. \$25, students and seniors \$15. 613-244-3939

RELIGIOUS PLURALISM

New Israel Fund presents **Prof. Gerald Croner**, of Bar Ilan University, on "Religious Pluralism in Israel: An Issue for All Jews." 7:30 p.m. at Beth Torah Congregation. 905-660-3563

WOMEN AND JEWISH TEXT

Rachael Turkienicz, of York University, talks about "Women and Jewish Text." 8 p.m. 416-781-3511

SING FOR THE CHILDREN

Chai Lifeline Canada hosts Sing for the Children with cantors **Yitzchak Meir Helfgot**, **Chaim Motzen**, **Shlomi Simcha Sufrin** and **Benjamin Maissner** and

Toronto's Jewish Choral Ensemble, **Yisroel Lamm** and the Philharmonic Experience at Roy Thomson Hall. Chai Lifeline Canada offers support and programs to families of children diagnosed with cancer and other life-threatening diseases. Tickets, 1-888-416- CHAI or www.chailifelinecanada.org.

Tuesday, February 5

BINGO TUESDAYS

Lodzer Centre Congregation hosts bingo Tuesdays, 1-3 p.m. 6 cards only \$1.25. Prizes and light refreshments served.

TUESDAYS AT THE MOVIES

Beth Tikvah Synagogue movie series with **Larry Ankiewicz**, presents *The Devil's Arithmetic*, a Holo-

Continued on page 27

The Search for Truth:



Torah Encounters Secular Knowledge

Saturday, February 9th, 8:15 - 10:30 pm
Sunday, February 10th, 9:15 am - 4:15 pm
Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, 470 Glencairn Ave.

**Saturday Night,
February 9, 2008**

8:15-10:30pm

**Rabbinic Authority
vs. Worldly Wisdom**

A Panel Discussion with:
Professor Menachem Kellner
Professor of Jewish Thought,
University of Haifa.

Dr. Marc B. Shapiro
Weinberg Chair of Jewish Studies,
University of Scranton.

Rabbi Natan Slifkin
Lecturer on Judaism and Science and
the relationship between Judaism and
the animal kingdom.

Rabbi Dr. Daniel Sperber
Professor of Talmud, Bar Ilan
University, Ramat Gan, Israel.

Moderator: Dr. Elliott Malamat
Professor of Jewish Education, York
University.

Sunday, February 10, 2008

9:15 am

**Transforming Judaism:
Philosophy, Kabbalah and
the Legacy of the Rambam**
Professor Menachem Kellner

10:30 am

**Are There Things a
Jew Must Believe?**
*The Controversy over
Rambam's 13 Principles*
Professor Menachem Kellner and
Dr. Marc B. Shapiro
Moderated by Dr. Elliott Malamat

1:15 pm

**Darwin and Daas Torah:
Does Modern Science
Oppose the Torah?**
Rabbi Natan Slifkin

1:00 pm

**Lunch and Presentation:
Halacha and the
Challenges
of Modernity**
Rabbi Dr. Daniel Sperber

2:15 pm

**The Lives of Gedolim and
the Truths of History**
Dr. Marc B. Shapiro

3:15 pm

The Challenge of Faith
Rabbi Dr. Daniel Sperber

ROM tour with Rabbi Slifkin at 3:00 pm. Pre-registration required.

\$30 in advance (includes catered lunch) or \$40 at the door (no lunch included).

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What's New

Continued from page 26

caust story from the perspective of a teenagers transported back in time to witness the events first-hand. 2 p.m. \$5. 416-221-3434

BASICS OF JUDAISM

Am Shalom in Barrie and the Canadian Council for Reform Judaism offer an intensive adult-oriented class geared to Jews and non-Jews who want to learn more about the Jewish faith, which is a requirement for those wishing to convert to Judaism. Begins tonight for 30 weeks, 3 hours. \$650, \$800 per couple. Registration, 416-630-0375.

Wednesday, Feb. 6

PROSTATE CANCER

Beth Tzedec Men's Club hosts Dr. Laurence Klotz, chief of the urology division, Sunnybrook Health and Sciences Centre, who talks about prostate cancer. 7:30 p.m. 416-781-3511

Other News

EXPERIENCE TORAH

Study Torah free with live learning on your computer. Classes offered include "Architects of Modern Orthodoxy" with **Marcel Shapiro**; "Midnight Midrash" with **Rabbi Menachem Leibtag**; "Understanding the Text: How Our Ancestors Really Learned Talmud" with **Rabbi Pinchas Hayman**; and "Shmitah: In Theory and Practice" with **Rabbi David Gottlieb**. Beginning the week of Feb. 2. For information and to register www.torahinmotion.org.

BEYOND BELIEF

Chabad congregation across the GTA offers a six-week course, *Beyond Belief: Reflections on Jewish Faith, Reason and Experience*, beginning Feb. 5, 6 or 10. \$70, \$130/couple. First class free. Register online at www.jlitontario.com.

HOLOCAUST SURVIVAL

Yehudi Lindeman, of McGill University, talks about his newly published book, *Narratives of Holocaust Survival: A Scholar's and Child Survivor's Perspective*. Thursday, Feb. 7, 4-6 p.m. at U of T's Munk Centre, Room 108N, 1 Devonshire Pl.

JEWISH MEDITATION

The House offers Meditation and Jewish Enlightenment: The Art of Being with **Chayim Newman**, a four-week series on Feb. 7, 12, March 6, 13, April 3, 17, May 1, 15. \$20. RSVP required, 416-482-9025 or www.thehousetoronto.com.

BOYCOTTING ISRAEL

Torah in Motion presents "Boycotting Israel: The Lie and its Perpetrators" with **Menachem Kellner**, of Haifa University, Thursday, Feb. 7, 8 p.m. at Yeshivat Or Chaim. \$10, students free. www.torahinmotion.org or 416-633-5770

SEARCH FOR TRUTH

Torah in Motion hosts two days of discussion on the search for truth, Torah and secular knowledge, Feb. 9-10 at Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue. Saturday, 8:15-10:30 p.m. Includes a panel discussion with **Menachem Kellner**, **Marc Shapiro**, **Rabbi Nathan Slikin** and **Rabbi Daniel Sperber**. Each speak Sunday, 9:15 a.m.-4:15 p.m. \$30. Register, www.torahinmotion.org or 416-633-5770.

DINOSAURS AT THE ROM

Rabbi Nathan Slikin leads a tour and talks about dinosaurs at the Royal Ontario Museum. Sunday, Feb. 10, 3 p.m. \$25, children \$15. Pre-registration required. 416-633-5770 or www.torahinmotion.org

THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

Explore major themes in the Book of Isaiah, looking at the nature of the prophet and prophecy in general, and specifically Isaiah's mission. With **Rabbi Eric Levy**. Feb. 13-March 5, 8-9 p.m. at Or Chaim Yeshiva. Register, 416-877-2050 or www.mekorot.ca.

KOLEL COURSES

Kolel's winter and spring courses and one-night events, February to June. Registration, 416-636-1880, ext. 255, or visit www.kolel.org.

FLOWERS AREN'T ENOUGH

The Toronto Miklat Committee raises awareness about domestic violence in the Jewish world. Support their work at *Flowers Aren't Enough*, featuring Israeli-American actress **Naomi Ackerman**, Saturday, Feb. 9, 8 p.m., at the Baycrest Terrace. \$36. Info, miklat.toronto@gmail.com.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

Enjoy a story with magic, romance and suspense, Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*, with all proceeds donated to the Pediatric Oncology Group of Ontario, Feb. 20-24 at the Isabel Bader Theatre. Tickets, \$26, \$40, \$55, at uoftix.ca or 416-978-8849.

COMMON ISSUES

Rabbi Roy Tanenbaum and **Ramesh Rao**, of Longwood University in Virginia, speak on "Hinduphobia and Anti-Semitism: Common Issues." Tuesday, Feb. 5, 7 p.m. at York Woods Library

Theatre, 1785 Finch Ave. W. Wednesday, Feb. 6, 12 p.m. at the offices of Minden Gross, 145 King St. W. For info, e-mail projectman.ager@speakersaction.com. \$20, reserve at 416-449-6484.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. Information/registration 416-638-7800 or www.jfandcs.com. Call **Shawna**, ext. 215, for info and registration.

- For Men After Divorce: A six-week group for men experiencing separation or divorce. Discuss how to let go of your grief, express anger without affecting children and how to become an effective single parent. Mondays, beginning Feb. 4, 7:30 to 9 p.m. at the Promenade Mall, #313.
- Today's Woman: A six-session group for women wanting to make a change in their lives. Begins Wednesday, Feb. 4, 7-9 p.m. at the Promenade Mall, #313.
- Effective Parenting: A four-session group to learn what parents can do to raise a happy, motivated child. For parents of children ages 2-11 years. Begins Thursday, Feb. 14, 7-9 p.m. at the Promenade Mall, #313.
- For info or registration for the following programs, call ext. 246.
- Teen Talk: An eight-week program for teens 15-17 to talk about issues of importance to teens and to meet new friends. Wednesday, Feb. 6-April 2, Promenade Mall, #313, 6:30-8 p.m.
- Parenting the Child with Challenging Behaviour: For parents who are frequently challenged by the behaviour of their children aged 6-12. Wednesday, Feb. 20-April 2, 6:30-8 p.m. Lipa Green Building.

FOR SENIORS

Beth Tzedec Congregation Haverim Program presents storyteller and author **Alvin Abram**,

telling "Real Stories from Jewish Family Life." Monday, Feb. 4, 1:30 p.m. \$2. 416-781-3511

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Casino Rama. Feb. 13, 27; mah-jong, Tuesdays 10 a.m.-1 p.m.; Yiddish-speaking hairdresser and barber; Thursdays, 9 a.m.-noon; bridge, Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m. New members welcome. Info, Tuesday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 416-395-7881

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Diabetes education and counselling, Tuesday, Feb. 5, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Call 416-787-1676, ext. 301, for a free appointment.

African fashion and cultural show, Wednesday, Feb. 6, 1-3 p.m. \$3, non members \$6.

Wellness presentation: Overcoming life's obstacles with **Judy Weiss**. Thursday, Feb. 7, 1:30 p.m.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

Lunch 'n' Learn with **Rabbi Moshe Stern**, Friday, Feb. 1, 12-1 p.m. Free, bring lunch, coffee/tea served.

"Great Songs from Yiddish Theatre," Wednesday, Feb. 6, 1-2:30 p.m.

Free Tax Return Clinic to qualify income below \$17,000 no dependents; \$25,000 with dependents. Call ext. 0 for appointment.

The JCC Maccabi Games 2008 take place Aug. 17-22 in Detroit, Mich. The games are for Jewish athletes ages 13-16. The Toronto basketball tryouts take place at the Bathurst JCC, for girls, Sunday, Feb. 3, 6-7:30 p.m. and for boys,

Tuesday, Feb. 12 and Thursday, Feb. 14, 8-9:30 p.m. Info, call **Grant Smith** at ext. 257 or e-mail gsmith@bjcc.ca.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www.mnjcc.org.

"Dances of Offering," Saturday, Feb. 2, 7:30 p.m. at the Al Green Theatre. Proceeds support Sick Kids Hospital. \$25, children \$15.

Sundays with **Shlomo Schwartzberg**, Sunday, Feb. 3, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. "Drastic Changes: The '60s and '70s," how Jewish filmmakers have depicted the Jewish image in the movies. Bagels and coffee served. \$9.

Museum and Gallery Adventures with MNJCC's new group for Seniors, "55 Forward." Visit the Beth Tzedec Museum for a behind-the-scenes glimpse of a rare Judaica collection with curator **Dorion Liebgott**. Thursday, Feb. 7, 1:30 p.m. Info, phyllisf@mnjcc.org or ext. 155.

Flying Bulgars 20th anniversary concerts: 2 shows, Saturday, Feb. 9, 8 p.m.; and Sunday, Feb. 10, 7:30 p.m., at the Al Green Theatre. \$24 in advance, \$30 at the door, \$15, 14 years and younger. Tickets, ext. 0.

Volunteers Needed

BETEL CENTRE

Bernard Betel Centre is in need of home respite volunteers. The program gives family caregivers a 2-3 hour break each week while trained volunteers visit family members who are unable to be alone. Choose the day that best suits you. Call **Naomi**, 416-225-2112, ext. 127.

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Goldberg, Hetty	Jan. 18/08	78 Castlebury Ave
Bergida, Frank	Jan. 19/08	3636 Bathurst St
Salsberg, Debby Michelle	Jan. 19/08	39 Garthdale Crt
Wilder, Allen	Jan. 19/08	
Schopp, Pearl	Jan. 20/08	Private
Mittelman, Jenio	Jan. 20/08	20 Shallmar Blvd
Friedlander, Mildred	Jan. 22/08	72 Flaming Roseway
Weinstock, Jean	Jan. 22/08	17 Barksdale Ave
Cohen, Aaron	Jan. 23/08	601 Clark Ave. W.
Khodorkovsky, Efimiya	Jan. 23/08	10 Torresdale Ave
Korn, Edythe	Jan. 23/08	3560 Bathurst St
Kobric, Chaja	Jan. 23/08	3560 Bathurst St

HEBREW
BASIS

Dezso Varkonyi	Jan 6/08	59 Spadina Road
Dr. Leslie Cera	Jan 18/08	7460 Bathurst St
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Leila Conn	Jan 13/08	3705 Bathurst St
Ruth Mirsky	Jan 15/08	250 Heath Street W
Simon Rosenberg	Jan 15/08	217 Codsell Ave
Panny Gula	Jan 16/08	120 Winston Park Bl
Heidi Himmel	Jan 17/08	2121 Bathurst St
Donald Sterling	Jan 17/08	625 Avenue Rd
Shirley Gordon	Jan 17/08	25 Brunswick Ave
Renee Nadal	Jan 18/08	400 Walmer Rd
Ben Stackle	Jan 16/08	4350 Bathurst St
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Coast to Coast

Students study Afghan mission

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — High school students at Gray Academy of Jewish Education got a crash course on Afghanistan and Canada's mission there as part of commemorations marking Raoul Wallenberg Day.

The day-long series of seminars on Jan 17 helped mark the day set aside by the government of Canada to honour the legacy of the Swedish diplomat who saved more than 100,000 Jewish lives during the Holocaust.

It was the third year in a row that Gray Academy, in conjunction with the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg, organized the high school student conference on human rights. Last year, students learned about Africa and heard from several African refugees living in Winnipeg.

The day began with a short film presentation on Afghanistan, followed by a keynote address by Capt. Dave Murrall of the Canadian Forces 17 Wing air force unit in Winnipeg and a veteran of the Afghan campaign. He spoke about Canada's role in Afghanistan and described "a day in the life of a soldier in Kandahar".

Following his address were several break-out sessions led by a number of guest speakers, including Daniel Ashrafi, an Iranian-born Jew who served in the Iranian air force under the Shah, who is currently living in Winnipeg (he spoke about terrorism and the Taliban); Prof. Richard Gordon, a theoretical biologist who started "Books With Wings," a project that ships medical and other books to universities in Afghanistan; Dr. Wassay Niazi, a specialist in microbiology and infectious diseases who was forced to leave Afghanistan by the Taliban; and his daughter, Meena Niazi, currently a student at the University of Manitoba, who spoke about growing up in Afghanistan and about its people, culture and hopes for the future.

Other speakers included Ariana Yafali from the Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council, who discussed the challenges faced by Afghans in adapting to life in Manitoba; and Alex Dobrota, a former *Globe and Mail* journalist, currently studying Law at McGill University, who was embedded with Canadian troops in Kandahar for three weeks last summer.

Progress in Afghanistan has been slow, Dobrota said. "But pulling out our troops now is unrealistic and would bring more harm than good. The Afghan army, the national police and the people depend on us. If the goal of our mission is to bring security to the region, even 2009 is too early to withdraw."

During the closing session, students honoured fallen soldiers from CFB Shilo, an armed forces base in western Manitoba, with a display of photos of those who have been killed in Afghanistan and a short film created by Gray Academy student Jorel Minuk picturing each of the fallen soldiers. David Rubinfeld, who is in Grade 12 at Gray Academy, lit a yahrzeit candle in memory of the soldiers.

The students also presented Joy Smith, MP for Winnipeg's Kildonan-St. Paul riding, with a book of letters to give to Prime Minister Stephen Harper. In their letters, the students expressed strong support for Canada's mission in Afghanistan and the pride they feel for its effort to promote security, democracy and human rights there.

"We hope that by exposing students to the history and challenges facing Afghanistan, they have gained a better understanding of the human rights issues involved," said Shelley Faintuch, the federation's director of community relations and a driving force behind the Wallenberg Day commemoration.

"Raoul Wallenberg demonstrated how one person can make a difference. With information at their fingertips, students will be empowered to develop action plans to help those in need in an area of the world where turmoil and human rights abuses have prevailed for so long."

Coast to Coast

Nursing home denies wrongdoing in resident's death

By RHONDA SPIVAK

Special to the C/JN

WINNIPEG — The head of Winnipeg's main Jewish retirement home says the death of one of its residents from hypothermia is a "tragedy," but there's nothing that reasonably could have been done to prevent it.

Barry Collen, 74, froze to death Jan. 2 at the Sharon Home branch in the city's north end after being outside for 3½ hours in -20 Celsius weather. The developmentally challenged man had gone for a cigarette in the building's courtyard, where his body was found at around 4:30 a.m.

He had apparently fallen and banged his head, and was found lying in a pool of blood.

Sandra Delorme, the Sharon Home's president and CEO, said Collen's mental capacity "was much more than a five-year-old," contrary to what his sister-in-law, Ann Collen, told *The C/JN* and *Winnipeg Free Press*.

"Barry bought himself a bus pass, and he would often go to the Garden City Mall," Delorme said. "He'd also go downtown to Eaton Place occasionally. He was quite capable of being mobile. If it were true that he had the mental capacity of a five-year-old, he wouldn't have been going downtown on his own. I wouldn't let a five-year-old go downtown by themselves. The doctors and nurses would have had a different care plan for him."

When asked to give her assessment of what Collen's mental capacity was, Delorme answered, "I can't tell you what his age was in terms of mental capacity. He'd done this [taking buses on his own] all of his life, and we saw no valid reason for him not to continue. We don't want people to feel [the Sharon Home] is a jail."

According to Delorme, as of April 2004,

a month before Collen became a resident at the home, "the smoking room in the building was shut down," and thus was not available to any of the four residents who smoked, including Collen, who became a resident a month later.

"It is not the case that Barry was banned from the smoking room as Ann Collen has claimed, as the room was shut down altogether," Delorme said.

She described the smoking room on the second floor as "having space for two people that was not properly vented and [as of April 2004] it didn't meet the requirements of the WRHA [Winnipeg Regional Health Authority]."

"After the smoking room was shut down, we stopped taking residents who smoked. The [Sharon Home] board grandfathered the residents [including Collen] who smoked. We permitted these residents and staff to smoke in the interior courtyard," Delorme said.

She noted that currently there are only two retirement residences in the city that allow smoking.

When asked whether the WRHA was advised of what the Sharon Home was doing to accommodate smokers by having them use the courtyard, Delorme responded, "I don't know. I can't answer that. It was close to four years ago."

Delorme said that the "inner courtyard [where Collen went to smoke] is safe and secure and surrounded by buildings."

She added: "In order to get into the courtyard, there is a key pad and you enter a code and open the door. To get out of the courtyard, you go to the door and just push a red button and you can open the door."

She said that Collen "had been doing this for four years without any problem, and there was no reason to suspect that there would be any problem with his continuing

to do so."

According to Delorme, "the courtyard is lit up at night. There are lights in there. There's a seating area, benches and chairs."

When asked how often staff at the nursing home do bed checks at night, Delorme answered, "We do rounds hourly throughout the night."

She added that staff would not be concerned if Collen was not in his room, since he "was a resident who roamed around and

could be anywhere in the building. He liked to go out [of his room] frequently."

The WRHA is continuing its investigation into Collen's death.

He suffered from Charcot-Marie-Tooth syndrome, which makes it difficult to feel numbness or cold.

It is not known why Collen couldn't get back into the building from the courtyard, although it appears he fell and banged his head.

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Disease may have mutated from a childhood illness

Continued from page 3

He explained that as of 25 years ago, yaws was thought to have been eradicated in the western hemisphere due to massive inoculation campaigns by the World Health Organization in the 1950s and 1960s.

However, as Silverman and his team journeyed further into the interior of Guyana on their annual missions of chesed and tikkun olam, they noticed that yaws was still in existence.

"It was primarily a childhood disease, affecting about 5.1 per cent of the child population," Silverman said. "And the [yaws] sores were found mostly on children's arms or legs... because that's the skin that would come into contact with each other to spread the disease. But it would have been something almost everyone contracted in youth... so yaws would have had no need to develop into a sexually transmitted disease [in the New World]."

Silverman and fellow researchers hypothesize that the disease mutated from a child-

hood illness to a sexually transmitted disease because Columbus' men, who travelled fully clothed, would have exposed only their genitalia to the disease during sexual activity in the New World. The disease would have then adapted to exposure to this new body area and become much more virulent in a population without any natural immunity, spreading easily between sexual partners.

The result was what historians call "The Great Pox," which killed nearly five million people in Europe.

While discovering the source of syphilis provided some fun media attention, Silverman said he's much more gratified at the results of Ve'ahavta's campaign to wipe out yaws in Guyana.

"I'm most proud of the fact that it seems we've eradicated a childhood scourge," Silverman said, adding that return missions to Guyana since 2005 have failed to turn up a single new case of yaws.

For more information, visit veahavta.org/guyanaresearch.asp

Coast to Coast

Exhibit gives glimpse of Jewish life in Zimbabwe

By LAUREN KRAMER

Special to The C.J.N.

VANCOUVER — "Rabbi Among the Lions," a photographic exhibit at the Jewish Museum and Archives of British Columbia, gives viewers a glimpse of the Jewish community of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

Tobi Asmoucha, 39, a Toronto photographer whose brother, Nathan, 37, served as the rabbi of the Bulawayo Jewish Community from September 2003 to August 2007, took the pictures that make up the exhibit.

Rabbi Asmoucha's adventure began while he was studying in a Jerusalem yeshiva. There, he was approached by Steven Feigenbaum, a Bulawayo-born Israeli resident whose father is president of the Bulawayo Jewish community. "He was looking to meet potential candidates to serve as rabbi of the congregation, and when he offered us a position, we realized we could learn and grow by being there," Rabbi Asmoucha recalls.

He and his family arrived in Bulawayo to find a community of 100, of which one-third live in Savyon Lodge, a home for the Jewish aged. Of the 200 students at the Carmel Jewish Day School in Bulawayo, only five were Jewish, and two of those children were the new rabbi's. The rest of the student body comprised Hindu, Muslim, Ndebele, Shona, Asian and European children.

Within weeks of Rabbi Asmoucha's arrival, the Bulawayo synagogue went up in flames, but its Torah scrolls and Ark curtain, both of which date back to 1725, were rescued from the fire in the nick of time. The mikvah remained intact and is still in use, but the congregation had to move to Bulawayo's old Reform shul, Sinai Synagogue and Hall.

In a three-week-long visit to the city to see her brother in 2006, Tobi took pictures of children at prayer, of Bulawayo street scenes; and of community members, including a portrait of Ruth Feigenbaum, who founded a support group for families of people who are terminally ill. In Zimbabwe, AIDS has ravaged the population. One-quarter of all Zimbabwe's

children have been rendered orphans by the disease, and many of them are being raised by their grandparents.

"I came away touched by the extent to which people support each other in this very small but very warm, generous community," she says. "Even though the community is diminishing, people are looking after each other."

Despite that Vancouver and Bulawayo are on different sides of the world, there are parallels between the communities, says Ron Ulrich, director of the Jewish museum. "In any museum, the dialogue cannot be just about the past, it must deal with the present and future, too, to be relevant. This exhibition deals with relevant themes in the Jewish world, such as an aging community whereas, in the 1950s and 1960s, it was vibrant and had up to 3,000 Jewish members."

"This is about community memory and the perpetuation of Jewish life and culture. The immigrants to Bulawayo were of the same Lithuanian descent as many of Vancouver's Jews, and we see Jewish community members performing mitzvot and dealing with AIDS, a disease that affects us here, too, although not to the same extent. There



Rabbi Nathan Asmoucha, who served the Jewish community in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, is the "rabbi" in the photo exhibit "Rabbi Among the Lions."

are lots of parallel issues."

Tobi's exhibition got its name from an image of Rabbi Asmoucha walking in Antelope Park, a place where African lion cubs are being bred and rehabilitated. Behind him and at his sides are three adolescent cubs.

"Rabbi Among the Lions" runs until June 2008.

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WASTE NOT: Grade 1 students at the Toronto Heschel School performed a waste audit of the whole school and created a three-dimensional report in a shape on a tree. The project was a part of an integrated unit encompassing social and environmental studies, math, and tikken olam. With the students are teachers Elissa Wolff, left, and Marylin Berman.



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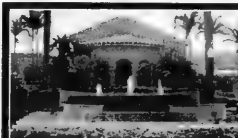
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Coast to Coast

Winnipeg has new federation president

By MYRON LOVE
Prairie Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Although Jonathan Kroft, the new president of the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg, is a lawyer by vocation, his avocation, he says, has always been community work.

In fact, he is from a family steeped in community work and volunteerism. His father, Justice Guy Kroft, was president of the community in the early 1980s. His mother, Hester, has a long history of community work. And he, his brother, David, and his sisters, Debbie Hoffman and Sarah Morry, have all been recipients of young leadership awards presented annually by the Jewish community.

Jonathan Kroft first began his volunteer activities with federation (which was then known as the Winnipeg Jewish Community Council) in the mid-1980s, shortly after he was called to the bar.

He earned his law degree at the University of Manitoba and followed up with a master's degree in law from Harvard in 1990.

"I started [my community involvement] as a canvasser and as a member of the community relations committee," he recalls.

Over the years, Kroft has also been active with the Canadian Jewish Congress, the Canada-Israel Committee and the Winnipeg Jewish community's Jewish Child and Family Services, as well as working with numerous legal and general community organizations.

Kroft notes that while he was a member of the Jewish federation executive for many

years, he had previously declined the presidency because he wanted to have more time to spend with his young family. He and his wife, Cara, have two children — Emily, 10, and Daniel, who celebrated his bar mitzvah last spring.

"Two years ago, I finally made the commitment [to the community]," he says.

A couple of months ago, before assuming the role of president, Kroft determined what he felt the role of the federation is in the community. "I see the purpose of the federation as identifying, co-ordinating and supporting programs and services that make Winnipeg a good place to lead a full Jewish life at a high level now and in the future," he says.

"There are tough questions we have to answer, such as what constitutes leading a Jewish life today. Are we maintaining the infrastructure we need? Are we using our limited resources in the most effective manner? And where will we need the resources we will need in future to support existing programs and institutions and new programs and institutions that may arise?"

Kroft has praise for his predecessor as president, Ted Lyons; Jewish federation executive director, Bob Freedman; and his staff and community volunteers for their success in bringing new members to the community, which now numbers about 17,000 as compared to about 14,500 six years ago.

"I am proud of the community-wide effort to integrate the newer members of our community," he says, "although there is still much work to be done."

"Our goal as a federation is to make sure that Winnipeg remains a great place to live a Jewish life."



Jonathan Kroft



FRUITFUL MEETING: Habonim Dror, Camp Gesher and Hashomer Hatzair held a joint Tu b'Shvat Seder Jan. 22 that was sponsored by the Hagshama Department. The children read from a Haggadah that stressed a connection to Israel and commitment to preserving nature, and they took part in a variety of holiday activities.

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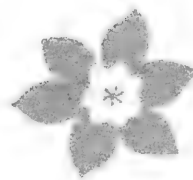
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The Justices of the Peace Appointments Advisory Committee invites applications for full-time justice of the peace appointments to the Ontario Court of Justice.

For information about the position, the court locations in each region and the application form, please visit the Ontario Courts website at www.ontariocourts.on.ca/jpac/en/index.htm

Applications must be received by 4:30 p.m. on Friday, February 8, 2008. If you are applying for more than one region, you must submit separate applications.

If you do not have access to the Internet, call:

Coordinator, Justices of the Peace Appointments Advisory Committee
Telephone: 416-326-4957

Justices of the peace should be reasonably representative of the population they serve.

Generation Y Visits Israel

Canadians visit patients at Save a Child's Heart

Organization treats kids with congenital heart problems

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

When nearly 50 Canadian Jews travelled to Israel on a 10-day tour earlier this month, they knew they'd be visiting children who are waiting for life-saving heart surgery funded by a humanitarian organization, but they weren't sure what to expect.

The visit to Save a Child's Heart (SACH), a non-profit organization based in Holon that treats children from all over the world with congenital heart problems, was part of a *tikkun olam* theme on a post-birthright, subsidized Israel tour for Jewish students and young professionals, organized by Jewish Urban Meeting Place (JUMP), a new group that works to give young Jews the opportunity to stay connected to the community.

The participants brought toys and school supplies to the children, who are brought to the SACH house in Holon from Africa, Asia, South America, Europe and the Middle East, where they stay while awaiting free surgery

at the nearby Wolfson Medical Center.

What would the atmosphere in the house be like? Would the children be weak and withdrawn, sick and sad?

The participants found dedicated staff, volunteers and nurses who lived in the home to make the children's stay in Israel as comfortable as possible, and 17 kids between the ages of six months and 17 years, who were excited to play and laugh with their visitors.

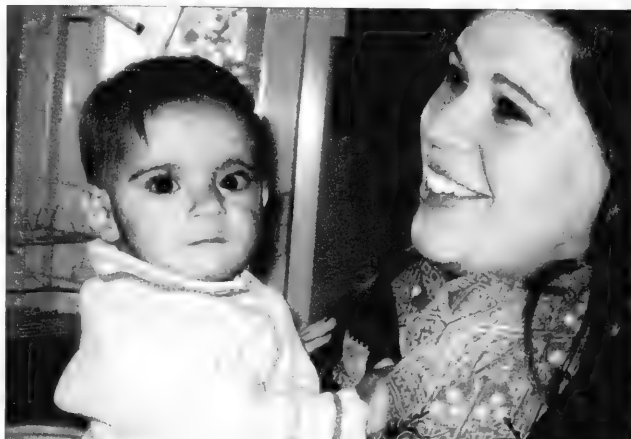
Laura Kafif, the house mother, talked about her admiration for the children's strength and bravery during such a difficult time.

"To be here, sometimes without a mother, [coming] from a village all the way to Israel to undergo a surgery – it's quite a traumatic thing for them. Actually, the children are amazing. If it was me that was going through it, I wouldn't be half as good as they are," Kafif said.

In the hope of brightening up their day, participants brought the children toys and supplies including dolls, colouring books, markers, cards and board games.

The need for these things is most North American kids take for granted became apparent when Kafif explained that these children, most of whom come from poor villages in Africa and the Middle East, don't have access to them.

"Basically the things that we do here are things that we would do in the *gan* [preschool]. Don't forget that these children come



Lindsay Malet, right, a JUMP participant, holds Tara, an Iraqi heart patient who is in Israel to receive free life-saving surgery courtesy of Save a Child's Heart.

[Sheri Shefa photo]

from villages where they don't have a lot of toys, they don't have a lot of paper or crayons or things like that," Kafif said.

Tova Vertes, a Canadian student from Dundas, Ont., who was completing her three-month stay in the home, talked about the importance of her role as a volunteer and reflected on the impact that it had on her.

"It's been an amazing experience, and I really learned a lot about how to deal with children... We have learning barriers and cultural barriers, and the first couple of weeks that you come here are very difficult, but then... you find ways of doing things that make them happy without speaking too much English."

Since SACH was established in 1996, 1,800 children have been treated by Israeli doctors at the Wolfson Medical Center, where SACH has an agreement that permits the organization to use all the facilities of the hospital, provided that they are able to raise funds to supplement the cost.

"It costs \$10,000 for each child. Seven thousand dollars goes to the hospital for whatever they need, whether it covers just a tiny little bit [of the cost] or it covers nine months of treatment, and the rest is for plane fare, housing, food and things like that," said Jonah Mink, SACH's student co-ordinator.

"All of our donations are private donations. The EU [European Union] gave us 1.5 million Euro to treat Palestinians and start a fellowship program for Palestinian doctors."

In addition to creating fellowship programs to train doctors around the world, doctors and volunteers associated with SACH go on medical missions every year to less-developed countries to evaluate potential patients.

Kafif said that on a mission to Panama last year, she recalled seeing families – children and their parents – sitting on the floors of the hospital courtyards waiting to be seen by doctors.

"It's like something you've seen in a documentary. Until you see it with your own eyes, it's really difficult to imagine."

She said that on their most recent trip, an

Israeli delegation travelled to Amman, Jordan, to set up a clinic at the Red Crescent Hospital. SACH doctors, including Dr. Sion Hour, the director of the pediatric intensive care unit at Wolfson Medical Center, screened 38 Iraqi children. Although they were able to arrange to treat a majority of the Iraqi children, some of the patients were beyond help.

"They actually had to sit and tell them, 'I'm sorry we can't help you with your child.' That was very difficult," Kafif said.

Among the group of children that the doctors were able to treat was Tara.

When the doctors first saw Tara, she was five months old and underweight. Her skin was blue because of a lack of oxygen in her blood.

Tara was suffering from a cyanotic heart disease, a congenital heart defect that results in low blood oxygen levels, and she would surely die if not treated immediately.

"She was surviving by a connection [from the lungs] to the two main arteries that only exists in utero," Hour told *The C/JN* three months ago, just days after Tara's first surgery.

"We just added a tube to bring more blood to the lungs and we decided she was too sick to have the final surgery at this stage."

Tara's mother, who travelled with her daughter to Israel, has been living in the SACH house for the past three months and is currently waiting for the final surgery. During JUMP's visit to the house, the participants were able to interact with Tara, who has gained strength and weight since her first surgery.

Mink is currently touring Canadian campuses as part of a SACH tour put together by National Jewish Campus Life (NJCL) and the Canadian Federation of Jewish Students (CFJS) to raise awareness about the organization.

Mink, who already visited Edmonton, Calgary and Saskatoon, will travel to Vancouver, Victoria, Toronto, Ottawa, Halifax, Montreal, St. Catharines and London.

For more information, contact Mink at student@saveachildsheart.org.

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International

Israel & the Jewish World

Robins Appleby
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BARRISTERS/SOLICITORS

A 'bold and brave' decision

Continued from page 1

end its "siege" of Gaza. The UNHRC will be chaired in 2009 by Libya and vice-chaired by Cuba, with Iran sitting on the Durban II organizing committee.

The American and Israeli delegations both walked out of Durban I in disputes over language that sought to equate Zionism with racism. The conference was also heavily criticized by Jewish groups and others worldwide for its blatant anti-Semitic bias and extreme focus on Israel.

Canadian Jewish groups lauded the government's decision to withdraw from Durban II.

Canadian Jewish Congress called the withdrawal a "solid and principled" stance, while B'nai Brith said Canada acted "honourably" in the matter.

Amir Gissin, Israeli consul general for Toronto and Western Canada, also praised the decision.

"We see [Durban II] as an anti-Israeli, anti-Semitic circus," Gissin told *The C/JN*. "Canada's decision not to lend its hand to it is something we greatly appreciate... and hope sets an example for the rest of the world."

Leo Adler, director of national affairs for the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center, called the decision "bold and brave."

"The fact that Canada has tried its best to change the mood and tenor of Durban II and... see to it that the poisonous atmosphere of 2001 is not repeated, speaks volumes about this government's commitment to... values of freedom and liberty," Adler said.

Even members of the Opposition applauded Ottawa's choice.

The group Liberal Parliamentarians for Israel – co-chaired by Winnipeg South Centre MP Anita Neville and Senator David Smith – issued its own statement.

"We are pleased that the government is finally taking this issue seriously and is doing the right thing," Neville said.

Smith added: "It is inappropriate for Canada to advance the international human rights agenda through a forum that makes a mockery of the fight against racism and discrimination."

Various Canadian NGOs have denounced the government's move, saying an official Canadian presence should be a part of any conference on racism.

Though the Durban I conference was overshadowed by the later

events of Sept. 11, 2001, many remember how a forum that was supposed to be a watershed gathering aimed at fighting racism and discrimination was hijacked by an anti-Israel agenda.

Speaking to *The C/JN* last week, Liberal MP, noted human rights advocate and former federal justice minister Irwin Cotler said he was pleased that the government pulled out of Durban II.

"[Ottawa] made the right decision in not being there," he said. "All the preparatory signs for Durban II [indicate] a re-run of Durban I. Those of us who were at Durban I and witnessed that festival of hate will never forget the depth and pervasiveness of the hate at that conference."

Cotler added that besides the fact that Iran, Libya and Cuba – all "oppressive regimes [and] all explicit in their anti-Israeli indictments," he said – are on the organizing committee of Durban II, there is another reason to shun the conference.

"The UNHRC, which has made a fetish of condemning Israel while giving major human rights violators exculpatory immunity... will have the super-attending authority over [preparatory committees] on the way to Durban II," he said. "And the meetings of the prep-comms are scheduled to take place on both Passover and Yom Kippur. One would have thought that with the remembrance of Durban I, the organizers would have been sensitive to anything that appears to exclude Jews, Israel and their representatives. They chose not only to ignore [the lessons of] Durban I, but to repeat... a mocking insensitivity to the Jewish people."

Cotler expressed hope that Canada would now consider hosting an "alternative" anti-racism conference to demonstrate that Ottawa is committed to being at "the forefront of the struggle against racism."

Cotler said he would promote the idea in Ottawa.

UNHRC denounces Israel over Gaza blockade

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF

Staff Reporter

The UN Human Rights Council last week adopted a resolution calling for an "end to grave violations committed by Israel" against Gaza.

It also calls on "the occupying power, Israel" to immediately "lift the siege it has imposed on the Gaza Strip."

The motion was brought forward by Syria on behalf of the Group of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference and was passed by a count of 30 votes for, one against and 15 abstentions.

Canada was the lone member-state to vote against the resolution. The United States and Israel are not part of the council.

Nowhere in the text of the resolution are calls made to end daily rocket fire from

Gaza into Israel.

Citing the absence of any balanced language in the resolution, Slovenia, speaking on behalf of the rest of the European Union voting members, decided to abstain, saying the resolution lacked "an acknowledgement of civilian casualties on both sides."

In a Jan. 24 Associated Press report, Louise Arbour, the UN high commissioner for human rights and former Canadian Supreme Court justice, said Israel's closure of the Gaza border was causing "desperation" for Palestinians.

The same report quotes Israel's ambassador to the UN, Izhak Levanon, as saying, "I am glad Israel did not participate in this circus."

Canadian Jewish groups hailed Canada's vote against the resolution.

In a personal letter, Moshe Ronen, chair

of the Canada-Israel Committee, thanked Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier for Canada's stance on the council.

"I greatly appreciate Canada's support for Israel's right to security and its condemnation of Palestinian terrorist attacks," Ronen wrote. "Canada demonstrated principled leadership in voting against such a one-sided resolution and sent a clear message to the world that Canadians will not accept the hijacking of UN institutions."

U.S. Ambassador Warren Tichenor said the council had "squandered its credibility" by failing to address continued rocket attacks against Israel.

The council's actions, he said "do nothing to help the Palestinian people, in whose name the supporters of this session claim to act."

With files from JTA

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Authors & Poets

The CJN is pleased to announce its

Annual Passover Literary Supplement

We invite our readers to submit unpublished, original works of fiction or poetry that explore Jewish themes. They should not exceed 2,000 words.

We must receive your submissions no later than Friday, March 14. E-mail submissions are preferred, but works can also be sent by mail or brought to our office.

E-mail: info@cjnnews.com. Mail: 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4.

Submissions will not be returned. The CJN will not enter into any correspondence with participants.

CJN Purim Art Contest

It's time again for our annual Purim Art Contest.

Who can enter: Children in grades 1 to 6 inclusive are eligible. The children of CJN employees are not eligible.

Prizes: The judges will choose one drawing from two different students in each grade. These "winning" drawings will be published in *The CJN's* 2008 Purim Poster. In addition, each of the 12 children whose drawings have been selected will receive a cheque for \$25.

How to enter: You may submit as many drawings as you want. However, they should not be too small nor too large. Please paint or draw bright, bold, colourful pictures. You may use markers, crayons, paint or pencils. Please send us your name, address, phone number, age and grade along with your drawings.

You may mail or deliver your drawings to: CJN Community Contests, The Canadian Jewish News, 1500 Don Mills Road, Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4. If you want us to return the pictures to you, please provide a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Otherwise, we will be unable to do so.

The contest closes at 3 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 29, 2008. We will undoubtedly receive many wonderful submissions from children all across the country. But only 12 of the drawings will be chosen as the "winners." The judges will base their decisions on a number of factors such as: the use of colour, the imaginative quality of the drawing and the way it tells an aspect of the story of Purim. The judges' decisions will be final. The chances of winning depend upon the number and quality of submissions received.

How the winner will be announced: The children whose pictures are chosen will be notified by telephone before the start of Shabbat on Friday, March 7, 2008.

When the prizes will be awarded: The "winning" pictures will be published in *The CJN* of March 20, 2008. Have fun and good luck.

Any litigation respecting the conduct and awarding of a prize in this contest may be submitted to the Régie des Loteries et courses du Québec.

Israel & the Jewish World

Israel re-thinks Gaza strategy

By ROY EITAN
JTA

JERUSALEM — The few hundred pounds of TNT that brought Rafah's border wall tumbling down has also shaken Israel's strategy of isolating Hamas.

The Ehud Olmert government watched helplessly last Wednesday as the Islamist group, responding to Israel's tightening of its blockade on the Gaza Strip, blew holes through the border wall between Gaza and Egypt, enabling tens of thousands of Palestinians to surge across the border and stock up on food, fuel and other provisions.

Before the dust settled at Rafah, both Israel and Egypt were faced with a new reality, one that some Israelis suggested wasn't all bad. Israel's closure of Gaza, imposed after Hamas seized control of the strip last June and tightened following a surge of cross-border rocket fire last week against Israel, was no more.

In breaking down the border, Hamas burnished its reputation among Palestinians, further humiliating Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah faction, which it defeated in elections last January and with violence in June. And in brazenly sidestepping Israel's blockade, which had already stirred international

censure, Hamas put Israel on the defensive.

Fearing that Palestinian terrorists who regularly tunnel under the Gaza-Egypt border are now at liberty to transport weapons and fighters across the border as they please, towns in southern Israel went on high alert, and the military deployed reinforcements.

Because the Egypt-Israel border is more permeable than the Gaza-Israel border, the Israeli army warned that Palestinian terrorists could use Egypt as a staging ground for attacks on Israelis. Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's office issued an urgent advisory to Israelis vacationing in Sinai to hurry home.

"This was a resounding failure, a public relations disaster," Danny Ayalon, Israel's former ambassador to the United States, told Reuters. "And we've lost deterrence."

Some in Jerusalem saw a silver lining in the chaos, suggesting that the elimination of the Gaza-Egypt border provided an opportunity for strategic rethinking.

Defence Minister Ehud Barak's deputy, Matan Vilnai, said Israel can now finalize its disengagement from Gaza, begun with the withdrawal of troops and settlers in 2005.

"We need to understand that when Gaza is open to the other side, we lose responsibility for it," Vilnai told Army Radio. "So we want to disengage from it."

Other Israeli officials, speaking privately, said this could be a prelude to a full return of Egyptian authority over Gaza. Egypt controlled the crowded coastal territory until Israel captured it in the 1967 Six Day War, a loss Cairo never appeared to mourn.

"For years, Israel begged to share its control over the territories with Jordan and Egypt. But King Hussein disengaged from the West Bank in the mid-1980s, and Egypt, which had always perceived the Gaza Strip as a black pit of terrorism, said, 'No thank you,'" Smadar Perry wrote in the Israeli daily *Yediot Achronot*. "Yesterday, the black pit of Gaza was forcibly linked to Egypt."

Throughout the crisis, Cairo has played it cool. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak spoke of the sudden influx of Palestinians — the number was put at between 80,000 and 350,000 — as a humanitarian necessity, making no mention of the fact that his regime had been a partner of Israel in efforts to seal off Gaza and thus weaken Hamas.

"Let them eat, buy food and then go back," Mubarak said. "Egypt will not allow Gaza to starve."

It's unclear when, or even if, the mile-long border wall at Rafah will be rebuilt. As long as the border stays open, Palestinian terrorists will be able to freely bring arms and cash into Gaza from the Egyptian Sinai, Israeli officials warned.

So far, the Olmert government has avoided overt criticism of Egypt, the first Arab power to have recognized the Jewish state.

"I believe Egypt knows what its job is, and we expect them to perform their task in the framework of agreements," Barak said after the border was breached.

Egypt may have its own concerns about its new open connection with the Hamas-run Gaza.

Hamas' power in the strip will only stoke the flames of its kindred faction in Cairo, the Muslim Brotherhood. The Brotherhood is the most virulent political opposition Mubarak faces, and Jerusalem's nightmare — and Mubarak's — is that one day it will take over Egypt.

Perhaps not surprisingly, while Mubarak was speaking kindly of the plight of Gaza's Palestinians, his security forces were rounding up Muslim Brotherhood members taking part in pro-Palestinian protests.

Asked about Gaza's new reality, the United States reiterated its stance that the strip must be considered, along with the West Bank, part of the future Palestinian state — a show of support for Abbas' claim to represent Palestinians in both territories.



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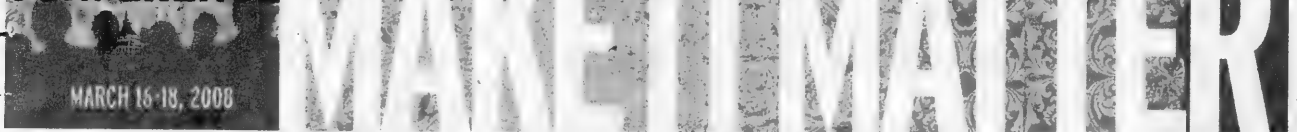
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Israel & the Jewish World

Olmert stresses peace credentials at Herzliya

By DINA KRAFT
JTA

HERZLIYA, Israel — Fighting for his political life, prime minister Ehud Olmert told the Israeli people that keeping him in office was their best hope of reaching the promised land of peace.

"There is no other option to what I am offering," Olmert said last week in his keynote address at the Herzliya Conference, referring to ambitious peace efforts with the Palestinians launched under the aegis of the United States at the Annapolis, Md., peace conference last November.

It was an embattled Olmert who showed up just one week before the publication of the final report of the Winograd Commission investigating his and other top officials' actions in the 2006 Lebanon war.

Calls for Olmert's resignation have been growing from political rivals, bereaved families and even Israel Defence Forces reserve officers.

After the speech, Maj.-Gen. Eyal Ben-Reuven said Olmert's words of hope cannot conceal his failures in the 2006 war with

Hezbollah. "The prime minister earned a failing grade in the supreme test of any state," Ben-Reuven said to Army Radio of Olmert's management of the war.

The prime minister's address at the annual Herzliya Conference has become a platform for Israeli leaders to present major policy initiatives.

Olmert used the speech not for any dramatic surprises but to state his case that despite past errors, the country is on the right track.

"I come to speak of the future," Olmert said in his opening remarks, quickly sidestepping calls for his dismissal. "I believe responsible leadership can deal with criticism... and continue forward."

He said the negotiations with the Palestinian Authority were full of risks and questions but repeated the message that they are the only way Israel can break the cycle of conflict the country has been locked in since the state was born.

"We have no right to squander this chance," Olmert said. "Our nation has been waiting for a light at the end of the tunnel."

"We have no horizon of hope more promising than speaking with the current Pales-

tinian leadership. Some say it is weak," he said, and "unable to hold up to agreements. I say this is the best [Palestinian] leadership we could have."

Olmert warned that if action is not taken now, there might not be a democratic state with a Jewish majority to call home in the future.

Although the Gaza Strip and the southern Israeli town of Sderot are the current front lines of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Olmert referred only briefly to the situation there. Israel has faced international criticism for limiting Gaza's fuel supplies.

"We will not permit, under any circumstances or conditions, a humanitarian crisis to develop," Olmert said. "We will not harm the supply of food for children, medicine for those who need it and fuel for institutions that save lives."

"But there is no justification for demanding we allow residents of Gaza to live normal lives while shells and rockets are fired from their streets and courtyards at Sderot and other communities in the south."

Olmert touted the quiet that has prevailed in the north of the country since the end of the 2006 war, saying the past 18 months of rocket-free life on the border was the longest stretch of calm there in the past 25 years.

"Our enemies in the north are in no rush to fight us, and they know why," he said, offering that the reasons Hezbollah refrains from reigniting violence with Israel "are

known to all who need to know."

"These reasons reflect the enormous might of Israel," Olmert added.

A former corporate lawyer, Olmert defended himself while acknowledging mistakes were made.

"I have no regrets about the vital decisions that I led as prime minister, not those linked with the fighting in Lebanon, nor those related to other matters," he said.

"Mistakes were made, yes. There were failures — definitely. But lessons were learned, flaws were fixed, modes of operating were changed and principally, the decisions that I have made since then have brought greater security, more quiet, less terror, greater deterrence and more prosperity for the State of Israel than it has had in many years."

Ben Caspit, a senior political columnist for Israel's daily *Ma'ariv*, said Olmert's speech was good, comprehensive, "even moving." But he argued that no matter what Olmert says or how he says it, his fate remains on the line.

"Whatever he says now, one week before the Winograd Committee determines his fate, is subject to a warning comment. All his high-flown peace talk requires proof," he wrote in last Thursday's paper. "Yesterday, he gave his speech for the defence, from the depths of his heart, firing the opening shot of the race of his life, even before the race has started."



Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert

Adath Israel Congregation

Adath Israel Congregation, located for over 100 years in the vibrant Jewish community of Toronto, Canada, is one of the leading and largest traditional conservative synagogues in North America. We are searching for an experienced and dynamic Cantor to join our congregational family effective August 1, 2009.

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A more detailed job description can be found at www.kdhs.org. Submit CVs to jobs@kdhs.org. No phone calls or surface mail please. The deadline for submissions is February 4, 2008.

Israel & the Jewish World

Border guard killed

A Palestinian group claimed responsibility for killing an Israeli border guard in a shooting attack near Jerusalem. Rami Zoari, 20, from Be'er Sheva, was killed the night of Jan. 24 in a shooting near Shuafat just outside northern Jerusalem. Another border guard was wounded. The Battalions of Struggle and Return, a previously unknown offshoot of Fatah's Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, claimed responsibility, Israel Radio reported.

Israel Briefs

witness to in Arabic countries, we want to offer an alternative source of information to moderates in these countries to provide them with reliable information about the Shoah," said Yad Vashem chairman Avner Shalev. In 2007, nearly seven million people from more than 200 countries visited www.yadvashem.org, including 32,500 from Arab countries.

Egypt-Gaza link sought

Israeli officials proposed that Egypt take over responsibility for supplying the Gaza Strip. Israeli media quoted members of the Olmert government as saying that after tens of thousands of Palestinians overran the Gaza-Egypt border, there was an opportunity to demand that Cairo take care of the needs of the coastal territory. Egypt currently supplies some electricity to Gaza, but Palestinians there are otherwise dependent on Israel, a situation that Jerusalem wants to end, completing a "disengagement" begun in 2005. "We need to understand that when Gaza is open to the other side, we lose responsibility for it. So

we want to disengage from it," Deputy Defence Minister Matan Vilnai told Army Radio. "We are responsible as long as there is no alternative." Egypt controlled Gaza until Israel captured the territory in the 1967 Six-Day War. It has made clear it does not want to return to ruling the congested and impoverished territory.

Defence trumps reputation

Israel's self-defence is more important than finding favour in foreign eyes, its foreign minister said. Tzipi Livni said in a speech that while the Olmert government is serious about trying to make peace with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, its efforts are hobbled by the power of Hamas and the threat it and other terrorists pose to Israel. That, Livni told the Herzliya Conference, means Israel must continue fighting in Gaza even as it courts Abbas, though the violence generates international censure and occasional accusations of poor faith. "I believe that we do not need to apologize for our existence or for protecting our citizens, even at the cost of criticism from the international community," she said.

Sopranos star discovers her Jewish spirit on birthright

By DINA KRAFT

JTA

JAFFA, Israel — Meadow Soprano, Jewish?

"Everyone assumes I'm Italian," Jamie Lynn Sigler, 26, said with a sigh, pausing over her hummus lunch at the open-air market in Jaffa, one of the stops on her birthright Israel tour.

"Even kids on the trip keep asking, 'Are you Jewish?'"

Sigler, who played the daughter of Mafia kingpin Tony Soprano on the acclaimed HBO show *The Sopranos*, grew up in a Jewish home in Jericho, N.Y., going to Hebrew school and having a bat mitzvah.

Her father's family immigrated to America from Greece and Poland. Her mother, who is Puerto Rican, converted to Judaism.

But it was only while touring in Israel, during her recent visit to the country, that she said she felt a true spiritual and emotional connection to her roots.

"It's one of the most beautiful, inspiring places I've ever been to," Sigler said. "I now have a greater understanding and motivation about preserving my Jewishness."

Among the highlights she noted were riding camels in the desert, dining on roast lamb in a Bedouin tent and exploring the back alleys of Jerusalem's Old City.

Sigler said she was especially moved during her visits to the Western Wall, where she was surprised by her tears, and to Yad Vashem, where the Holocaust and its history suddenly felt deeply personal.

"I started to think, 'What if I was there, what if I had been ripped away from my family?'" she said.

Sigler said Israel had been a fairly abstract concept to her before the trip, with her images

of it limited to the coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict portrayed in the media.

On the birthright trip, which brings Diaspora young people between 18 and 26 to Israel for free 10-day tours, her group was accompanied part of the time by a small group of Israeli soldiers.

Through them, Sigler said she heard about a much different life than the one she and her friends lead in America. She was impressed by their sacrifices and the pride they have in their country and history.

"It's so different but so inspiring to be part of that," said Sigler, her face dominated by a pair of large designer sunglasses. "I would want to move here and join the army too."

She bonded quickly with the other birthright participants. Sigler and her new friends kidded about returning to Israel together and renting apartments in the same building.

She compared these fast and seamless friendships to her experience with the cast and crew of *The Sopranos*.

"It's a similar dynamic — people loving what they are doing," she said.

Sigler acknowledged it's been difficult realizing that the show, considered to be among the seminal works of television drama, is finally over after six seasons. She has plans to move to Los Angeles and continue her acting career.

So would Tony have allowed Meadow to come to Israel?

"Probably not," she said.

Her friend, noting that Tony's mob rivals were out to kill him by the end of the series, interjected: "What are you talking about? It's probably safer for Meadow in Israel than near her father."

Sigler laughed and agreed that this was probably true.



Jamie Lynn Sigler


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Israel to field electric cars

JTA

JERUSALEM — The Israeli government is sponsoring a campaign to encourage widespread use of electric cars.

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert signed a deal last week with Renault-Nissan CEO Carlos Ghosn under which the automotive conglomerate will produce electric cars for mass distribution in Israel beginning in 2011.

Project Better Place, a company headed by Israeli venture capitalist Shai Agassi, will construct a national grid of thousands of stations where the cars can be recharged.

The signatories said Israel would be a



From left are Israeli venture capitalist Shai Agassi, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Renault-Nissan CEO Carlos Ghosn.

proving ground for turning electric cars into the mass transit of choice in an era of oil jitters and environmental concerns.

According to Olmert, the government hopes to eliminate gasoline-based transportation in Israel by 2020.

Learning to remember (and forget) Belgrade

Tsing by David Albahari, Northwestern University Press.

By NORMAN RAVVIN
Special to The CJN

One of the darkest chapters in postwar European life is undergoing a second act this month, as Serbs ready themselves for a run-off in their national election for president.



Norman Ravvin

The lead competitors are a mild pro-western incumbent and a more strident nationalist who was an ally of Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic during the Balkans' disastrous descent into civil war and ethnic killing. Aside from deciding which direction the country will take, the Serb election is also expected to trigger a declaration of independence from Kosovar Albanians, the target of what

western commentators euphemistically called the Serbian efforts to "ethnically cleanse" their country.

Undoubtedly, the aftermath of NATO bombing and the revelation of substantial massacres of Bosnian Muslims marked the Serbs as the devils in this conflict, and a surprising number of Serbs continue to bear a marked victim complex, as if the war their leaders engineered were someone else's doing.

But Belgrade – a wonderful holdover from the Austro-Hungarian empire with deep Turkish influences – is little known or understood in the West.

Large numbers of Serbs chose Canada as their second home during the Balkan Wars of the 1990s and with them came writers well worth reading.

Among the most provocative of these is David Albahari, who has lived in Calgary since 1994. Arriving there with a major reputation in the literary world of the former Yugoslavia, he has gone on to create his own second act – a literary oeuvre in English, in which he is often the translator of his own works from the original Serb.

A recently translated novel, *Gotz and Meyer*, tells the little-remarked-upon history of the German massacre of Belgrade's long-established Jewish community using trucks with a crude mechanism to asphyxiate their victims with the vehicles' exhaust. The destruction of Serbian Jews was an early undertaking, completed in 1942 with the collaboration of Croatian militia.

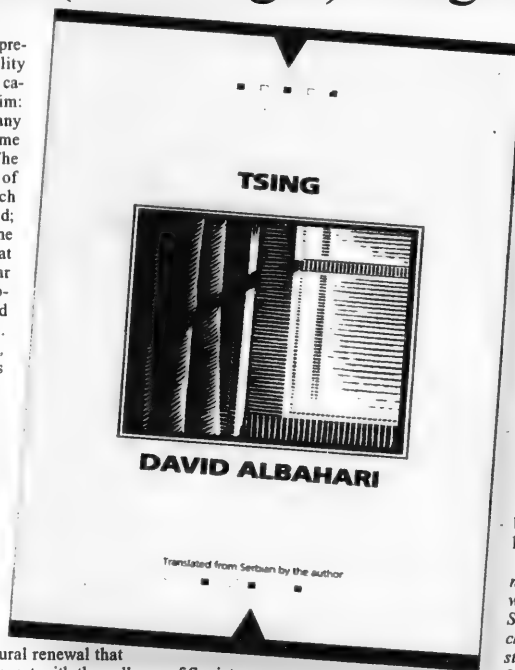
But it is another novella, called *Tsing* in English, *Cink* in the original, which reflects in uncanny ways the hiddenness, the lack of public acknowledgment of the German crime. I encountered this phenomenon during a recent trip to Belgrade, which is a city full of monuments, busts, historical buildings and plaques, with little public attention paid to the damage done during World War II. Jewishness, as a public presence, is notable by its absence, though there is still an old and active synagogue in the city.

Tsing is an oblique study of these postwar outcomes. It is a poetic account of a writer's life, some which is autobiographical, and it is a rumination on the relationship between a father and son, played out on an international stage in Belgrade, Tel Aviv and Zurich.

The novella's most compelling character is the writer's

declining father, who is presented as a personality marked by the particular catastrophe that befell him: "For him, like so many people who survived, time began after the war. The war camp was a kind of womb, a uterus which pushed him into the world; into a different world... he regarded the things that happened before the war as if they had not happened, no, as if they had happened in a dream... Belgrade, *Péc, Cuprija, Zemun*: the circle was closed."

The short sections the narrator dedicates to mining his father's postwar life are evocative of a certain evasive resignation I encountered amongst Serbs, with regard to both the recent conflict and the much more distant disasters of the World War II. Some of this may be accounted for by the ongoing process of cultural renewal that should have begun in earnest with the collapse of Soviet



influence in the region, but was held up by the mystifications and braggadocio of the Milosevic years.

Albahari presents his narrator's father as a Representative Man, a figure who in key ways encapsulates the troubles of his homeland. And it is the father's embrace by history that leaves the son at remove from these things, diffident and guilty. "He lived through four wars," Albahari writes, "four years in German captivity, the loss of his first wife and children, while I worry because of my thinning hair and my bad teeth."

Norman Ravvin's novel, *Lola by Night*, was recently released in Serbian translation. He chairs the Concordia Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies.

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Arts & Travel



SECOND SHOW ADDED FOR 13-YEAR-OLD SINGING SENSATION NIKKI YANOFSKY

Luminato and TD Canada Trust Toronto Jazz Festival have added a second show for 13-year-old Montreal singing sensation **Nikki Yanofsky** after her first scheduled show was sold out within hours of the tickets being released for sale here in Toronto.

Yanofsky seems to be entrusted with a talent as large as **Ella Fitzgerald's**. Her repertoire includes a highly sophisticated version of Fitzgerald's classic *A Tisket A Tasket* and other jazz standards. Several tracks are available for free download from Yanofsky's website (www.nikkionline.ca).

She performs at the Isabel Bader Theatre, 93 Charles St., on Feb. 5 and 6; tickets are still available for the latter concert. Ticketmaster, 416-870-8000 or www.ticketmaster.ca.

Film Sundays with Shlomo Schwartzberg: The topic is "Drastic Changes: The '60s and '70s" in this continuing series on how Jewish filmmakers have depicted the Jewish image in the movies over the years. Film clips, bagels and coffee. Admission \$9. Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, Feb. 3, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Book Launch: The Latner Jewish Library presents the launch of *Living Legacies: A Collection of Inspirational*

enber. The moderator is **Susan Jackson**, the executive director of the Centre for Jewish Knowledge and Heritage. Lipa Green Building, 4600 Bathurst St. Sunday, Feb. 3, 2 to 4 p.m. RSVP, 416-635-2883, ext. 111, or by e-mail to lnobel@ujafed.org.

Klezmer Concerts: The Flying Bulgars perform two 20th anniversary concerts. Tickets are \$24 in advance, \$30 at the door, \$15 for young people up to age 14. Al Green Theatre, Miles Nadal JCC. Saturday, Feb. 9, 8 p.m. and Sunday, Feb. 10, 7:30 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 0. (Phone order service charge applies.)

Golden Globes & Oscars: Jewish winners of the recent Golden Globe awards included **Daniel Day-Lewis**, who won the best dramatic actor award for his role in *There Will Be Blood*. Day-Lewis is the son of British Jewish actress **Jill Balcon**. His wife, Rebecca, is the daughter of the late playwright **Arthur Miller**.

David Duchovny, star of the adult sitcom *Californication*, was selected best actor in a musical or comedy series. (Duchovny's father is Jewish.)

Other Jewish winners included **Julian Schnabel**, director of *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly*, and brothers **Ethan and Joel Coen**, who won best screenplay for the thriller *No Country for Old Men*. Hollywood icon **Steven Spielberg** was to be honoured with the Cecil B. DeMille Award, but the presentation was postponed to next year due to the writer's strike.

Also on the subject of film honours, two films with Jewish themes were nominated for Academy Awards for best foreign language film. The Israeli film *Beaufort* and the Austrian film *The Counterfeiters* were among five films nominated in that category.

Beaufort, directed by **Joseph Cedar**, is a war movie about a small Israeli unit that evacuates the medieval Beaufort fortress during the first Lebanon War. According to the *JTA*, the film has stirred controversy in Israel because several actors in the cast did not serve in the military.

In *The Counterfeiters* by **Stefan Ruzowitzky**, the Nazis round up dozens of skilled Jewish craftsmen from concentration camps to create counterfeit British and U.S. currency in a last-ditch ploy to wreck the economies of the two allies.

The Toronto Jewish Film Festival's *Chai Tea & A Movie* program presents a screening of *The Counterfeiters* at the Sheppard Grande Cinema, Yonge and Sheppard, Sunday, Feb. 24, tea 4 p.m., film 5 p.m. \$15 at the door or in advance. 416-324-9121, www.tjff.com

Contemporary European Drama: The University of Toronto Graduate Centre for Study of Drama presents the Canadian premiere of German playwright **Roland Schimmelpfennig's** *Boulevard of the Brave* (*Auf der Greifswalder Strasse*). Translated into English for the first time, the play explores the nature of fate and chance, and the little things that mo-

mentarily bring us together. For 24 hours, the lives of 37 people who live on a low-income street in Berlin intersect in seemingly banal and accidental ways.

"Through his signature dramaturgy of laconic, hyper-realistic snapshots, magic realism, fairy tale and prose narrative, Schimmelpfennig leads the spectator's gaze abruptly back and forth between the two sides of one loud and ugly street - unexpectedly spanning generations bound together by this neighbourhood of the forgotten."

Studio Theatre, 4 Glen Morris St. \$15, \$10; Sunday PWYC. Jan. 30 to Feb. 3. 416-978-7986

Names in the News

• **Natalie Ruskin** is the associate producer of *Fortune Hunters*, a new CBC show about entrepreneurs hunting their fortunes, creating companies and trying to cash in on popular trends. The show airs weekly on CBC News-world, Saturdays at 6:30 p.m. and Sundays at 4:30 p.m. www.cbc.ca/fortunehunters

• Toronto-born writer **Karen X. Tulchinsky** (*The Five Books of Moses Lapinsky*) is the associate story editor for *The Guard*, a new dramatic television series about the Canadian coast guard. The first one-hour episode aired Jan. 22 on Global TV.

• **Ashley Botting** is the newest cast member of Toronto's Second City mainstage and the company's first Jewish female mainstage actor. Catch her in *Tazed and Confused*, which opens at 51 Mercer St. (at Blue Jays Way) on Feb. 7, 8 p.m. \$20 to \$28. 416-343-0011. (Thanks to Second City's creative assistant, Daniel Shehori, for the information.)

• Vocalist **Aviva Chernick**, with pianist **Tania Gill** and bass player **Andrew Downing**, will play a concert to launch their CD *In The Sea*. This album is an eclectic mix of world cabaret repertoire that weaves together Judeo-Spanish love songs, blues, Yiddish folk, cabaret and more. Monday, Feb. 4 at the Heliconian Club, 35 Hazelton Ave., Toronto. Tickets \$20 at the door. Call 416-579-5366 to reserve.

• Director-playwright **Michael Rubinfeld**, who operates his theatre company Absit Omen with playwright **Hannah Moscovitch**, is the new artistic producer of SummerWorks Theatre Festival, the largest juried theatre festival in Canada. "The festival has provided a home for me," Rubinfeld said. "It's allowed me to develop as an artist, and I'm honoured to be in a position to help offer the same opportunity to others." www.summerworks.ca

Arts in Brief

• Dancap Productions presents *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, a rousing musical comedy that offers audience members the opportunity (strictly voluntary) to become part of the action as onstage spellers. Elgin Theatre, 189 Yonge St. \$50 to \$100. Jan. 29 to Feb. 10, 8 p.m., matinees 2 p.m. 416-872-5555, www.dancapickets.com

• Due to its popularity, the Royal Ontario Museum has extended its "Early Typewriters" exhibit to June 29. The exhibit showcases 20 antique typewriters from the very beginning of their history in the 1880s and 1890s.

• The first program in a series of Museum and Gallery Adventures planned by the MNJCC for the new seniors group, 55 +Forward, will take place at the Reuben and Helene Dennis Museum, Beth Tzedec Synagogue, 1700 Bathurst St (rear entrance) on Thursday, Feb. 7 at 2 p.m. This behind the scenes view and curator's talk will provide a rare glimpse into the beautiful Judaica collection and an afternoon of culture conversation and tea.

• An exhibit of photographs by Russian-born photographer **Roman Vishniac** is on view at McMaster University's Museum of Art in Hamilton, the first time the New York-based collection has been shown in Canada. "Roman Vishniac: A Vanished World" chronicles life in the Jewish villages and ghettos of central and eastern Europe between 1935 and 1939. Until March 1. www.mcmaster.ca/museum

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Arts & Travel

Theodore Bikel to perform at Ashkenaz Festival fundraiser

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Famed actor and singer of screen and stage, Theodore Bikel, will be back in Toronto after a 20-year absence.

The 83-year-old Jewish performer and icon is returning to promote the Ashkenaz Foundation – a community non-profit dedicated to creating increased awareness of Yiddish and Jewish culture through the performing arts – and to “get everything I need by riding up and down Bathurst Street again,” he told *The C/JN* last week. “I’m very fond of Toronto.”

Speaking from his home in southern California, Bikel explained that while the billing for his Feb. 2 appearance at the Toronto Centre for the Arts states he’s been away for two decades, in fact he was here about 11 years ago as part of a troupe performing *Fiddler on the Roof*.

This isn’t surprising, considering he’s performed the lead role, Tevye, in the play more than 2,000 times over the course of his storied career. Despite this, he never tires of it, he said.

“If you have any sense of artistic integrity it doesn’t get tiring,” Bikel stated, adding that as a professional artist, “you can’t just have the semblance of newness to the [role]... you actually have to bring something new to it.”

When asked how it feels to still be performing as an octogenarian, Bikel responded enthusiastically.

“It feels no different than it has in the past. My voice is as strong as it ever was,” he said.

Perhaps the only difference, he said, is in his world outlook and

his refined experience.

“I’ve lived longer and have more insights into what role culture plays in society [and] that I’m not performing in a vacuum. When you’re 22, you perform, but you don’t define what it is you’re doing,” he said. “Now, whether it’s connected to my links as a Jew and as a human... you look to yesterday to pinpoint where you are today.”

So what can local audiences expect from Bikel after all this time?

“I’ve added a lot of material since I last came to Toronto, a lot of ethnic stuff. All that will be there,” he said.

But far from being a one-note, Jewish performer, Bikel has appeared in numerous projects across artistic genres, with more than 35 film roles and dozens of appearances on TV, including stints on popular shows *Law and Order*, *All in The Family*, *L.A. Law* and *JAG*.

Interestingly, Bikel has also become somewhat of a science-fiction icon for his portrayal of the hard-nosed Sergey Rozhenko, human adoptive parent of Worf, everybody’s favourite Klingon on *Star Trek: The Next Generation*.

“Yes. I still get trekkie [mail],” Bikel quipped when reminded about the role. “I guess the producers liked my read. I just tried to read the part as

a human... because I don’t know what an alien looks like or sounds like. I played what I projected into the role. So they cast me.”

Despite the long list of screen credits, Bikel still prefers performing live.

“It’s the live contact with the audience,” he said. “In the studio, you’re working for a reaction that may or may not come months later when the thing is released.”



Theodore Bikel

Actress’ monologue aims to help abused women

By SHERRY SMITHER
Special to *The C/JN*

When Israeli-American actress and activist Naomi Ackerman was asked to write a 20-minute monologue 10 years ago, she never anticipated the journey she’d be taking.

“While working as an actress in Israel – my family made aliyah when I was nine – the Ministry of Welfare in Jerusalem approached me to write this piece, a one-time gig on domestic violence,” Ackerman said over the phone from New York, where she was giving a performance.

Interviewing women at a government shelter heightened her awareness of abuse victims.

“I went into the women’s shelter thinking this could never happen to me. I knew

there was domestic violence in the Jewish world, but I was shocked that I identified with them, even though no one ever raised a hand to me in my life,” she said.

Weaving together the stories of four women, Ackerman wrote *Flowers Aren’t Enough*, a poignant portrayal of Michal, a young woman from an upper-middle-class family who is in an abusive relationship.

After her performance, one of the four came up and said, “You’ve got it Naomi! Now go and tell the world.”

From then on the monologue became a work in progress.

“The first 20 minutes are based on the initial four women, but so many women wrote and spoke to me that the monologue got longer, deeper and wider – from 20 minutes it became one hour,” said Ackerman, a medi-

ator and conflict resolution specialist who promotes tolerance and dialogue through art direction, theatre programming and workshops.

Ackerman took advice from an acquaintance on a Hadassah mission and translated the play from Hebrew into English.

Audience reactions were amazing.

“The minute I performed in English, I started getting invites to the United States, India, Australia – I’ve travelled all over the world and performed it close to a thousand times. I always laugh that I was chosen to do this. Never in my wildest dreams did I intend this to become what it has become. The places I’ve been – it’s incredible.”

There’s one response the acclaimed actress said she gets from every audience. “They don’t want to talk about the cycle of violence

Continued on page 41

Never shy about his opinion, Bikel, a longtime member of the Actors’ Equity Association, also has his take on the current writer’s strike in the United States.

“The writers have a good cause, but bad negotiation skills,” he said. “There are means of distribution that the producers have that have not been covered by any contract. They refuse to make a deal and that’s nonsense. You can’t just let the producers rake in the money and not share it.”

Proceeds from Bikel’s Toronto concert will help fund this summer’s Ashkenaz Festival.

“I’m connected with Jewish festivals all over the world... and [the Ashkenaz Festival] seeks to cultivate a cultural environment that is not otherwise covered. So I agreed to help raise the necessary funds to support it,” Bikel proudly stated.

For more information, visit www.ashkenazfestival.com.

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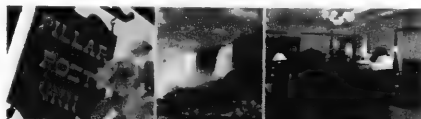
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Arts & Travel

Musical chronicles compelling family history

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL

Special to The C/JN

Growing up Jewish in small-town Ontario can be quite a colourful journey.

Just ask Allan Merovitz. The actor, singer and raconteur is parlaying memories of his formative years in Smiths Falls, Ont., into a family friendly musical.

Titled *If Cows Could Fly*, the production is rich with dialogue and a wide range of music genres, including Yiddish songs, country ballads, klezmer hits and even Ottawa Valley fiddle tunes.

"I am very excited about this production," says Merovitz, a two-time Dora Award winner.

"There is so much music and it's integrated in such a beautiful way."

The show, produced by Artword Theatre and Barry Karp, will be presented in Hamilton in mid-February and will run in Ottawa in February and March.

If Cows Could Fly traces the story of both sides of Merovitz's family, which left eastern Europe in the early 20th century seeking a better life in the new world.

Along with chronicling Merovitz's compelling family history and odyssey to Canada, the play touches on a common theme for many Jewish immigrants, namely, the challenges of holding onto age-old traditions in the face of modernity.

"What does *If Cows Could Fly* mean?" Merovitz asks rhetorically.

"It means making the impossible tangible. How do we do this? Through a belief in ourselves and in the generosity of so many people who help us along the way. Music is a way to express this and have a good time. We smile, we laugh, we sing, we dance."

Born in Montreal, the 65-year-old Merovitz was raised in Smiths Falls, a small town that was not exactly a bastion of Jewish culture. Nevertheless, Merovitz's relatives ensured he was imbued with strong Jewish sensibilities.

The father of four notes his family members often spoke about their history, and he was deeply moved by the stories they regaled.

"So I started interviewing all of my relatives," he says.

"They told wonderful stories of where they came from, why they left and that really got me rolling."

As he compiled a compendium of their tales, Merovitz started to create characters based on them as well as interspersing these tales with Yiddish songs and other forms of music.

"I started to share this with my theatre friends, and eventually, I had so much material that I was able to put together a show. I staged little pieces for friends in their homes and art galleries, and in time I took the show to fringe festivals."

Merovitz will also appear in the production alongside renowned musicians' Henri Oppenheim, Frank Rackow and Ronald Weihs, who is also the director.

"This play... runs the gamut from wacky, to fascinating, to deeply moving," says Weihs.

"It's a kaleidoscope, always full of surprises. Most



Allan Merovitz

of all, it's about tolerance and understanding between people from different backgrounds."

A veteran of the arts, Merovitz was a former lead singer with the Juno-nominated Flying Bulgar Klezmer Band and currently leads his own band in Calgary, KlezMerovitz, which has recently released a self-titled CD.

The band is working on a new CD release in 2008, titled *The Wedding Bard/Der Badchan*.

Hamilton performances of *If Cows Could Fly* will be held at the DAC Downtown Arts Centre on Feb. 15 and 16. For tickets, call 905-543-8512.

The Irving Greenberg Theatre Centre in Ottawa hosts the production from Feb. 21 to March 9. For tickets, contact the box office at 613-236-5196.

More information about the musical can be found by visiting www.fcowscouldfly.com.

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Arts & Travel

Sharon Azrieli to perform in Israel Opera production

By JANICE ARNOLD

Staff Reporter

Sharon Azrieli will die on stage in March, and she can hardly wait.

The Montreal opera singer will sing a leading role in Puccini's *Turandot* with the New Israel Opera in the 1,600-seat Golda Meir Centre for the Performing Arts.

Azrieli is playing Liù, the servant girl who stabs herself in the heart rather than betray the prince she secretly loves in the exotic Chinese tale that would be Puccini's last work. The dramatic death scene is a highlight of the tragedy.

Getting a big part in a lavish classical Italian opera before a major audience is something Azrieli has been striving for since re-starting her career. She took 10 years off after a divorce and to raise her two sons, now 12 and 10.

Now in her early 40s, she resettled in 2000 in her native city after living in New York since her college days.

"I'm an overnight success that took 20 years," Azrieli quipped.

She leaves for Israel Feb. 7 to begin rehearsals for the opening March 13 of *Turandot*.

Azrieli has loved opera and singing generally since childhood, and credits her Grade 4 choirmaster, the late Yehuda Vineberg, at Solomon Schechter Academy with recognizing her talent early on.

"He always gave me the solos," she said.

She and her mother, Stephanie, regularly tuned in to *Saturday Afternoon at the Opera*, and Israeli music was a family favourite.

However, she didn't consider singing as a career until she spent a summer abroad in Europe while she was an art history student at Vassar College. She visited Florence and became enthralled with all things Italian. She studied with the late

acclaimed baritone Gino Becchi.

After graduating from Vassar, she tried for three years to be admitted to the prestigious Juilliard School, finally passing its rigorous audition.

Among her early roles was the heroine in the Canadian Opera Company's production of *Romeo and Juliet*, Elvira in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* at the Vermont Opera Festival, the soprano solo in Verdi's *Requiem* with the New West Symphony in Los Angeles, and Susanna in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* with the Sarasota Opera. She has also performed with a number of orchestras around the world.

Azrieli said she has never suffered from stage fright, and, in fact, feels more comfortable performing in a large hall than at a cocktail party or in a lounge.

Her voice has matured from her early years when she was a lyrical soprano. She is now a spinto soprano which makes her suited to the "juicier parts" she craves, such as the full-blooded ladies in *Madama Butterfly*, *Tosca* and *Aida*, one of her dream title roles.

"Opera singing is an aerobic sport. It takes years of training the muscles and the breathing."

To keep fit, she practises for an hour or two each day and takes Pilates classes, which emphasize breathing correctly and strengthening the body's core.

In addition to opera, she also studied cantorial singing in New York and was the cantor at Temple Emanu-El-Beth Shalom from 2001 to 2003. Sacred music is something dear to her, and she doesn't care what religious tradition it comes from.

She is infatuated with Verdi's *Requiem*, which she describes as "a thrilling roller-coaster ride."

She has started working on a doctorate at the Université de Montréal that will explore what she believes is the influence of the nusach, or melody, of the Jewish prayer service, on the composition, even though it's a Catholic funeral mass. She has

a hunch that Verdi was actually Jewish.

While a master's music student at U de M, she had a solo in a production of Dvorak's *Stabat Mater*, which is also inspired by the Catholic liturgy.

Azrieli has also soloed in two McGill Chamber Orchestra concerts of works by Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoff, which are to be released on compact disc. They will be Azrieli's first recordings.

She has just distributed to Israeli radio stations recordings of two original Hebrew pop songs, written for her by Ilana Klein with music by Varda Granot, in hope of getting some air time.

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Show raises awareness of abuse

Continued from page 39

in their community. They find excuses and reasons why it's there."

Ackerman brings her one-woman show to Toronto to benefit Miklat Bat Melech ("miklat" is Hebrew for shelter), a network of shelters for abused haredi women in Israel, on Feb. 9 at 8 p.m. at the Terraces of Baycrest, 55 Amers Ave.

After the performance, the actress will answer questions. A kosher dessert reception follows.

Ackerman learned of Miklat, which was founded in 1996, when she was invited to perform at a benefit for the organization in New Rochelle, N.Y., last year.

"I wasn't aware of Miklat's phenomenal work. It's extremely needed. Some people ask why religious women need a different shelter, but others have beds for women with

maybe two or three children. These women come with eight or nine kids. The government shelters are kosher, but not what these women require," she said.

"Miklat helps women go back to their community or gets them legal help from someone who understands where they're coming from. They help and don't ask questions," Ackerman added. "In Israel, if an abused woman needs legal aid, the government won't assist if she has assets in her name. One of the biggest issues is their husbands cut off financial aid. Although women may have money, they don't have access to it."

What makes Miklat special for Ackerman is that it also has Nigunim, a shelter for teenage girls.

"There's really nowhere for [haredi] girls to go when they're

in trouble, being abused or sexually assaulted. Having a house gives them a future," says Ackerman, who works extensively with Israeli girls at risk. "It's such a joy to do a show that raises awareness and money for an organization in Israel that I truly believe in. It's a double mitzvah for me."

Flowers Aren't Enough will also be performed at Beth Tzedek Congregation on March 26.

For more information, visit www.naomiacckerman.com or www.miklat.org.

The Feb. 9 Miklat event is \$36. A tax receipt will be issued. For tickets, contact the Toronto Miklat Committee at miklat.toronto@gmail.com.



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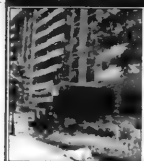
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Sports & Leisure

Israelis win Grand Slam event

JTA

MELBOURNE, Australia — Andy Ram and Yoni Erlich have become the first Israeli doubles team to win a Grand Slam tennis title.

The pair, seeded eighth, defeated the seventh-seeded French duo of Arnaud Clement and Michael Llodra in the Australian Open final in Melbourne last weekend.

Ram has won two mixed doubles Grand Slam titles, but never with an Israeli partner.

"It's a great day for us, for our family, for Israel, for everybody," Ram said, noting that Prime Minister Ehud Olmert had already called the pair to congratulate them. "He left a message for us to call him back; he couldn't reach us."

Hundreds of flag-waving Israelis were in the crowd, including Israel's ambassador to Australia, Yuval Rotem, who travelled with his staff from Canberra for the match.

The Israelis, who did not drop a set in the tournament, earned \$393,211 (all figures US) for their victory.

Earlier in the tournament, Shahar Peer had become the first Israeli female to reach a Grand Slam final, but she lost in three sets with her partner, Victoria Azarenka of Belarus.

Peer and Azarenka went down to defeat in three sets despite taking the first set convincingly, 6-2.

"I'm disappointed, but I'm excited to be in my first final" of a Grand Slam tennis event, Peer said after the match.

Earlier last week, Peer, 20, was eliminated in the third round of the singles tournament by Russian Elena Dementieva.

Despite her brush with history in the Australian Open, Peer is poised to break another barrier by becoming the first Israeli tennis player to compete in the Arab nation of Qatar.

Peer confirmed she will compete in the Qatar Open from Feb. 18 to 24, while Ram and Erlich are considering a Dubai tournament along with another Israeli, Tzipi Obziler.

Last year, Peer was ineligible to enter the \$2.5-million tournament in the Persian Gulf state because she was still officially enlisted in the Israeli army.

This year, however, the world's 17th ranked player has no such restrictions.

"I'm really comfortable about" going to Qatar, she said after her second-round victory at the Open. "Doha is a big tournament. I really want to go play tennis. It's a very nice country, and I'll just go there and have fun and do what I need to do."

Canadians travel to Israel

Continued from page 1

who also serves as director of the IGTO. "It is an exciting time for Israel as we enter 2008 and begin preparations to celebrate Israel's 60th anniversary. Canadians of all religions, cultures and ethnic backgrounds are booking to visit Israel."

Grofman said Israel has embarked on a large marketing campaign to increase tourism. About \$12 million (all figures US) was invested in the North American market last year, \$1 million of which was allocated to Canada. The marketing and advertising budget is expected to rise to \$1.2 million in 2008. Grofman expects 2008 to mark a new record for Canadian visitors — 70,000.

Police kibbitzed at hearing

Continued from page 5

Henry Gimpel, a past lodge president and chair of B'nai Brith's Toronto regional co-ordinating committee, who is also facing expulsion, said he knew of no efforts to bring people to the hearing. Supporters were annoyed that they were not permitted to view the hearing.

Gimpel said he joked with the off-duty police, who were paid by the hour, saying, "What do you expect from older people, to fight, to burn down the building?"

He called their presence "a waste of money."

When contacted by *The C/JN* for a comment, B'nai Brith Canada responded with a written statement, reproduced on page 5.



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Mosaic Outdoor Club heading for Israel

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Mosaic Outdoor Club of Ontario is taking its show on the road.

From May 12 to 21, as many as 30 devotees of the outdoor life will hike, bike and camp in Israel – miles away from their usual stomping grounds in southern Ontario.

The Israel trip is being organized in conjunction with the Jewish National Fund (JNF), which is handling logistics and accommodations in Israel and providing access to some of the country's more interesting natural sites.

The trip will take participants off the beaten track. They will forgo the usual five-star accommodations associated with JNF missions, in exchange for "an infinite star hotel," camping in the open air, said Lynne Morris, Mosaic's events committee chair.

Participants are expected to be in reasonably good shape to be able to handle the vigorous itinerary. The trip will include swimming, hiking, biking and cooking.

Cooking? On day two of the trip, the participants will be in the Negev Desert, and, to quote the itinerary, they will "wake up and make breakfast."

After breaking camp, the group will climb on board mountain bikes for a trip into the Tzin Valley to the Akev Spring, where they will trade their biking shorts for swim trunks.

The night will be spent at the traditional home of a Bedouin family.

Other trip highlights include a hike in the Mitzpe Ramon Crater, swimming in the Dead Sea, climbing Masada, a walking tour of Jerusalem's Old City, hiking in Gamla (near the Sea of Galilee) and overnight stays in



Mosaic members take a break during a hike in the Cheltenham Badlands, near Caledon, northwest of Toronto. [Photo courtesy of Lynne Morris]

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"It was a natural to partner with the JNF, as they are the primary charity protecting and improving the parks and environments' infrastructure" in Israel, Morris said.

Ben Prossin, executive director of JNF Toronto, agreed that hosting a Mosaic mission was "a natural fit. The proposed trip encompasses nature and an appreciation of nature."

JNF, he continued, plays an important role in keeping Israel green, developing aqua culture, planting trees, conserving the environment and preserving Israel's flora and fauna.

"They're going to see rural Israel" as well as cities and villages, he said.

The Mosaic mission is quite a departure from the usual JNF missions from Canada, though JNF offices in Britain

and Australia have sponsored similar outdoor trips, Prossin said. "We hope this is something that may be held biannually."

Morris said the club, which is active all year round, "felt we wanted to do something more meaningful" than its regular hiking and cycling tours around Ontario and the United States. "We have a number of Israelis in the club who said there are great outdoor activities in Israel. Let's do that... The fact it corresponds to Israel's 60th anniversary is serendipity," she said.

Her friend Mitchell Shnier, who is involved with JNF, suggested linking with the environmental organization. So far, 17 people have committed to participate and as many as 30 can be accommodated, Morris said.

Information evenings have been held to publicize the trip. The next one is scheduled for Feb. 19.

Cost is \$1,450, which covers the land portion of the mission, not including gratuities and some meals. Air fare is an additional \$1,300. Prossin said a somewhat longer JNF mission runs around \$4,900.

For more information, visit www.mosaicontario.org.

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Inside Back



Some of the seniors working at Yad LaKashish in Jerusalem are from the former Soviet Union: from left are metalworker Immanuel Lukatzki, Boris Guyber painting a violin on silk and Luba Krushentzki putting the finishing touches on a delicate silk scarf. The program serves olim from several countries.

Program provides a 'lifeline for the old'

By MICHAEL GORDON

The physicians and dentists on the seventh annual UJA Federation of Greater Toronto medical mission last year were greeted by a man who introduced himself this way: "I am a retired professor of anthropology. Rather than pursuing something in my field when I made aliyah, I decided to volunteer in a pursuit I loved all my life - woodworking. It has marvelously fulfilled my dreams and ambitions."

He was doing his woodworking in a workshop for seniors in Jerusalem called Yad LaKashish (Lifeline for the Old), a program that has provided supportive employment for seniors and people with disabilities for more than 40 years.

There are sheltered workshops in Canada, and there are arts and crafts programs in many organizations, including Baycrest. People on the tour with me asked if I knew of any programs like the one we were visiting. I could not recall any of this nature in Toronto or elsewhere in Ontario or Canada that provide a support system with financial, social, linguistic and community interventions as part of their mandate.

As a nation of immigrants, Israel absorbs individuals from countries around the world. Many of the elderly immigrants face enormous educational and language challenges, and it's very important to have a place where they can go and feel valued. Social networks and a sense of be-

longing have been shown to be crucial to older people in helping them maintain their physical and emotional well-being.

We met immigrants from the former Soviet Union who spoke rudimentary Hebrew, but I was able to communicate with them using my very rusty Yiddish. A big smile spread across the face of an elderly woman when I commended her work in Yiddish as she ironed silk-screened scarves and challah covers.

Elderly Ethiopian immigrants coloured greeting cards and put the finishing touches on tallitot, using skills they knew from their home country. In another room, men were finely painting gift boxes and wooden plaques, while in the room supervised by the retired anthropologist, people were using power tools to produce scrolled napkin rings.

What is unique about this program is the concept of providing a place for older people to go to avoid loneliness, while at the same time, providing a way to be productive, earn some money, and receive a range of social services and one very welcome robust hot meal a day.

Innovative and creative programs like Yad LaKashish can be a model to be explored by organizations that care for elderly Canadians. Such a program might provide an incentive for them to take part in their new world through companionship and a reason to get up and go someplace where they can contribute something useful.



The Senior Side of Life

Dr. Michael Gordon is medical program director of palliative care at Baycrest and co-author with Bart Mindszenty of *Parenting Your Parents* (Dundurn Press).

APPLE CINNAMON QUICHE

Ingredients

Serves 6

- 2 apples, peeled and sliced
- 8 oz grated cheddar cheese
- 1 unbaked 10-inch pastry shell
- 1 1/2 c whipping cream
- 2 Tbsps butter
- 1 Tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 4 large eggs

Directions

Sauté apples in butter for 5 minutes. Sprinkle sugar and cinnamon over apples. Layer apples in pastry shell. Sprinkle cheese over apple mixture. In medium size bowl, lightly whisk together the eggs and whipping cream. Pour over the apple/cheese mixture. Bake in a preheated 375° oven for 35 minutes or until set. Serve warm.

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Epi on Education

On the advice of a colleague, I recently read *Three Cups of Tea* by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin. I highly recommend this wonderful account of Mortenson's astounding achievement in building schools in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

A mountaineer who failed an attempt at K2, ending up in a tiny isolated village where he was inspired to begin his school-building career, Mortenson promoted education and literacy for girls and boys in the very territory that spawned the Taliban. The radical difference between his passion for a liberating, yet respectful, education and

the Taliban's desire to dominate through ignorance and force is a testimony to the power of the pen over that of the sword, or the computer versus the gun.

I was reminded of the work of Paulo Freire in Brazil, where he, too, chose the written word and articulate speech to be his weapons against oppression. (See his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.)

In both cases, there is also a message for Jewish education.

Knowledge liberates. It's no accident that the Exodus from the slavery and persecution of Egypt had to be quickly followed by the giving of the Torah at Sinai.

Instruction (Torah) leads to deep knowledge and literacy in a tradition and culture,

and that same knowledge empowers its owner. The illiterate, the less literate, and the illiterate (those who can read, but don't) can only fumble for words. They have no basis for their identity and can't stand up to those in power. In Jewish life, the more literate you are, the more you appreciate the richness and depth of our heritage, and the more you can deliberate your way through life as a proud and courageous Jew.

We are named Yisrael because we should be able to struggle even with God.

But we can't enter that life-long dialectic if we are bereft of the proper letters and words to express ourselves. Jewish literacy has always been our source of strength and pride. As Zechariah tells us in chapter 4, "... not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord."



Seymour Epstein

Epi (Seymour Epstein) is the vice-president of Jewish Education at UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

By AVRUM ROSENZWEIG

Have you ever been hungry? Have you ever gone without a meal, not because you wanted to but because you had to? Do you know what it feels like to be starving, not because it's a fast day but because you only have two nickels in your pocket to rub together, enough perhaps to buy a stick of licorice?

In our hometown of Toronto, thousands of children wake up every morning, and lay their tired heads down at night, hungry.

What a painful reality.

Consider the following facts found on the website of Mazon Canada (which describes itself as the "Jewish response to hunger" - mazoncanada.ca): 140,000 people in the Toronto area use food relief programs, and the percentage of food recipients who go hungry at least a couple days a week is 36 per cent. The number of children in food bank households is 50,400, and the number of children who go hungry at least once a month is 18,497.

The federal government made a commitment



URBAN WRITER

in 1989 to end child poverty by 2000. But by 2003, children were still the most notable victims of poverty-related hunger. Unfortunately, the chances of ending child poverty in the next decade are as good as the Toronto Maple Leafs' winning a Stanley Cup in 2008.

Hunger is indeed a serious problem, both here in Toronto and across Canada. According to Mazon, almost one million Canadians receive emergency food hampers each month, a figure that has risen 122 per cent since 1989 (and 8.5 per cent since 2003). Even more disappointing is that of these food bank recipients, 40 per cent are children - 317,242 to be precise, 166,242 more than in 1989. Mazon adds that "there are far more hungry Canadians than these numbers indicate."

Ask any teacher for the signs of a hungry child. Ask your child's teacher. He or she will tell you that hungry children can suffer from anxiety, depression, social problems and/or

attention problems. The National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine in the United States have conducted studies that show children who suffer from malnutrition have lower IQs and "score worse than their peers on arithmetic, writing, spatial memory and other cognitive tests."

It's crucial that we become aware of this devastating problem that's going on all around us. The thought that a little child is hungry in the morning, or has no lunch in his or her bag is heart-breaking.

Your gut response in reading this sad news might be to say that these facts reflect bad situations in Regent Park or near Jane and Finch. The earth-shattering reality, however, is that they also reflect a problem that affects many of our children, some of whom attend Jewish day schools. Poverty exists inside and outside the Jewish community.

Fred, the fellow who put flowers where David Rosenzweig was killed a few years ago, told me

that he would frequently be asked by young children at Bathurst Street and Lawrence Avenue if he could buy them a burger or something else to eat, because they hadn't eaten that day. They were hungry. Child poverty is everywhere and pays no attention to religion or culture.

How can you help? Familiarize yourself with the problem. Some important websites include www.campaign2000.ca and www.ncjwc.org, the site of the National Council of Jewish Women of Canada (NCJWC).

Then consider supporting organizations such as Mazon and NCJWC in their quest to help eradicate child hunger and poverty. Join with them. Play a role in strengthening our community and city by ensuring that our members, be they five or 85, are cared for, in accordance with Midrash Psalms 118:17: "When you are asked in the world to come, 'What was your work?' and you answer, 'I fed the hungry,' you will be told, 'This is the gate of the Lord, enter into it, you who have fed the hungry.'"

Discuss this column at my blog, avrumrosenzweigideas.blogspot.com, or e-mail me at avrum@veahava.org.

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The News in Brief

CANADA

Eager For Trial

REGINA — A Regina man charged with promoting hatred against Jews on the web told CBC last week he wants to air his views in court. Terry Tremaine, 59, a former math instructor at the University of Saskatchewan, was charged last month after a complaint from Canadian Jewish Congress and Ottawa lawyer Richard Warman. Tremaine was also fined last year by a human rights tribunal after a complaint by Warman. In a Jan. 28 interview, Tremaine said he wants all Jews to leave Canada, calling them "a destructive force."

WJC Praises Ottawa

JERUSALEM — The World Jewish Congress passed a resolution praising Canada for its "bold" stance on the Durban conference. Canada said last month it won't attend the second UN anti-racism conference in South Africa next year out of concern it will stir up anti-Semitism. The WJC, whose board met Jan. 29 in Israel, commended Ottawa for "its bold action in calling the world's attention to the cor-

rupted Durban Review Conference process." The 2001 conference featured a resolution equating Zionism with racism and a series of protests against Israel. Members of Jewish groups who attended an accompanying conference for non-governmental groups said they were heckled.

Cotler Honoured

NEW YORK — Liberal MP and former justice minister Irwin Cotler received the prestigious Pursuit of Justice Award from the American Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists on Jan. 27 at Yeshiva University's Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law. Cotler is the first Canadian to receive the award. Previous winners include U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and former Israeli Supreme Court justice Aharon Barak. In presenting the prize, Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz revealed that he has nominated Cotler for the Nobel Peace Prize.

WORLD

More Iranian Threats

TEHRAN — Iranian President Mahmoud

Ahmadinejad predicted the imminent collapse of Israel. In a televised speech Jan. 30 in the port city of Bushehr, where Russia delivered the last of the uranium needed to start up Iran's first nuclear power plant, Ahmadinejad told Israel's friends to "stop supporting the Zionists, as [their] regime reached its final stage... Accept that the life of Zionists will sooner or later come to an end." London's *Daily Telegraph* quoted him as saying, "The ones who still support the criminal Zionists should know that the occupiers' days are numbered." Ahmadinejad has publicly threatened the destruction of Israel many times since becoming Iran's president in 2005. He has also referred to the Holocaust as a "myth."

Deportation Closer

CLEVELAND — A U.S. federal appeals court rejected accused Nazi death camp guard John Demjanjuk's challenge of a final deportation order by a former chief U.S. immigration judge. The court said Jan. 30 that the 2005 order to deport him to Ukraine, his birthplace, is still valid. His lawyers say he may face prosecution or torture if deported. Demjanjuk was stripped of his U.S. citizenship in 1981 and extradited to Israel, where he was acquitted in 1993 of being the Treblinka guard "Ivan the

Holocaust Attorney Seeks Interest Payment

NEW YORK — A lawyer who sparked outrage over his multimillion-dollar fees for a Holocaust reparations case has demanded interest.

In papers filed last week, Burt Neuborne, a New York University law professor, said he is due an extra \$300,000 (US) because two years have elapsed since he originally filed for his fee. Last month, a U.S. federal judge ordered that he be paid \$3.1 million for his work. The additional request is based on an interest calculation of 4.72 per cent.

Neuborne's original fee request of \$4.76 million provoked outrage among Holocaust survivors. Critics said Neuborne is not only being greedy but had led survivors to believe he was working pro-bono on the case. He countered that he did indeed work for free to win the original settlement, \$1.25 billion from Swiss banks accused of profiting from the deposits of the Nazis' victims, but not for his later years of work administering the settlement.

Sam Dubbin, a Miami lawyer representing several survivors who objected to the original fee request, has written to the court opposing the interest payment.

Terrible" by its Supreme Court. He was stripped of his citizenship again in 2002 based on new evidence he was a guard at another camp. In December 2006, his appeal to have a deportation order overturned was dismissed. His lawyer said the next step is an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

next door. None were Israeli. The attackers shouted "God is Great" before opening fire. Mauritania is one of only three Arab nations with full diplomatic ties with Israel. Western intelligence agencies recently have identified an Al Qaeda cell in the country.

Shabbat For Israel

NEW YORK — The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations and Orthodox, Conservative, Reform and Reconstructionist leaders have declared a Sabbath for Israel to mark the state's 60th birthday. Shuls will celebrate Shabbat Israel May 9 to 11.

Embassy Attack

NOUAKCHOTT — Gunmen opened fire outside Israel's embassy in Mauritania early last Friday in Nouakchott, the Arab nation's capital. No one was killed, but one to three people were wounded, apparently revellers at a nightclub

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Darchei Noam moves into its reconstructed home

By **FRANCES KRAFT**
Staff Reporter

Congregation Darchei Noam's new building was filled with music, dancing, and an estimated 500 people for the dedication of the synagogue's first permanent home on Jan. 27, following a one-kilometre Torah procession from its previous rented premises.

After 34 years of existence, Toronto's only Reconstructionist congregation has moved into an attractive Jerusalem stone-clad building at 864 Sheppard Ave. W. that is barely recognizable as the former Adath Sholom Synagogue, a congregation that merged with Beth Tikvah Synagogue in 2005.

Darchei Noam, which had been meeting in the B'nai Brith Canada building on Hove Street since 1989, purchased Adath Sholom's four-decade-old building in 2005 and raised \$6.4 million to renovate and expand it.

The building now has a two-storey en-

trance with large south-facing windows and a multi-coloured donor wall designed by glass artist Alfred Engerer – one of a number of examples of new artwork in the building. It also boasts barrier-free access to all three levels, a teen lounge with a magnetic floor-to-ceiling chalkboard, and a new sanctuary on a second floor that was added to the building. The former sanctuary of Adath Sholom, with its original stained-glass windows, is now the building's social hall.

The congregation's initially more modest plans were given a substantial boost by philanthropist Leslie Dan, who with his wife Anna donated \$3.2 million.

Rabbi Tina Grimberg, the congregation's spiritual leader, praised Dan's "philanthropic, warm, all-encompassing embrace regardless of affiliation," referring in part to significant funding he has also provided for Orthodox and Reform congregations.

Dan, who had no previous ties to the synagogue, told the assembled group that



Mitchell Rothman, a past president of Congregation Darchei Noam, holds a Torah before placing it in the ark in the synagogue's new building. Lisa Charendoff, current president, looks on.

[Frances Kraft photo]

he had been impressed by the "participation, dynamism [and] vitality" he witnessed when he attended a Darchei Noam Shabbat service after being approached by a small delegation. He also lauded the "warmth, knowledge, and spiritual depth" of Rabbi Grimberg, and said he found the congregation intellectually stimulating and spiritually vibrant.

For all those reasons he felt the proposed plans should be "much larger, more elaborate, more attractive and have more facilities for expansion and growth."

Robert Barkin, president of the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation, cited Darchei Noam as a "beautiful example" of the JRF's mission of fostering "transformative Judaism for the 21st century."

"What could be more 21st century than constructing a building with solar panels?" he asked. "Every aspect of your building is built with the concept of being good shepherds for all that God has given us."

Continued on page 21

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The culmination of the campaign to spread anti-Israel calumny on campus was this week with the oxymoronically named program called Israel Apartheid Week.

The zealots who strive to bring about the demise of the Jewish state were in their glory. They knew they would openly revel in the dissemination of factless, though dangerous, drivel and even find curious clusters of students attracted to their twisted message like agitated moths to yellow light.

The phenomenon of Israel Apartheid Week was the natural outgrowth of years of unceasing distortions and defamations about Israel that began first in the international arenas of the United Nations and in a cadre of NGOs and then, sadly, spread to the halls of the academy.

Israel Apartheid Week is, simply, the poisoned fruit of an ugly, twisted tree.

Prof. Martin Lockshin, a frequent contributor to *The C.J.N.*, the former director of the Jewish studies program at York University in Toronto, has commented on these uncomfortable campus atmospheres wrought by the hardcore anti-Israel polemicists. In the December 2007 issue of *Jewish Studies*, he wrote, "There are professors on Canadian campuses who take advantage of their positions to bash Israel in their classrooms. This makes the work atmosphere unpleasant (and, even worse, makes the study atmosphere for Jewish and Zionist students very difficult). It also betrays the larger mission of the university and poses obstacles to students seeking understanding of the genuine complexities of the contemporary Middle East."

How the academies of higher learning became one of the driving engines of public hostility to Israel is ably discussed in *Academics Against Israel and the Jews*, edited by Manfred

Gerstenfeld, released last year by the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs.

The book, therefore, is particularly relevant this week.

It contains 18 essays written by scholars from four different continents. Of special interest to Canadian readers are the essays *The Canadian Campus Scene*, by Alain Goldshlager, and *Anti-Israel Activity at Concordia University, 2000-2003*, by Corinne

**From the
editor's
desk**

Berzon.

Goldshlager, the director of the Holocaust Literature Research Institute and professor of French at the University of Western Ontario, has written a brief survey of the state of anti-Semitism on Canadian campuses.

Berzon, a former Montrealer, MA candidate in political philosophy at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, chronicles with exacting detail the startling context at Concordia University for the ugly violence that led to former Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu's being unable to address a student audience there in 2002.

In his sparkling and incisive foreword to the work, former Israeli cabinet minister Natan Sharansky posits his thesis of the test of the "three Ds" (Demonization, Double standards against Israel and Delegitimization) to distinguish new anti-Semitism from legitimate criticism of Israel.

"It is anti-Semitism and demonization when comparisons are being made between Israelis and Nazis, or between Palestinian refugee camps and Auschwitz. It is equally anti-Semitic when Israel is singled out by the United Nations for human rights abuses, while the behaviour of major abusers such as China, Iran Cuba and Syria is ignored. Similarly it is anti-Semitism when only Israel's fundamental right to exist - alone among all the people of the world - is ques-

tioned."

One of the chief strengths of the book is that it is prescriptive as well as analytical and narrative. Gerstenfeld and various of the authors offer advice and suggestions on how Jews and Israel can defend themselves against this assaultive behaviour.

Gerstenfeld's compilation of essays, however, does not explore the shocking involvement of Israeli-based academics in the campaign against Israel.

Into that gap of information steps a small policy research paper by Shlomo Sharan titled *Our Inner Scourge: The Catastrophe of Israeli Academics*, published by the Ariel Center for Policy Research.

Sharan is professor emeritus of educational and organizational psychology at the School of Education, Tel Aviv University.

He minces no words in this hard-hitting tract and explains why he undertook what must have been for him, particularly unpleasant research.

"The role of the anti-Zionist academics in moulding Israel's youth cannot be discounted. It is crucial that their opinions meet with serious counter-efforts on behalf of all Jews who value the existence and significance of Israel as a Jewish nation."

It is this very purpose, namely, to counter the efforts of all individuals who are opposed to the idea of the existence of a Jewish state, that binds us all in our labours on behalf of Israel.

Suggested related reading: *The Uncivil University*, by Gary A. Tobin, Aryeh K. Weinberg and Jenna Ferer, the Institute For Jewish and Community Research, San Francisco.

The authors examine the ideology and expression of both anti-Semitism and anti-Israelism on campuses in the United States. The book details how the propagandists perpetuate their vile attitudes on campus. They point out the alarming extent to which intimidation and threats against Jewish students and faculty have become acceptable. **MBD**

See JN**TU B'SHVAT
DIPLOMACY**

Israel's Consul General for Toronto and Western Canada, Amir Gissin, centre, was recently invited by the residents at the Reuben Cipin Healthy Living Community at 2 Neptune Dr. in Toronto to share his diplomatic insights with them during their Tu B'Shvat festivities. Pictured above, front row from left, are Temi Rosenthal, Gissin, Blema Mazin, Rhoda Feidin, Freda Rubenstein, Ruben Cipin, Monty Mazin, Sarlyne Fine and Sharon Cipin. Inset with Gissin are Chana Newman, left, and Leah Frimerman.

[Mark Goldberg photos]



4705

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Greater Toronto Area

Rabbi speaks out against domestic violence

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

After two of his congregants approached him over the past year about domestic violence in their homes, Rabbi Sean Gorman of Beth Tzedec Congregation decided he needed to learn more about the issue.

"I called Jewish Family & Child as well as Jewish Women International and said 'I need to get smart,'" he said in an interview at his synagogue office.

He attended a conference in Baltimore, Md., read books about domestic violence in general and within the Jewish community in particular, and learned how rabbis can help deal with the issue, he said.

As well, he has spoken about domestic violence twice from

the bimah.

"My angle is that it exists in our city, and that Beth Tzedec will be a safe place for women to turn."

The statistics are frightening, he said. "In 2005, 1,050 men, women and children passed through the doors of Jewish Family & Child seeking help in abusive situations. That averages out to three times a day, every day.

"Women are victims of abuse at a rate 16 times that of men, and Jewish women live with abuse at the same rate – 15 to 20 per cent – as the national population. That means if there are 200 women [sitting in the Beth Tzedec sanctuary], approximately 30 suffer at the hands of their husbands."

The issues that domestic violence present are beyond his training, he said, "but I can be a gatekeeper. My goal is to receive women, listen to them, refer them and then follow through. It is a very big deal for women to know that they can come here [and be heard]."

Domestic violence manifests itself in many ways, he said, but it is definitely a control problem, not an anger problem.

"Abuse is defined as a means of control, and anger management is not remotely useful. What is useful is for men to learn that spouses and children are meant to be loved and nurtured," Rabbi Gorman said.

"The husband didn't go to work and hit his boss, so we know he can control his anger."

Problems rarely begin with a black eye, he said. "Abuse begins well before in things that on the surface look almost loving. A man may want his wife to call every hour so he can 'hear her voice,' but that is really a control issue in that she has to check in.

"It's OK for him to keep an eye on the chequebook to make sure bills get paid, but it ceases to be OK if she gets an allowance and has no control over the account."

There are many reasons why women stay in abusive relationships, Rabbi Gorman said.

"The psychological torture within these relationships often leaves the woman with such little self-worth that she doesn't have the ability to leave."

The bottom line, he said, is that she should not have to leave. "If a man robs a bank, we don't tell the bank to move to a safer

neighbourhood. We try to protect the bank from further incidents. Why in domestic violence do we put the responsibility on the victim to leave?"

When a woman realizes how bad a problem is, she may be presented with the choice of a warm home for her and her children, or being homeless, he said.

Rabbi Gorman said in his sermon that when rabbis talk about kosher kitchens but fail to talk about kosher marriages, "we have neglected our responsibilities to you. When communities fail to provide adequate support for shelters and for social workers, we

tell these women they are on their own.

"When communities place the burden of maintaining *shalom bayit* on the women, the communities by extension also place on those women the blame."

One of the rabbi's roles in dealing with domestic violence is to have phone numbers handy, and to make sure there are flyers in washrooms, and information in bulletins and on synagogue websites, he said.

"And when women come in, we have to believe, believe, believe. Don't say, 'It can't be him.' Never say anything that undercuts what she says. She has taken the strength to say she needs help, and we must help her."

Rabbis also need to talk about domestic violence, he said. "Every time we open our mouths about it, we give a woman a chance to open her mouth."

Rabbi Gorman will speak on a panel at Beth Tzedec about domestic violence on March 26 at 8 p.m., after a performance of *Flowers aren't enough*, a one-woman show, written and performed by Naomi Ackerman, that tells the story of a young woman from an upper-middle-class family who is in an abusive relationship.

The evening is sponsored by Beth Tzedec, Beth Tzedec Men's Club and Sisterhood, Jewish Family & Child, Jewish Women International and United Synagogue Day School's Bathurst campus.

In related news, a Toronto couple, Lewis and Charlotte Steinberg, have donated \$100,000 through UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, to the women's abuse program at Jewish Family & Child, to pay for the services of a Russian and Hebrew speaking social worker. Last year – this is the third year the Steinbergs have donated to the initiative – the program served nearly 100 Russian- and Hebrew-speaking women.

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JONATHAN SOLURSH, the past chair of new leadership succeeds Jeff Rosenthal as President. Jeff will continue his work with Shaare Zedek, replacing David Smith as Chairman of the Board. David will continue to be a key member of the Executive Committee and the Board. We thank Jeff and David for all of their efforts and success.

We are also pleased to announce that **JONATHAN ALLEN** will join the organization as the National Executive Director. Jonathan joins Shaare Zedek from his former role at UJA.

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Praise and plaudits to our students

A first-time visitor to Israel need only walk down any street in any city, travel in any intra- or inter-urban bus, shop in any mall or local market, read any of the numerous daily newspapers, watch even a few moments of television or sit at any café, to see for himself or herself, that the country is decidedly not an apartheid state.

Israel is very visibly and quite literally a multi-cultural, multi-racial, vibrant democracy. In fact, it is the only democracy in the entire Middle East. This, of course, is the other inconvenient truth that so many people around the globe, and especially, the haters of the very notion of a sovereign Jewish state, prefer to ignore. Sadly, this very patent truth has not been enough to stop dead in its tracks the equally patent, vastly pernicious lie that the Jewish state is an apartheid state.

Indeed, as *CJN* reporter Sheri Shefa notes in this week's paper, the campaign to perpetuate the apartheid calumny on campuses around North America and beyond appears to be gaining momentum. It is now in its fourth year.

This week, on campuses in Toronto; Montreal; Ottawa; Peterborough, Ont.; New York; Oxford, England; London, England; Johannesburg and, fittingly, Durban, South Africa, a cunning and, it must be said, malicious agglomeration of groups and individuals is peddling tainted propaganda under the perverse banner of Israel Apartheid Week.

The halls, walkways, theatres and public squares of the campuses where the apartheidists scream their anti-Israel hatred cannot be a pleasant place for anyone, let alone for those who believe that it is right and just that there be a state for the Jews too on this earth.

Thus we commend our students. They did not surrender the terrain of their campuses to let falsehoods and lies cling to their fellow students like vines of suffocating ivy to the crevices and fault lines of the masonry. Despite the hostile atmosphere and oppressively noxious climate in which many students found themselves this week, they rose on behalf of the Jewish state. They rose on behalf of truth.

To be sure, a number of different Jewish student organizations fought the apartheid lie. Each organization chose the means appropriate to its own credo and philosophy. For example, a spokesperson for Hillel said that its programming "is trying to take the attention away from the negative activities and put the focus on celebrating Israel and being proud of Israel." A spokesperson for Hasbara Fellowship said, "We want to remove the connection that modern-day students have to the word apartheid and Israel."

Just as an army melds a blend of corps to assert its ultimate strength as a fighting force, so it seems, did the various Jewish student organizations this week.

They deserve our praise and our thanks.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

During a visit to Canada by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Egypt and Canada signed an agreement promoting developmental co-operation. It covers economic, technical and related assistance. Mubarak took the opportunity to ask Canada to pressure Israel to stop settlements in the West Bank and Gaza, and to remove all its troops still in Lebanon.

Editorials & Letters

ROYAL SCREW-UP
Dry Bones

SOLOMON MY KING
TWO YEARS AFTER
WE DROVE THE
JEWISH SETTLERS
OUT OF GAZA.



THE HAMAS
TERRORISTS HAVE
MOVED INTO
SINAI!



THINGS ARE
NOT GOING
ACCORDING
TO PLAN.



YOU MEAN
WE HAD A
PLAN?



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Whitewashing the Liberal record

One would think after reading Bob Rae's letter that the Liberal Party of Canada, for which he is the foreign affairs critic, has been and is a strong supporter of the State of Israel and of Jewish causes ("Israel and the Liberal Party," *CJN* letters, Jan. 31). If that were the case, however, why is it that the Liberals censured Israel more than 70 per cent of the time in United Nations votes targeting the state, whereas the current Conservative government has reduced such anti-Israel voting patterns substantially? Why is it that the Liberals attended the first UN World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa, in 2001, and paid for NGOs to join this anti-Israel forum (and otherwise allowed Israel to be isolated at international forums), while the Conservative Party of Canada has refused to attend Durban II in 2009, and refused to pay NGOs to attend? Why is it that the Liberals refused to join the International Task Force on Holocaust Education, Commemoration and Research while the Conservatives have? Why is it that we only hear from Liberal MPs with large Jewish constituencies, whereas with the Conservatives, their support for Israel and things Jewish are espoused by MPs with no significant Jewish constituencies and are seemingly based on principle alone? Rae, while well intentioned, seems to be electioneering, and while doing so, he is whitewashing the Liberal record.

Joseph Y. Adler
Toronto

Culturally specific schools

On Jan. 29, the Toronto District School Board did what John Tory and his Progressive Conservative Party tried to do in the last provincial election. The board has agreed to fund culturally specific schools with tax dollars. It has set a dangerous precedent that is going to be exceedingly difficult to reverse.

This presents an interesting idea for the Jewish community. What would happen if parents pulled their children from the private day schools and put them back into the public system, then petitioned the school board for culturally Jewish-focused schools? Based on the board's ill-conceived recent decision, I do not see how its members could reasonably turn down our request.

Jay Solomon
Toronto

COR is kashrut authority for TO Jews

The article "Bagel Haven, Golden Chopsticks now under COR supervision," *CJN*, (Jan. 3) states that Bagel

Haven "switched to [the Kashruth Council of Canada] COR only because they needed their business promoted." I find that this statement leaves important issues unaddressed.

Most importantly, Rabbi Reuven Tradburks approached us in an official capacity to inquire what the COR had done wrong, as we had chosen Mehadrin Kasher over COR. During a lengthy discussion with him, we explained our point about a hashgachah that includes the entire Jewish community, as well as about issues of trust and respect among the parties. This demonstrated to us that the COR had become an open-minded organization that was looking for inclusiveness in the community.

At a later date, when we approached the COR, with the assistance of Rabbi Tradburks, we found Rabbi Yacov Felder and Rabbi Sholom Adler to be amazing to deal with, reasonable, and understanding of the issues that are important to us — while maintaining the integrity of COR. I feel that the COR has now shown that it is taking the steps to be the kashruth authority for all the Jews in Toronto. I have nothing but praise for the work of these fine rabbis. Most importantly, our relationship is one of understanding and respect as we work toward a mutual goal.

Michelle Nefsky
Bagel Haven
Thornhill, Ont.

People search

Dina Polliack, whose mother was Lida Kapulsky, believes that one of her mother's brothers, a Kapulsky, landed in Toronto. She would very much like to know if there are any descendants of the Kapulsky family in Toronto. Please contact me if you have any information.

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Games and toys wanted

Anyone interested in helping to establish a games and toys library in Jerusalem's Gonen Junior School is welcome to bring such items to Jerusalem. The aim of the library is to assist mainly Ethiopian immigrant children, which the school has embraced. There are now 203 pupils from the ages of six to 12, and more are to follow. Volunteer Rachel Fuchs can be reached by calling 02 6240919 in order to co-ordinate drop-off if necessary.

Ricky Chen
Principal
Givat Gonen Junior School
Jerusalem

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Winograd Commission: Olmert acted in good faith

By ROY EITAN
JTA

In the year and a half since Israel's failures in the Second Lebanon War, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has weathered incessant criticism that unlike many Israeli leaders, he's no ex-general.

But this very lack of military experience paradoxically may have spared the prime minister the full brunt of a commission of inquiry's censure and saved his political career.

The long-awaited final report by the Winograd Commission published Wednesday painted a dismal picture of Israel's 34-day offensive waged against Lebanon's Hezbollah militia in the summer of 2006. It said the war was desperately lacking in strategies, relevant tactics and even proper communication between the army's top brass and Olmert's government.

"Overall, we regard the Second Lebanon war as a serious missed opportunity," the panel's chair, retired judge Eliahu Winograd, said at a news conference carried live on Israeli TV and radio. "Israel initiated a long war, which ended without its clear military victory."

A semi-military organization of a few thousand men resisted, for a few weeks, the strongest army in the Middle East, which enjoyed full air superiority and size and technology advantages."

But while the five-member panel said Israel went to war without sufficient deliberation after Hezbollah abducted two of its soldiers on July 12, 2006 in a cross-border raid, it presented a kinder view of the Olmert government's biggest and most controversial gamble: an 11th-hour ground offensive in southern Lebanon waged even as a ceasefire was being hammered out at the UN Security Council.

The report said that move, which cost the lives of 33 soldiers, did not significantly repel Hezbollah or improve truce terms. But it presented this primarily as a function of the poor fighting capability of the armed forces, voicing confidence that Olmert and his then-defence minister, Amir Peretz, approved the offensive in good faith.

"We believe that they both acted out of a strong and sincere perception of what they thought at the time was Israel's interest," Winograd said.

That perhaps more than any other statement in the 500-page report was the reprieve needed by Olmert, who brushed off calls to resign even after Peretz and his wartime military chief, Lt.-Gen. Dan Halutz, stepped down in disgrace.

The report's conclusion that Olmert acted out of his perception of Israel's best interests and that the Israel Defence Forces and various levels of government share responsibility for the war's failures, bolstered Olmert's position.

His coalition partners gave no indication, at least initially, that the report's conclusions were sufficiently harsh to prompt them to quit the government and thereby hasten new elections.

Olmert's office said in a statement that he

would spend the coming days studying the report and arranging for its recommendations to be implemented. Aides to the prime minister made clear he was staying on.

"Responsibility means remaining, fixing, improving and continuing to lead," Olmert's cabinet secretary, Oved Yehezkel, told Army Radio.

That was a strikingly different interpretation than the one given by war veterans and the families of slain soldiers who have campaigned for Olmert's ouster. They are saying, like Winograd, that the Second Lebanon War left Israel less capable of deterring its regional foes.

"Really, this report was harsh enough to warrant Olmert going home," said Elisheva Tsemach, whose son Oz was among the war dead.

A poll commissioned by Israel's Channel 2 TV found that 56 per cent of Israelis want Olmert to quit, compared to 27 per cent who don't — daunting figures, but nothing new to a prime minister whose approval ratings reached single digits in the war's immediate aftermath.

But with Olmert determined to see out his term in office — perhaps delivering a peace deal with the Palestinians and an effective answer to Iran's nuclear program during that time — there is no mechanism to force him out.

Olmert's centrist Kadima Party heads a coalition government with a strong parliament-



The Winograd Commission officially delivered its report last week. The members of the commission are, from left, retired generals Chaim Nadel and Menachem Eitan, Justice Eliyahu Winograd, Prof. Ruth Gavison, Prof. Yehezkel Dror.

tary majority capable of fending off no-confidence motions. Some in Kadima would like to challenge Olmert one day — Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, Transportation Minister Shaul Mofaz and Interior Minister Meir Sheetrit are among them — but they are also aware that Olmert is favoured by the United States as he pursues peace talks with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas.

Olmert critics are still placing hopes that Defence Minister Ehud Barak might trigger early elections by pulling the Labor Party — the biggest junior partner in the coalition — out of the government. The Channel 2 poll found that 45 per cent of Israelis think Labor should quit the government, while 41 per cent don't.

Immediately after the report's publication, Barak made no indication that he would remove Labor from the government.

Olmert's negotiations with Abbas are a powerful reason for Labor, the architect of the Oslo peace accords, to stay. And Barak, a former prime minister who re-entered politics only last summer after a six-year hiatus, is seen by most analysts as still way off from

consolidating his power base.

Barak publicly has said that for now he sees his primary duty as ensuring that the IDF is overhauled to prepare for a future war. He was quoted this week as telling Olmert's security cabinet that the prime minister alone cannot be held responsible for military failures in wartime.

"I say to you that there will be no elections," said Finance Minister Ronnie Bar-On, an Olmert confidant in Kadima. "The prime minister is firm in this position. No pressure campaign will change that."

Another Olmert stalwart went as far as to say that the opposition leader, Likud leader and former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, should join forces with Kadima.

"Now is the time for a national unity government, with which we can face the challenges that face it," said Tzahi Hanegbi, who heads the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee. "The prime minister, like all Israelis, came out of the war bruised, but there were also achievements. Now is that time to get over it and look ahead."

IDF already learned lessons of Second Lebanon War

By YUVAL AZOULAY
© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

The Israel Defence Forces did not exactly wait trembling for the conclusive Winograd war probe report. This is mainly due to the fact that senior members of the establishment have already taken responsibility for their actions and quit the army a number of months after the war.

It should be recalled that the IDF already referred to the subject with the publication of the report into the Second Lebanon War by State Comptroller Micha Lindenstrauss. The army continues to stick to the line that it is learning the lessons of the war, and is doing all it can to correct mistakes it made.

Nevertheless, this is a long process which includes institutional and outlook changes, establishing a training program and more.

The principal goal of this program is to ensure that in every future conflict, the IDF will achieve a different result from that which it reached in the 34-day conflict with Hezbollah in 2006. At present it can be said that a substantial part of the areas requiring improvements have already been taken care of, some have

already been implemented in the field, and other areas are in the course of being assimilated in work plans.

The IDF did not wait for the report and immediately after the war, under the instruction of former IDF chief of staff Dan Halutz, initiated a thorough and fundamental process of investigation and lesson-learning, including all issues and at all levels. These probes were executed by over 70 different teams, which were made up of experts, senior and junior officers, as well as reservists with a wealth of experience.

As a lesson from the Second Lebanon War, the IDF's operational perception has been updated, and today there is an emphasis on integrating the different corps in training and warfare, and strengthening ground forces' maneuvering ability. This outlook has even been tried out and assimilated within the framework of recent training operations.

A central conclusion made by the investigation process related to the area of training, and the need for the frequent training of regular and reservist ground forces. It should be stressed that also with regard to this subject the IDF has not waited for the final Winograd committee

report, and has executed wide-ranging training exercises since the war.

As part of the accelerated process of increasing its readiness and fitness, the IDF has prepared a comprehensive training program for combat units, including an extensive one for the reserves. As such, there has been a 200 per cent increase in the number of regular brigade-level training exercises in the IDF Northern Command as opposed to in 2006, and a 200 per cent hike in the number of reservist brigade-level training exercises at the IDF centre for ground forces training in the south since 2006, in addition to an 80 per cent increase in all ground forces training exercises since 2006.

Furthermore, Current Chief of Staff Gabi Ashkenazi approved last year a multi-year and multi-dimensional procurement program to implement lessons learned in the war, while at the same time preparing for future strategic threats and challenges, based on an analysis of the different zones of combat. The budget for the multi-year program stands at NIS 250 billion.

Please see
Winograd Commission statement
on page 34

Israel's religious profile changing

The first Reform congregation in Israel, Har El, celebrated its 50th anniversary last month. In the beginning, services were held in private homes but with time the congregation acquired a building in the centre of Jerusalem, where its sanctuary and other facilities are now located.



Rabbi Dow Marmor in Toronto

In the course of the five decades, Har El has become part of an expanding movement with some two dozen sister congregations and several institutions that represent Progressive (as Reform likes to call itself here) Judaism in the State of Israel. Membership in this and the other congregations is no longer confined to Ashkenazi Jews from Europe and the Americas. Israelis born in the country, some even of Oriental stock, have joined.

Originally Reform rabbis in Israel came from overseas. Today, most are graduates of the Israel program of the Hebrew Union College. Not all work in congregations. Some do other rabbinic things. For example, one, a high-ranking officer in the Israel Defence Forces reserves, is now in charge of the year-long preparation program for young women and men before they go into the army. Another is a prominent spokesperson of the Israel Religious Action Center, the body that has earned admiration in the country for its social justice advocacy. Yet another is now the president of the World Union for Progressive Judaism, the umbrella organization of Reform Judaism. Others again are engaged in academic teaching and related activities.

In addition to the narrow congregational model of the Diaspora, leaders of Progressive Judaism in Israel see the whole of society as their constituency. Yet, it would be boastful and inaccurate to report spectacular successes, despite sure signs of progress. Though many Orthodox groups and some secular ones continue to attack Reform Judaism, nowadays even the outbursts are less frequent and more muted. And most Israelis have become well aware of the presence of Reform Judaism in their midst.

The many bar and bat mitzvah celebrations in Reform congregations, and the weddings often performed by Reform rabbis in Israel, suggests that a growing number of Israelis choose Progressive Judaism. Bearing in mind that many thriving Conservative congregations also exist in Israel, and that the general interest in Judaism outside its Orthodox framework is becoming more visible, an ever-diminishing sector of the population says, in that oft-quoted phrase, "The synagogue I don't go to must be Orthodox."

Israel as a whole is the beneficiary, for the lives of many citizens have been greatly enriched and the religious profile of the country as a whole is becoming more acceptable to the majority. There is much to suggest that the next 50 years will make Israel an even more comfortable home for all Jews, irrespective of religious orientation.

Rise in anti-Semitism on campus

Staring at the swastikas drawn on my campaign posters, my first reaction was sadness and regret. It was February 2007, and I was running for student body president at Carleton University. Another one of my posters had a Hitler moustache drawn on my face.

I had two options at the time. One, take the posters down and replace them without raising a ruckus. Two, lodge an official complaint with the chief electoral officer, go to the media and make it an issue. I chose the first option.

I decided from the outset that I did not want my religion to be an issue. I did not want my positive campaign for change in student leadership to be defined by anti-Semitism. It was a missed opportunity on my part to shed light on an emerging problem on campuses across Canada: a rise in anti-Semitism.

Anti-Jewish sentiment is rising on campuses, and it is being fuelled by the anti-Israel movement, which uses political free speech as a wall to hide behind and lob racist remarks into the public arena.

The question is, why are we taking it?

Most of my colleagues at Carleton either don't think anti-Semitism is truly a problem or don't see the point of raising it as an issue.

At one Shabbat dinner I attended with three members of the Jewish fraternity in



Mark Masters in Ottawa

Ottawa, I speculated about ideas for my next column. I suggested anti-Semitism on campus, and one friend immediately stated his opposition to the idea, before recalling his own brush with anti-Semitism in first year when someone drew a swastika on his dorm room door. The sudden flashback gave him pause.

The desire on the part of many Jewish students is to move on. Our society is for the most part accepted on campus, and quite simply, we are sick of playing the role of victim. Our community is so strong in so many ways, it almost feels like sour grapes to get up in arms over a piece of childish graffiti.

Meanwhile, on campuses today, it is a fear of racism against Islamic students that dominates campaigns to end hate.

But the truth is, the number of Muslim students is vastly greater than the Jewish population, and I have found anti-Muslim sentiment to be nearly non-existent on campus. In fact, Muslim students have their own prayer room at Carleton and have been allowed to use other spaces to pray and hold events. No such permanent space exists for Jewish students.

At Carleton, I constantly hear stories about how professors teaching Middle East history courses have started to make anti-Israel and anti-Semitic dialogue part of their

lectures. I tell people who experience this to go to the university Senate, the top academic body at the school, and raise their concerns. But again for the most part I get shrugs, as if there is nothing we can do and this must be accepted as the norm. It's suggested that these types of professors will simply always exist, and it isn't worth our breath to protest because then all we will be seen as is a bunch of complainers. This is a dangerous view and must be disavowed by Jewish student leaders.

We are a small community on the campuses in Ottawa, and as a result some students, especially younger ones, are hesitant to speak up about their faith. After all, when you walk through the famous tunnel system linking all buildings at Carleton and see that it is the Jewish Students' Association mural that is almost always vandalized, then what is one to think?

It's time to make anti-Semitism an issue on campus by calling on student and university leaders to take notice. Ask them to speak out and crackdown on any racist incidents. No anti-Semitic act should go unchecked.

We cannot fall into the trap of condemning incidents when they happen and then forgetting them two days later.

One day I want to come back to Carleton and walk through the halls and see a Jewish Students' Association mural untouched, a symbol that we are accepted on campus.

I don't think that is asking too much.

Israel should re-think policy in Gaza

I am paralyzed by choice. I've been writing for *The CJN* for several months now. They have provided me with a seemingly limitless scope of topics from which to choose; essentially, I am to write on any issue of substance and consequence that I can speak intelligently on. And yet, I find it increasingly difficult to decide from article to article what exactly I want to write about.

I usually wait to see what subject speaks loudest to me as the deadline for my article approaches. Either that, or I call my mom and dad and ask them what they think I should write about. Up until now, neither method has led me astray.

However, this month in particular I had a very tough time trying to decide a specific issue on which to write. I prefer to discuss, not the mere daily events and tribulations of a Jewish student transplanted in Halifax, but broader themes that are generally applicable (and I hope interesting) to more people.

This month, the issue that I have hesitantly chosen to write about is the Rafah border crossing. It seems, to me at least, that the more informed I become of nearly every aspect of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, indeed of all polemical partisan issues, the more skeptical I am forced to be of all involved. It is nearly impossible for all but the most single-minded people to listen to both

pro-Israeli and pro-Palestinian camps and unequivocally maintain entrenched in their opinions.

Jargon from both sides clouds the issue. As is often the case, the truth probably lays somewhere in between. It is the responsibility of every media savvy individual to navigate the empty rhetoric, sift through the media spin and form his or her own opinions.

And yet, what can we really know? Here I sit, in a library on Dalhousie University campus, in Halifax, more than 8,000 kilometers away from the reality on the ground in the Gaza Strip and Israel, and I try to find my own take on what is going on.

I read BBC accounts of the trade blockade and fuel shortage imposed by Israel; I read CNN reports of the potential of terrorists amassing arms in Egypt for use in Gaza; I read *Jerusalem Post* interviews with those injured by Qassam rockets fired from Gaza; I read Al-Jazeera narratives of the ongoing suffering in the Strip. Once again, I am paralyzed by choice.

There are few undisputed facts in this story. What I am able to conclude confidently, sitting this far removed from the events, piecing reality together from reporters I can't trust and reporters I'm scared to trust, is that there is suffering on both sides.

The people of Sderot and other Israeli

towns have a right to genuinely fear the escalation of terrorist attacks — they live them every day. By the same token, the looks on the faces of thousands of Palestinians streaming through the broken border wall between Gaza and Egypt at Rafah spoke to an unmistakably genuine emotion as valid as the Sderot residents' apprehension; for the roughly one and a half million residents of Gaza, this represents their first glimpse of freedom since their border was sealed and their movement regulated.

It is doubtful that even a closure of the border will return Gaza to its previous state. That being said, the closure of Gaza one year ago did not stop the Qassams, either. Heralded as a legitimate prison break by Hamas, the events will go down in history as a crisis only if neither side can learn from them.

It is time that Israel re-thinks its policy in Gaza, moving away from starvation and assassination tactics toward creative ones. At the same time, this is an opportune moment to establish joint border crossings, operated by the Israeli, Egyptian and Palestinian governments, and administered by international organizations.

All interested parties must realize that they are not alone; in reality, all of their concerns are interwoven. Only by working together can they avert crisis and perhaps better the situation for all involved.



Jesse Mintz in Halifax

The Kirshner File

Lotan – an ecologically sustainable kibbutz

Concern about the state of the environment is all the rage these days. Maintaining the health of the planet is suddenly a priority after centuries of neglect.

On Kibbutz Lotan, one of two settlements in Israel affiliated with the Reform movement, environmental consciousness is part of its collective DNA, and has been for many years. "We've integrated the kibbutz into the desert environment so that we will not be a passing episode," explained Mike Nitzan, Lotan's general secretary.

Founded in 1983, seven years after its sister kibbutz, Yael, Lotan has been in the forefront of developing what Nitzan describes as "an ecologically sustainable community that maintains a balance between development and preservation."

Faithful to the biblical injunction of tilling the earth while preserving it, Lotan's philosophy is rooted in the Jewish concept of tikkun olam, or repairing the world.

A speck of green in the sands and gravel expanses of the Arava Valley, 50 kilometres north of Eilat, Lotan lies beneath the red and purple-tinged Edom mountain range and is very close to the border with Jordan.

Its economy is based on winter field crops – tomatoes, onions, peppers, melons and so on – as well as on a date plantation, a dairy herd, an organic goat cheese factory, a fish farm and a guesthouse.

The kibbutz, whose infrastructure was laid out by the Jewish National Fund, has 150 members, the majority native Israelis and the remainder from nine different countries, including Canada. Foreign volunteers, students and non-members, including an Arab-Jewish couple, also live on Lotan.

Lotan was deliberately built within pre-1967 Israel, explained Nitzan, who made aliyah from Los Angeles 25 years ago. "We didn't want to settle beyond the Green Line, and we felt that the Negev was more important than the Galilee

in terms of settlement."

Nitzan and his fellow kibbutzniks subscribed to the belief, boldly and persistently enunciated by Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, that the future of Israel lay in the sparsely populated Negev, which comprises nearly two-thirds of Israel's surface area, but is where only eight percent of its Jewish inhabitants reside.

During Israel's pre-state period, Zionist planners did not regard the Negev as a priority for settlement, and much of the land acquired there was purchased by Jews in the Diaspora.

The first kibbutz in the Negev, Negba, was established in 1939. Four years would pass before the Jewish National Fund allotted land for three more outposts, Gevulot, Revivim and Beit Eshel. By 1948, when Israel declared statehood, the Negev was dotted with an archipelago of settlements. Israel has since stepped up the pace, and Lotan is one of the fruits of this concerted campaign.

In accordance with its conservationist credo, Lotan – Israel's representative in the Global Eco Village Network, an international organization linking communities committed to a sustainable lifestyle – shies away from using conventional prefabricated construction materials.

Instead, Lotan uses clay, mud, date palm branches, straw, old tires and empty bottles to construct solar-powered adobe buildings. Their smart design maximizes wind exposure and shade as cooling agents, this in a region with a blistering, though dry, summer.

Nitzan estimates that 20 per cent of the newer buildings are environmentally friendly, while older ones are being upgraded.

In an attempt to preserve scarce water resources and blend in better with its beige surroundings, Lotan's lawns will be ripped up and replaced with flagstones.

Thirteen years ago, having committed itself to a series of eco projects, the kibbutz planted a small organic garden and roughed out nature

trails. These eco projects morphed into the Lotan Center for Creative Ecology, known as Eco Fun, which offers two-hour nature tours. Focusing on recycling, composting, organic gardening and alternative/natural construction, the centre's programs and educational activities appeal to youths and adults alike, and have won praise from the ministry of the environment.

Currently, with the help of the Jewish National Fund, the kibbutz is in the process of installing wetland ponds to reclaim and filter waste water. The treated water will be reused in irrigation.

The complex, located on one of the world's

planners' eyes.

He and his wife – a New Yorker with whom he has three children – helped create its infrastructure and plant its date palms. "We worked all day and danced all night," he said, a hint of nostalgia in his voice.

Of the original 40 settlers, only 15 remain. "The turnover has been high. Initially, people left when their life partners didn't want to live here anymore, or because they sought job fulfillment."

Only a special person, steeped in idealism, can tolerate the challenges of hot summers and the rigours of isolation, he acknowledged.

"We're 3½ hours from Jerusalem, 4½ hours from Tel Aviv and eight hours from Kiryat Shmona."

Yet there are compensations.

"We have a vibrant, pioneering community, a slower, more people-focused way of life, close contact with nature and an excellent education system."

He added, "There are 10 kibbutzim in the vicinity, with lots of things going on. You can have a good social life here."

Terrorism, a fairly common phenomenon almost

everywhere else in Israel, is virtually non-existent in the Arava. The only incident Nitzan can recall occurred in 1989, when a disgruntled Jordanian soldier on patrol along the frontier ran amok, firing on an Israeli woman and wounding her. His brother, a Palestinian like himself, was shot by Israeli troops during the first intifadah, which broke out in the winter of 1987. Since the incident, the border has been blissfully quiet.

In 1994, Israel and Jordan signed a peace treaty, Israel's second with an Arab state. Jordan has observed it scrupulously. Under the historic agreement, Israel ceded territory to Jordan that Israeli farmers had used without permission. They regarded the sandy soil in Jordan as far more suitable for desert agronomy than Lotan's gravel plains.

In the process, Lotan lost about 400 acres. But Nitzan has no regrets about this turn of events. Peace, he suggested, is more important than a piece of land.



Sheldon Kirshner in Israel



Mike Nitzan

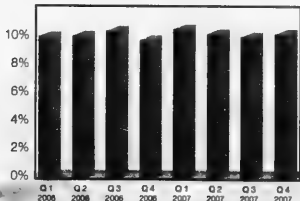
[Sheldon Kirshner photo]



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Greater Toronto Area

Will Gaza border become Mubarak's final frontier?

Last week, this column looked at initial media reaction to Hamas' carefully staged breach of the barrier separating Gaza from Egypt. As events continued to unfold, in-depth articles and analysis explored the broader regional implications of Hamas' gambit.

According to Reports

By
PAUL MICHAELS

In "Over to you, Hosni," (*National Post*, Jan. 29), Daniel Pipes summarized Hamas' "clever surprise tactic": "After months of preparation, it pulled down large segments of the 12-kilometre long, 13-metre high border wall separating Gaza from Egypt, simultaneously winning goodwill from Gazans and dragging Cairo into the picture."

Pipes wrote: "The border breaching, ironically, offers an opportunity to clean up a mess," providing Israel with a chance to free itself from the burden of providing energy and humanitarian assistance to Gaza.

Pipes' solution: "Washington and other capitals should declare the experiment in Gazan self-rule a failure and press President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt to help, perhaps providing Gaza with additional land or even annexing it as a province. This would revert to the situation of 1948-67, except this time Cairo would not keep Gaza at arm's length, but take responsibility for it."

Pipes examined only the upside. Gaza resi-

dents, he writes, are culturally closer to Egyptians than to West Bank Palestinians, and have stronger family ties to Egypt, so "[w]hy not formalize the Egyptian connection?"

Among other benefits, Pipes maintained, such an arrangement would bring an end to the rocket fire against Israel from Gaza, and perhaps even a break in the "Arab-Israeli logjam."

However, while Pipes noted that Hamas is an offshoot of an Egyptian organization, the Muslim Brotherhood, he failed to consider the negative implications such a plan would have for Egypt.

The Islamist Muslim Brotherhood is officially barred in Egypt. While its members sit as individuals in Egypt's parliament, the party is banned, because it poses a grave threat to Mubarak's regime. The last thing Mubarak wants is to take responsibility for 1.5 million Gazans ruled by Hamas, whose parent organization is bent on overthrowing him.

For now, Mubarak must deal with closing



Hosni Mubarak

the border at Rafah, and he is attempting to find a solution to that problem, even if that means talking to Hamas. At the same time, Mubarak is negotiating with Fatah, the faction of Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, to come up with a power-sharing arrangement for the border.

In "Border crisis bolsters Islamists," (*Los Angeles Times*, Jan. 29), Jeffrey Fleishman took a critical look at the Muslim Brotherhood: "Demonstrations in Cairo and throughout the country by the Muslim Brotherhood and other political groups ostensibly have been staged to declare Egyptian solidarity with the residents of

Gaza. But they are also aimed at weakening Mubarak, whom the groups accuse of oppression and criticize for economic shortcomings and close ties to Washington."

Mubarak's response, underreported in the West, was to crack down hard on demonstrations throughout the country — they were ap-

proximately 70 of them — even arresting scores of Brotherhood activists at the same time as he appeared to be showing patient understanding toward Hamas.

According to a Muslim Brotherhood leader quoted by Fleishman, Mubarak's government "dealt brutally with demonstrators because it is concerned about domestic stability... The regime knows that there is public outrage for other reasons, including inflation, unemployment and other accumulated problems. It fears that things will explode."

In "The Gaza Breakout" (*Wall Street Journal*, Jan. 29) Brett Stephens also described the problems facing Mubarak's regime as it attempts to gain control of the border and crackdown on the Brotherhood: "Having whipped itself into its usual frenzy over Israel's 'siege' of Gaza, it was a delicate matter for the state-run Egyptian press to make the government's case for deploying truncheon-wielding police to turn back the Palestinian human tide. It's an equally delicate matter for the Egyptian government to arrest Brotherhood protesters peacefully demonstrating 'for Palestine,' even if the Brotherhood's real target is Hosni Mubarak's regime and the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty that it supports."

Stephens concluded: "The border with Gaza is again being sealed, bringing the crisis to a temporary end. It won't remain quiet for long, and neither will Egypt — the next great foreign policy crisis on the American horizon."

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

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Greater Toronto Area

'Pied Piper of Tzedakah' enlists help from USDS kids

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Danny Siegel could have spoken to United Synagogue Day School middle school students last week about his experience starting and running the Ziv Tzedakah Fund, a non-profit organization that has distributed millions of dollars to little-known programs and individuals.

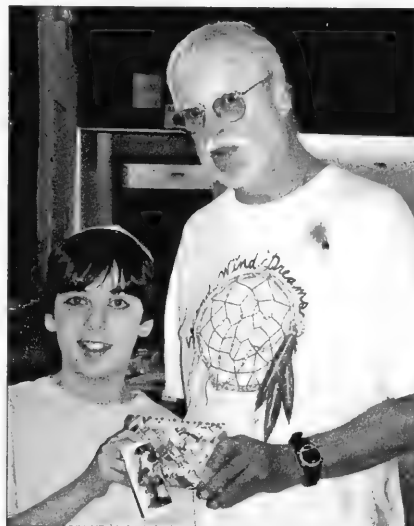
He could have told them how it all started when he collected tzedakah money from friends and relatives for a 1975 trip to Israel, and how he distributed the money – a total of \$955 – to people there who were making a difference.

Instead, the focus was on the students and what they could do to make the world a better place.

By the end of Siegel's 75-minute session at the school's Beth Tikvah campus (he also spoke at its Beth Tzedec campus), the man who is sometimes known as the Pied Piper of Tzedakah had enlisted a dozen students to take on specific do-able tasks, and the rest of them to help out.

Two days later, there were about three dozen teddy bears in the office of Amiel Sabari, the school's director of Jewish studies. The gently used stuffed animals, awaiting donation, attest that at least some of the kids have already taken Siegel's message to heart.

Sabari told *The C/N* he invited Siegel – who was in town to speak at the Conservative movement's Torah in Toronto event on Jan. 26 – to "energize" the students toward taking on mitzvot and putting into practice the Jewish values they



Danny Siegel gives Grade 7 student Noah Firestone, 12, a Guatemalan-made purse to carry for a day and inform others about them. By making and selling the purses, women are able to be with their families and can avoid travelling to a large city to work, Siegel told the students. [Frances Kraft photo]

learn in the classroom.

Siegel – a 63-year-old poet and author of 29 books who has attention deficit disorder and a mild learning disability – is somewhat teddy-bearish himself, with a white beard, low-key speaking manner and a rumpled appearance.

Dressed in brown cargo pants and a Second Wind Dreams T-shirt (from an organization that fulfils dreams for senior citizens), Siegel also sported the pink-and-purple feathered breast cancer awareness pin he said he always wears.

But his message can be harder-edged, although he delivers it in an understated manner.

"I do not believe for a minute when somebody tells you it's not how much you do, it's the thought that counts," said Siegel, who is based in Rockville, Md. "It's nice if you want to think nice and feed the world, but you have to do something about it."

Also, he added, "the second part is to find someone who's going to help you do it."

Then he called on a student to phone and "find out who in Toronto takes car seats [that meet current safety standards] and gets them to the right people," in order to prevent injury and death among children involved in car accidents.

Siegel – whose organization is winding up operations in the United States, but not in Canada – got the students onside when he asked if anyone thought it was a bad idea to collect and donate car seats.

About 30 students raised their hands when he asked who might have an infant car seat in their house that nobody is using.

He told them what challenges they might face from skeptical adults, but said their task would be simple. "Trust me... We've done it over and over again."

If they reach adults who don't want to deal with kids, he advised, "You're going to have to say to the person politely, 'Could I speak to a supervisor?'"

Otherwise, he suggested, kids might speak to the parent of a friend if the parent works at the institution they are contacting to find out who is the best person to speak to.

Referring to the saying on a T-shirt he owns, Siegel said, "You don't need to be a brain surgeon to do mitzvahs. You'll figure it out."

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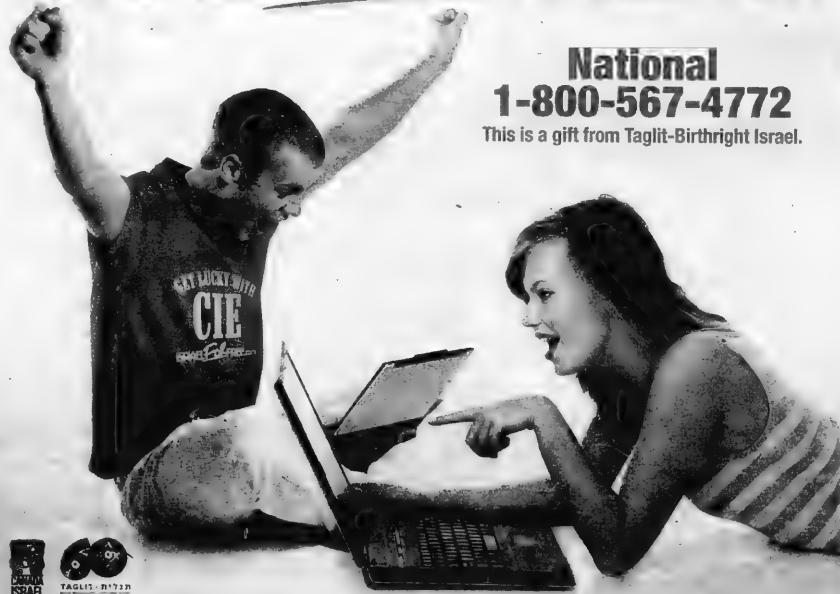
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Jewish Life

We need to create our own shuls

During high school, Aaron, a close friend, spent a summer in Israel and returned uplifted and rejuvenated. This isn't surprising. Israel experiences serve as important catalysts for personal and Judaic growth. What moved Aaron, however, was not the hikes or the sites; rather, it was one, run-down, old synagogue.

Upon his return, Aaron wrote a vivid description of his experience at the Yakar Synagogue, the small shul in Old Katamon. I remember reading the article and picturing myself in the synagogue. Not usually a spiritual or religious person, Aaron described a room bursting with young congregants. He wrote of melodies that drifted out the open windows, winding down the streets of Jerusalem. As a lull came to the service, the singing left way to humming and thumping that reverberated from the second minyan - held on the floor above.

What I remember most vividly of Aaron's description was not the spirituality of the service, but the simplicity of the space. Yakar is housed in an unassuming building at the corner of two quiet streets. The sanctuary had four plain white walls with cracks running along the ceiling. The few furnishings were stacking chairs and a wooden bimah.

Since Aaron visited Yakar, I have prayed there many times. The passion and vibrancy remains the same, though some of the cracks in the ceiling have been fixed. During a recent visit, I stayed with friends whose apartment backs onto

the synagogue. Sure enough, on Friday evening, the calming melody of *Yedid Nefesh* flowed through their window gently reminding us that we were running late. As we rushed into the packed synagogue (we were far too late to get seats), I began to think about my synagogue experiences at home.



Class Act
By Daniel Held

Toronto is experiencing a dearth of dynamic prayer communities. With few exceptions, our synagogues - spanning the denominational divide - are big-box establishments catering to a demographic far older than my own. Indeed, on a typical Shabbat, while listening obediently to a cantor chant the *Amidah* or a president make announcements that bear little relevance to me, I am left thinking, "Where is my synagogue?"

This, of course, is not a new phenomenon. In the 1820s, the young congregants of New York's Shearith Israel petitioned the board to establish a service with fewer formalities, earlier worship times and a less hierarchical structure to worship. The proposal was quickly quashed by the trustees and so, in an act of rebellion, New York's newest synagogue, B'nai Jeshurun, was founded.

Today, nearly 200 years later, BJ is one of the hot spots of the Jewish scene in New York, attracting nearly 500 young adults each Shabbat. The BJ model is being studied by other synagogues to

determine how its innovations can be replicated.

Services at BJ and Yakar could not be more different. BJ (www.bj.org), a left-leaning Conservative synagogue, features professional musicians leading services with instruments amplified through a high-tech sound system. Yakar, (www.yakar.org/eng), on the other hand, is an Orthodox synagogue that calls itself a "Center for Tradition and Creativity," and focuses on a "Judaism that is spiritual, welcoming and connected to the real world."

What unites the two, however, is a sense of community. Both synagogues seek to break down barriers, engage individuals and challenge congregants to grow within the family of the shul. If our shuls in Toronto are the big-box Wal-Marts of synagogues, these are the "mom and pop" shuls where you get both a spiritual boost and a sense of community.

From each we can learn a lesson. Yakar demonstrates that a prayer space doesn't need to be ornate. Often basements and dining rooms form the basis for growing communities, bridging the best of two primal Jewish institutions - the synagogue and the home. Similarly, BJ's history exemplifies the richness of creativity and the depth of innovation.

We can't wait for someone else to create a spiritual life for us. Rather, we must take the initiative and create our own spaces, our own shuls and our own communities.

Why Sephardim shun non-Orthodox movements

By RABBI YEHIEL BEN AYON

Both the Reform and the Conservative movements have been in Israel for quite some time. In an effort to gain official state recognition, their leadership has been occupied from the start with aligning themselves with left-leaning politicians and (especially) the judiciary, before whom they have brought many cases. They have realized some moderate advances toward their goal of legitimacy. But their appeal to the Israeli masses as an alternative to traditional Judaism has not met with any real success. Countrywide, after more than two decades, they have but a few thousand followers.

In a country that by no means has a majority of people whom we in North America would call Orthodox in their practices, this is an endless source of puzzlement to these movements. Why does Israeli society refuse to embrace the Reform and Conservative philosophies?

Recently, both movements sponsored separate but similar conferences in Israel in order to examine the cause of, and possible remedies to, this rejection.

Various theories were put forth. Interestingly, the "Sephardi factor" was

presented at both conferences. It's a rather complex issue, but the rejection of both movements by Sephardim is in no way exclusive to Israel, as the Reform and Conservative philosophies have been similarly rejected by Sephardi communities in the Diaspora, and they will continue to be rejected, in no small part for the reason I will explain here.

At the Reform conference, a distinction was made between two types of Israelis: traditional and secular. While outwardly looking very similar in terms of not being Orthodox in practice, the two types are fundamentally different from one another.

Secular Israelis will happily live their lives without much regard for religion. On the other hand, traditionalists have never denied the authenticity of the Torah or the role of Halachah. They just have difficulty putting their beliefs into practice in a contemporary world.

It is precisely this problem that first led to the formation of the Reform and Conservative movements. For members of these movements, religion is important, but at the same time, it's a source of much discomfort. This dichotomy between belief and practice is unbearable to them, and

hence religion is rewritten or reformed in a manner that will narrow, if not close, the gap.

I propose that Sephardim are different. They can't be defined as either secular or traditional: The secularity of the world is not an antithesis to their sacred traditions. They are proud descendants of Spain's Golden Era, when the greatest Jewish scholars were as much a part of the world of the arts and sciences as they were a part of the world of Torah. Revered rabbis were also accomplished doctors, poets, philosophers, playwrights and astronomers, and their dual personas were neither contradictory nor in competition.

As for sacred tradition, Sephardim take a measured and humble approach that begins by postulating that the world we live in is not perfect, and we as humans are likely to be the last to make a claim on perfection. Hence imperfection is not just tolerated, but accepted as a normal part of life. In this Sephardi mindset, different levels of imperfection (read: observance) can sit together, because everyone realizes that in life, no one is perfect.

Indeed, life is a process of growth and of striving toward the goal of perfection. So we are all reformists, in that we wish to reform ourselves to the Torah ideal, a goal that was divinely set out for us for our own good by God Himself.



Jewish Life

Gentlemen of the Road by Michael Chabon, Random House.

Michael Chabon, the author of this wild, picaresque novel, is an accomplished master of several literary styles.

After winning a Pulitzer Prize for the *Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay* (2000), he wrote a book for children, several screenplays and a bestselling novel about Jews in an imaginary Alaska, *The Yiddish Policeman's Union* (2007). Chabon is confident and limber, humorous and elegant – he commands the reader's attention.

Gentlemen of the Road first appeared as a serial in the *New York Times* magazine. In an afterword to the book, the author maintains that "the story of the Jews centres around – one might almost say that it starts – the hazards and accidents, the misfortunes and disasters, the feats of inspiration, the travail and despair, and the intermittent moments of glory and grace, that entail upon journeys from home and back again. For better and worse, it has been one long adventure."

The gentlemen of the book's title are two unlikely figures. The first of these is a young, pale, spare, black-clad Frankish Jewish physician, Zelikman, whose horse is named Hillel. The other, Amram, is an Ethiopian, a former soldier in the Byzantine army who fancies himself a Jew. They both bear formidable weapons.



Books
Bernard Baskin

Adventurers on the road in 950 CE

Zelikman describes himself as a person not overly encumbered by principle. "I am a gentleman of the road, an apostate from the faith of my fathers, a renegade, a brigand, a hired blade, a thief, but on this one small principle of economy... I have to hold firm: if we can only save them one man at a time, then by God we must only kill them one man at a time."

The novel is set around 950 CE, somewhere in the Caucasus, where the rootless duo experience a series of close shaves as they separate fools from their money and beat hasty retreats.

Eventually, they end up protecting a young Khazar Prince named Filaq, whose throne has been usurped by a wily and unscrupulous uncle who seeks his destruction.

The trio head for Khazaria, where a Turkic people had converted en masse to Judaism in the eighth or ninth century. Around this little known incident in Jewish history, and remote location, the author weaves a romantic account that includes unweary red-haired Jews.

At one point Zelikman and Amram become separated. The joy of finding each other is described in this way: "He rose a little unsteady to his feet. His face was streaked with ash, ash lay on his hair

and scalp and his eyes were crazed with pink. He came wincing down the steps of the mosque as if his back or hips were bothering him, and he and Zelikman fell into each other's arms. From within the mosque came the broken voices of men at prayer. Amram stank of burned tallow, smoke and a hard day's labour, but underneath it all there was the familiar smell of him like sun on dusty sandstone. The sound of prayer found some kind of grateful echo in Zelikman's heart. "Late as usual," Amram said.

The novel brims with breathless action, raucous humour, colourful characters and an extraordinary elephant.

Surprisingly, neither of the main characters make much use of their weapons. They are hardly ferocious. Perhaps Chabon is making a point that Jews at heart are irenic rather than truculent – more inclined toward introspection than outward behaviour.

I must confess that although I was impressed with the author's unrelenting creativity and superb literary skills, the book itself left me confused and unsatisfied. Is this a medieval Jewish western? Is it a parody on Hollywood fantasy films? Does it carry an elusive message about the Jew as wanderer who must find the need to defend himself?

Perhaps all of these questions. Curious readers must seek the answers for themselves.

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

Jewish summer camps, Pt. 1

Israeli culture and the campers themselves.

As for the Beth Tfiloh Camps, while they hold Shabbat services and are "kosher-style," executive director Ed Cohen says that parents who want their children to have a strong Jewish camping experience should send their kids elsewhere. [tinyurl.com/34pkbk]

Which brings us to a central question: how Jewish should a Jewish camp be? And how much time should be devoted to the spiritual and to the physical?

Rebecca Spence hit a nerve last summer with an article in the *Forward* that asked how kids are "supposed to cut loose when they're spending so much time learning to be observant Jews." New York attorney Barry Posner said, "I just want the kids to be kids... They're very deeply steeped in Jewish values, heritage and learning, so for one or two months a year, let them have a vacation."

Rabbi Mitchell Cohen disagrees. Rabbi Cohen is the director of the National Ramah Commission, which operates several overnight camps affiliated with the Conservative movement. "Families who spend a fortune on day school education and then send their kids to non-religious programs in the summer in some ways are wasting their investment... The kids are getting all the academic knowledge critical for a Jewish education and then not applying it with friends in a warm, fun atmosphere." The spirited comments following the article over-

whelmingly side with Rabbi Cohen. [tinyurl.com/2y2rzk]

What is the secret of Jewish camps and their power to shape campers' identities for a lifetime? Amy Sales is co-author of *How Goodly Are Thy Tents: Summer Camps as Jewish Socializing Experiences* (Brandeis University Press). "Each camp has a very strong and intentional culture, camp by camp. Camp's power to socialize young Jews – how do I be a Jew?; how do I be a member of the Jewish community? – depends on this culture." [tinyurl.com/213kzp]

Maybe you're convinced camps are a good idea in principle, but how do you know if the time is right to send your own children off to camp? Ellen Nash, director of Ontario's Camp Northland – B'nai Brith says that "around age nine or ten is ideal for many kids to begin to go to camp. Twelve is sort of the top end." Ask yourself: "Do they like being with groups of kids? Are they comfortable sleeping over at other kids' houses? Those are good signs," she says. [tinyurl.com/2uyyuj]

The Family Education website also has some good articles about talking to your kids about camp, homesickness and even camp packing tips: "Send nothing to camp (except your child) that you can't afford to lose." [tinyurl.com/38a2t7]

Next time, scholarships, Jewish specialty camps and landing a job at camp.

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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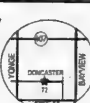


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Where to start? It's probably impossible to create a definitive list of all Jewish overnight camps, but here are some good places to look. The Association of Jewish Sponsored Camps has surveyed almost 150 camps. You can check its website for information about such matters as Jewish ritual observance, emphasis on sports and arts and staffing ratios. [tinyurl.com/39uas3]

The American Camp Association lists 132 Jewish camps [tinyurl.com/23dqkj], while Doing Jewish in Toronto lists more than two dozen overnight camps in Ontario alone. [tinyurl.com/35q5by] MyJewishLearning lists six in Quebec, two in British Columbia and one in each of Alberta, Manitoba and Nova Scotia. [tinyurl.com/ywq5xj]

There clearly are plenty of Jewish camps out there, and the differences between them can be quite significant. Steve Eller, director of Maryland's Beth Tfiloh Camps says there are seven key aspects to look out for when choosing a Jewish camp: general programming, special programming, staffing, dietary considerations, Hebrew language,



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CHRISTIANS FOR ISRAEL REMEMBER THE HOLOCAUST:

Holocaust survivor and partisan Faye Schulman, right, spoke at a Holocaust Remembrance Day program at the New Covenant Christian Fellowship Church in Brantford, Ont., Jan. 27. With her is Rev. John Tweedie, spiritual leader of the church and chair of Christians for Israel - Canada, which sponsored the event. Amir Gissin, Israel's Toronto-based consul general, also spoke. Attendees included Christians and Jews from Brantford, Hamilton, Cambridge, London and Toronto.



New trial ordered for Ahenakew

The province of Saskatchewan will bring onetime First Nations leader David Ahenakew to trial for a second time on charges of promoting hatred of Jews.

"Mr. Ahenakew was originally prosecuted because we believed that there was a reasonable likelihood of success and that it was in the public interest to do so," said Public Prosecutions executive director Daryl Rayner, in announcing the decision. "After careful consideration, we still believe this case meets that standard so we have decided to proceed with a new trial as ordered by the Court of Appeal."

Ahenakew was charged for wilfully promoting hatred after rationalizing the Holocaust and calling Jews "a disease" in remarks to a reporter at a First Nations convention.

He was convicted on July 8, 2005 and fined \$1,000. He appealed to the Court of Queen's Bench and on June 8, 2006, the decision was overturned and a new trial was ordered. The Crown appealed to the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal and, on Jan. 14, 2008, the appeal was dismissed. That left the Crown with the option of a second trial, appealing to the Supreme Court of Canada or dropping the matter.

His conviction was overturned by the Saskatchewan appellate court because the trial judge failed to take into account the defense contention that Ahenakew acted spontaneously in response to questions and did not have the intent of promoting hate.

Justice spokesperson Candace Cook said no date for the trial has been set, but it will likely be held in Saskatoon sometime this year, the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* reported.

Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) commended the Saskatchewan Crown Attorney's office for "its persistence in the David Ahenakew case" but said it would have preferred to see the case appealed to the Supreme Court.

"This is further proof the Crown prosecutor takes this matter very seriously, as do we," said Hershel Sahian, chair of CJC's national community relations committee.

"We are comforted by the many First Nations political and ethnic leaders who spoke out boldly and clearly against Ahenakew's tirade," Sahian said. "We will offer the Crown our continued support as the trial process begins again."



David Ahenakew



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Tel Aviv University's new president seeks change

By SHELTON KIRSHNER

Staff Reporter

The new president of Tel Aviv University – Israel's largest institution of higher learning – has embarked on a mission of change.

"My vision is to make it the best in Israel and one of the best in the world," said Zvi Galil, a 60-year-old computer scientist and mathematician who succeeded Itamar Rabinovitch as president last June.

Galil, whose father was one of the founders of the university, is aiming at improving it significantly across the board.

A Sabra who was previously dean of Columbia University's Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science, his



Zvi Galil

objective is to shake up his alma mater during his five-year term.

As he put it in a recent interview in Toronto, "I'm insisting on excellence on all levels."

Galil, who obtained his first two degrees at Tel Aviv University (TAU) before earning a PhD at Cornell University, has big plans.

He hopes to create better lines of communication between students and faculty. "Israeli universities are not known for treating students particularly well," he said. "Faculty thinks more of research than students."

"I want faculty to be more accessible to students," he added.

"I want [professors] to teach better and update curriculum more frequently. I want students to have a great experience."

Taking his cue from the United States, Galil observed that Israeli universities should treat students like "customers."

Galil appears to mean what he says. "I'm determined to bring change. This message has to come from the top."

In a bid to turn TAU into a more global institution with more students from abroad, he intends to introduce a greater variety of programs taught in English.

"We want to double or triple the number of international students. Universities aren't local any more."

And in this internationalist spirit, Galil seeks to forge extensive co-operation with overseas universities.

As well, Galil wants to see more multi-disciplinary research on campus. "Problems of society usually don't fall into one discipline," he explained.

If TAU is to be globally competitive, Galil suggested, it will need an additional infusion of \$30 to \$50 million (US) per annum to hire Israeli professors who currently live outside the country.

He believes this will help reverse Israel's alarming brain drain.

"We're losing some of our brightest talents to the United States and Canada," he lamented.

By way of illustration, Galil said that while there are 4,500 research professors in Israel, another 3,000 Israeli research professors live and teach in North America.

He hopes that private donors will assist him, but said he realizes that the Israeli government has an enormous role to play in this matter.

"The last few governments have cut university budgets by at least 20 per cent, something no western nations have done recently," he said.

Yet the situation is in flux, he noted.

"There is now a movement to restore these cuts. Rhetorical-ly, the government is sympathetic to increasing university research budgets. But we need results. Will they do it? I don't know."

Galil, having discussed this topic with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, believes that he appreciates the magnitude of the problem and that he intends to remedy it.

The problem is serious.

Currently, Israeli universities can tap into a yearly research

budget of only \$100 million. By contrast, the research budget of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) alone totals \$1 billion.

Reflecting on these startling figures, he said, "We should get much more. Education is an investment in Israel's future. It is on a par with security."

Galil, who taught at TAU from 1976 to 1995, returned to Israel out of patriotism.

"I took a 65 per cent pay cut to become president. I saw it as a job of national importance."

Universities are crucial to Israel's survival, he said.

In an allusion to Arab oil and gas, he said, "We have brain power, not natural resources. Our universities are responsible for Israel's economic success, especially in high-tech startups."

Much to his regret, the state of Israeli education at the pre-university level is abysmal.

"It's bad, and has deteriorated seriously in recent decades."

Galil – whose wife is a marine biologist – was chair of TAU's computer science department from 1979 to 1982.

From 1982 onward, he was an itinerant professor, commuting between TAU and Columbia.

He ended his association with his alma mater in 1995, when he was appointed dean of Columbia's school of engineering and applied science.

"Columbia was wonderful. I like the American system very much. It's the best in the world. Salaries are determined by performance. It's a tool to achieve excellence. This system exists in a mild form in Israel."



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Canada's first astronaut impresses young audience

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Marc Garneau was the first Canadian to travel to space. He is the former president of the Canadian Space Agency, a companion of the Order of Canada, and has two Canadian high schools named after him.

But when Garneau came to speak to United Synagogue Day School (USDS) students last week at the Bathurst campus, they seemed to be less interested in his accomplishments and more interested in what it feels like to be weightless, and how astronauts brush their teeth and go to the bathroom in space.

Before the question-and-answer period, Garneau, a 58-year-old Quebec City native, spoke about his experience as one of the six Canadians who was selected to be part of the first Canadian Astronaut Program in 1983.

He said that although a Canadian had never travelled to space at that point, Canadians had built a mechanical arm called the Canadarm, that was used on an American space shuttle in 1981 to both launch and capture satellites in orbit.

"Because Canada provided the Canadarm to the United States, NASA wanted to thank Canada and they said, 'We'd like to fly some Canadians to space...'" That's how the astronaut program came about. In order to select astronauts, they put a newspaper ad in the career section of the newspaper. It described the qualifications you needed to become an astronaut. About 4,000 Canadians wanted to become astronauts and they all applied. After about six months, they chose the final six," Garneau said.

"Three months after we were selected, I was chosen to become the first Canadian to go into space. It was with the crew of STS-41-G. I was chosen to fly with this crew in October 1984, less than a year after I was selected as an astronaut. This flight was aboard the Challenger."

Garneau, who has logged almost 700 hours in space through-



Garneau talks about the Canadarm

out his career, talked about the reward of travelling to space for his first time after months of hard work and intense training.

"The crew comes together, and you do about a year of training before we actually fly. Finally, three days before the launch, we go from Houston, which is where we train, to Florida, which is where the Kennedy Space Center is located and from where we launch."

He said that in the last couple days before the launch, the crew relaxes and prepares.

"But the night before, you go to bed, it is a little like the night before your birthday. You're quite excited because you know that the next day is going to be a very special day. I can remember wanting to sleep but having trouble sleeping because the next day, I was going to do something that only a few hundred people have ever done."

He said that although it's only an 8½-minute ride to get to space, it's very intense.

"It's noisy, there's lots of vibration, the acceleration has sort of pinned you in your seat and it's quite a roller-coaster ride, but after 8½ minutes, when you arrive in space... suddenly it's very quiet and you feel yourself floating out of your seat. Of



Marc Garneau, the first Canadian in space, poses with Amanda Belzowski, a Grade 5 student at USDS in her space suit she got when she attended NASA's Space Camp in Huntsville, Alabama.

[Lisa Belzowski photos]

course, you've got your seatbelt on, and you can hardly wait to take it off and just float out of your seat: It's a magical moment because you have arrived in space. This is what you've been training for such a long time... The first thing you want to do is float over to the window and to look out and see the earth... look at our beautiful planet from above," he said.

"I will always remember all my life, the very first time I floated out of my seat and looked out of the window."

Since his first flight into space, Garneau has been part of two more missions. During his training, he met with Ilan Ramon, Israel's first astronaut who was part of the Space Shuttle Columbia crew that died in 2003 when the shuttle re-entered the earth's atmosphere.

Garneau explained that a problem had occurred on the shuttle's launch. A tile on a critical part of the wing was damaged, and this allowed the heat to come inside the wing structure when they attempted to land. This caused an explosion and the deaths of the seven astronauts on board.

"I knew Ilan. We worked together when we were down in Houston, because

that is where all the astronauts trained," Garneau said.

"I met Ilan because until you're named to a mission, you're in a pool of astronauts and there are about 100 of them from different countries. When we do training sessions, we often do them as a group. I got to know Ilan while I was there... He was a very fine gentleman."

After Garneau's presentation, students from both the Bayview and Bathurst campuses had the opportunity to ask him questions about living in a space shuttle.

"In space, we do all the things we do here on earth. We eat, we sleep, we exercise, we go to the bathroom, we wash ourselves... but it's different because we're floating and that presents us with challenges," Garneau said.

"For example, sleeping is not something you need to do on the floor — you can sleep on the ceiling, on the walls. You just get a sleeping bag and you Velcro yourself to the wall. Or if you're like me, you float. I would just float around sleeping all night long."

Students asked how astronauts brush their teeth and use a toilet if there is no running water.

He said that when they brushed their teeth, they either swallowed the toothpaste, or spit it into a facecloth. The toilets were not like ordinary toilets. They didn't use water, but they were more like vacuums that used suction to pull waste away from the body.

Another student asked what it felt like to be weightless. Garneau explained that it is a wonderful feeling, but some people experience nausea and vomiting for the first two or three days.

"But the rules are very clear. If you get sick, you have to clean up your own mess," he said on top of the students' moans and groans.

The Q and A session took a more serious tone when a parent asked what people can do to urge the Canadian government not to sell Canada's biggest space company to an American company.

"The company that built the famous Canadarm and all the robotics that we've contributed to the international space station... is called MDA... We found out a couple weeks ago that they are selling their space division to a company in the United States. I personally think it would be a mistake because this is the biggest space company in the country, and I hope the government will not approve it," Garneau said.

"We as Canadians have spent a lot of money to invest in it and built it up to what it is today... and I think it would be a pity to lose it," he said, adding that students should write letters to Jim Prentice, Canada's industry minister.

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'A good place in every sense of the word'

Continued from page 3

The building, a project of Quadrangle Architects, features low-emission materials, solvent-free paints, recyclable carpets, environmentally friendly cleaning supplies, and high-efficiency heating and cooling units that can be applied in discrete areas to conserve energy in parts of the building that are not in use.

Michael Mitchell, immediate past president of Darchei Noam, spoke of the congregation's modest beginnings and shared values, including Judaism and love of Torah, social justice, love of Israel, equal treatment of men and women as well as of gays and lesbians, warmth, and being welcoming to Jews and their non-Jewish partners.

Synagogue membership has grown about 40 per cent

over the past five years, said president Lisa Charendoff. As of the dedication event, there were 613 adult members – the number of mitzvot in the Torah, she noted.

MC Alan Levine, who co-chaired the capital campaign and chaired the construction committee, said that the congregation is "in a good place in every sense of the word."

Rabbi Richard Hirsh – he was hired in 1981 as Darchei Noam's first full-time rabbi by the then-40-member congregation and is currently the executive director of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association – advised congregants not to "lose track of the heart of this community... There will always be time for the details."

"This structure is a physical manifestation of our spiritual dream," said Rabbi Grimberg.



The new Darchei Noam synagogue

Mazon gala funds programs for the hungry

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN

Staff Reporter

Mazon Canada, A Jewish Response to Hunger, is holding its 10th annual Evening of Kosher Delicacies on Feb. 20 at 7:30 p.m. at the Ontario Science Centre.

The event raises almost \$100,000 annually toward feeding Canada's hungry, offering funding to various Canadian organizations including Flemington Public School, in Toronto; Loaves and Fishes Community Food Bank Foundation, in British Columbia; Maison Shalom, in Quebec; and Melville and District Food Bank, in Saskatchewan.

Shira Lester-Cohen, Mazon's executive director, said that in 2007, her organization began funding a nutritional program at three Toronto District School Board alternative schools: Oasis Alternative Secondary School; the Triangle program at Oasis for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, questioning youth; and Contact Alternative School.

The funding, in the amount of \$7,500, was made possible by a \$1 million grant to Mazon from the estate of Stephen and Sophie Lever.

"For whatever reasons, many of these kids are from families without a lot of parental support, and food security is a big issue," Lester-Cohen said.

Teachers were pleased with the grant, she said, because many students live on government subsidies and have very little to eat.

"Most of our kids never think about where their food is coming from, and here are these kids fully responsible for taking care of themselves."

By holding the annual gala, Lester-Cohen said, Mazon ensures that programs such as these can keep running.

"Since our inception in 1986, we have allocated \$7 million. We will never eradicate hunger, but if we can alleviate it, then we've accomplished something," she added.

At the gala, guests will have the opportunity to taste test offerings from kosher chefs, including from the Steam Whistle Brewery, Cravings To Go, DSM Foods, Eventful Specialty Event Bars, GUILT Free Cookies, Metropolitan Ice, Levy's Catering, Baldwin Kosher, Bubbies Biscotti, Feature Foods, Grodzinski's Bakery, Simcha Wine, Rhonda Litwack Fine Foods, Taam Tov Fine Catering, the Windsor Arms Hotel, Umami Sushi and Zuchter Berk Creative Catering.

For information or tickets, call Mazon at 416-783-7554.

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The Physician Aliyah Program has been made possible through the generosity of the Legacy Heritage Fund Limited.

Summer 2008 Application Deadline: March 15, 2008
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www.nbn.org.il

Food, Scrumptious Food

Food blogs – a source of almost anything recipe-related

By NORENE GILLETZ
Special to The CJN

I first met Ruth Daniels via an e-mail sent to me by my foodie friend, Renee Unger of Toronto. Renee was searching for a recipe for roast tongue and discovered Daniels' website and blog, along with the desired recipe. There was also a picture of a tattered, food-stained copy of *Second Helpings Please*.

Daniels wrote on her blog: "*Second Helpings Please* is the first book my mother bought me. It's filled with traditional Jewish recipes and I still thumb through it around Jewish holidays. I have to be careful, though, it no longer has a spine. Although many people have offered to buy me a new copy, I wouldn't part with this one. It's filled with history along with the smudges and globs of batter. This is the only recipe for challah that my family uses. Stain factor: 11." (Daniels gives each of her favourite cookbooks a stain factor on a scale of 0 – "hardly used," to 10 – "filthy and always open in the kitchen.")

That was the beginning of our e-mail friendship. Although we still haven't met face-to-face (Daniels moved to Halifax from Toronto several months ago), we keep in touch on a regular basis. Distance is not a problem – we are connected by a culinary cord that reaches across the miles!

I recently decided to start a food blog, but since I'm technically challenged, Daniels kindly offered to become my food-blog coach. She knows all about blogging – she has several food-related blogs, including <http://askruth.blogspot.com/> where she answers pesky kitchen questions and <http://recipefrom4everykitchen.blogspot.com/> which is recipes, recipes and more recipes!

I asked Daniels to share a favourite vegetarian dish for your eating enjoyment. These scrumptious recipes come from her cookbook *Every Kitchen Tells Its Story: Recipes to Warm the Heart*. It's available only through her blog/website in either CD version or an e-book version. A kosher version is avail-

able on request. Visit <http://onceuponafeast.blogspot.com> for more information, recipes, food photography and whatever else food-related that hits her fancy. There's more food than you can shake a fork at!

RUTH DANIELS' STUFFED ROASTED RED PEPPERS

Hands-on time: 15 minutes; baking time: 20 minutes; plus puree time: 45 minutes.

4 medium red/yellow bell peppers
2 cups shitake mushrooms
2 cups button or cremini mushrooms
1 box red and yellow grape or cherry tomatoes (2 cups)

1 shallot, thinly sliced
2 tbsp. olive oil
1 clove garlic, thinly sliced
2 cups Chickpea & Eggplant Puree (see recipe below)
1 tbsp. pine nuts, toasted
garnish: finely chopped Italian parsley or thinly sliced, rolled fresh basil leaves (also known as chiffonade or ribbons)

Preheat oven to 425. Halve peppers lengthwise and discard seeds. Bake peppers cut side down in top third of oven on baking sheet for 10 minutes.

In the meantime: quarter mushrooms and halve tomatoes. In a large skillet, sauté the shallot in oil until soft, add garlic and continue to cook 20 seconds, just to get the aroma going. Add mushrooms and cook 2 minutes. Stir in tomatoes and season with salt & pepper and set aside.

Spoon 1/4 cup of Chickpea & Eggplant Puree into each pepper half and pack down, making a well for the mushroom tomato mixture. Mound mushroom, tomato mixture on top and sprinkle with pine nuts. For the extra mixture, just allow it to fall on the baking tray surrounding the peppers. Bake in upper third of oven for 15-20 minutes.

Garnish with chopped basil or parsley. Serves 4 as main dish or 8 as side/appetizer.



Ruth Daniels

Tips & variations:

- If you cut the peppers horizontally, the top half will have a hard stalk or a hole. Neither works well for stuffing.
- Grape tomatoes are smaller than cherry tomatoes and are sweeter. Daniels likes the flavour better, but both work well.
- Daniels usually makes this as part of a buffet supper or brunch, choosing smaller peppers so people can have a little of everything.
- This dish looks impressive when you use a variety of coloured peppers – red, yellow, orange and even purple, if you can find them.

CHICKPEA & EGGPLANT PUREE

Hands-on time: 40 minutes; broil time: 10 minutes.

1 small eggplant
2 tbsp. kosher salt
1 cup chickpeas, cooked, drained and rinsed (see Tips below)
1/4 cup Italian (flat leaf) parsley (packed)
1/4 cup fresh basil (packed)
1 1/2 tbsp. lime juice
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 tbsp water

Preheat oven to broil. Cut eggplant into 1/2-inch thick slices. Place them in a colander, sprinkle with salt and let them rest for 30 minutes to drain excess moisture.

Rinse the eggplant and pat dry. Broil or grill until golden (5-6 minutes per side). Cool, peel skin off and chop the eggplant.

In food processor, combine eggplant and the rest of ingredients and pulse until coarsely chopped. Makes enough to stuff 8-10 peppers halves (above).

Tips & variations:

- You can soak dried chickpeas overnight in water or use canned.
- This also makes a great spread for wraps and sandwiches.
- Just add your favourite veggies (Ruth loves marinated red peppers) or cheese (feta is great here) and you have a great lunch.
- Think picnic on a sunny summer day, or easy to pack lunch for busy days the rest of the year.
- This puree also works well as a dip with crudité or crackers.

Norene Gilletz is a cookbook author, teacher and food consultant. For information, call 416-226-2466 or visit her website at <http://www.gourmania.com>.

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Food, Scrumptious Food

Magyar madness in the kitchen

By ADAM MENCELES
Special to The CJN

To all of you who picture a Hungarian dinner table as a humongous spread of heavy-as-bricks food and pickled vegetables that don't resemble vegetables at all, your preconceptions are not unfounded.

While traditional non-Jewish old-country Hungarian food is full of sausages and sour cream, Hungarian-Jewish food is something entirely different. It's not that Hungarian Jews totally omit sour cream from all dishes. There happens to be a famous dish called *túrós tészta* that children tend to like, made by combining noodles with sour cream, cottage cheese and a sprinkle of sugar on top.

Some may call our Jewish dietary restrictions a hindrance, but I call them an opportunity for diversity and creativity. We can't rely on the heavy sour cream to enrich our meat dishes – we have to think of other ways to accent our meals.

My grandparents came to Canada with my parents during the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 and brought with them a culture rich with food and love, and a love of food. That appreciation was passed down to me through years of stories and delicious meals.

Imagine having not one, but two grandmothers cooking delicious Hungarian food for you for as long as you can remember. Classic well-known dishes such as goulash soup and chicken paprikas are just the beginning of what a Hungarian meal can be, and are only examples of the most common foods that exist in the spectrum of Hungarian cooking.

If a departure from the norm is what you're looking for, you'll find that Hungarians can be very creative. Take sour egg soup for example. No, the eggs are not left to rot and the soup hasn't gone bad. This dish is a vinegar, paprika and bay leaf broth adorned with eggs poached in that same liquid. The beauty of sour egg soup (also known as *savanyú tojás leves*) is that the yolk from the poached eggs flows directly into your soup, thickening and enriching the broth.

My favourite meal to date is an amalgamation of sorts. The three items in question that compose this ethereal plate of yumminess are *fasirt* (pronounced *fasheert* – a softer, lighter hamburger-type patty containing soaked challah and spices), sunny side up eggs and warm spinach purée that has been thickened with a bit of a roux and some garlic. These three items cannot be eaten separately. They have to be allowed to meld on one plate creating a harmony of creamy spinach, yolky egg and meaty *fasirt*.

If you would rather eat a meal that leans to the traditional, there are so many directions you

can go. Chicken schnitzel and roasted potatoes are a classic, as are *nokedli* and *pörkölt* (dumplings and stew). Desserts range from the intoxicatingly sweet *fánk* (doughnuts or *sufganiyot*), to the famously delicious *palacsinta* (crepes), the silky smooth custardy broth of *madar tej* or *dobos torta* (dobos meaning drum – for the hard caramel on top of the cake).

When you take into consideration the setbacks Jews faced before and after wars and the lack of outside resources (especially when it came to food) that they had, it's amazing how taste and creativity bloomed in places as unassuming as farm-town kitchens and ghetto bakeries.

It may have been a need for self-sufficiency that forced our elders into a love of food, or it may be that genetically, mothers get a genuine joy from watching their children eat a nice bowl of chicken soup. Either way, there is no reason to question why or how food has become such an important part of Jewish life. Just accept it as an unconventional gift from ancestors who thought that bringing a family together would be as easy as making a heartwarming bowl of matzah ball soup.

AD'S KÖRÖZÖTT

In short, it's a Hungarian paprika and caraway cheese spread or dip. Although traditional *körözött* is made by combining butter, soft ewe's milk cheese, ground caraway, paprika and onion, I've come to the realization that ewe's milk cheese is not as readily available as your everyday cream cheese and butter is not a health-conscious option. The recipe below has all the taste of traditional *körözött*, minus the butt-widening qualities of butter and the breath-contaminating properties of onion.

2 8-oz. packages of cream cheese
1 tbsp. Hungarian paprika
1 tbsp. ground caraway seed
salt and pepper to taste

Soften cream cheese in a bowl or food processor. Add paprika, ground caraway, salt and pepper. Combine. Refrigerate for a couple of hours to let the flavours come together. Use as a spread for challah, crackers or toast, or if you're feeling healthy and adventurous, vegetables.

Note: Keep in mind that you can always substitute some of the cream cheese with butter or margarine and finely chopped onion can be added for extra flavour. You can also tweak the amounts of paprika and caraway so that the end result suits your taste.

Adam Menceles is a Toronto-based freelance food, travel and music writer.



FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish News



Stacey Stein & Shi Davidi announce the birth of their son, Adyn Eli, on Dec. 21. Grandparents, Sharon & Stephen Stein, and Frieda & Israel Davidi.



Mazel tov Josh Foreman, seen here with his family, on winning a silver medal for Canada in basketball at the Maccabi Games in Buenos Aires.



Mazel tov to Dr. Alex Kulik (married to Meredith Serota) on his graduation from Harvard University, and currently pursuing cardiac surgery at Ottawa Heart Institute.



Mazel tov to Dr. Dina Kulik (married to Andrew Levy) on her graduation from McMaster University, currently pursuing pediatrics at Sick Kids in Toronto.



Happy first birthday Maya! Love, your parents Tami & Michael Weintraub.



Mazel tov to Stephanie & Robert on their engagement. Delighted parents are Marion & Laz Caplan and Gertie Pelcowitz. Robert's father was the late Max Pelcowitz.



Happy second birthday Jayden Lewis, son of Lauren & Brian. Grandparents, Sylvia & Lou Kirshner, Adele & Melvyn Lewis and great-grandparents Oupa & Granny Blumenow.



Happy first birthday Carly, daughter of Rachael & Jordan Sweigman. Proud grandparents Abbe & Eddie Nelson, Lorene & Bill Sweigman.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!
Label the back of all photos and keep wording to 25 words or less.
Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return.
Mail to: The CJN, Family Moments,
1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205,
North York, ON, M3B 3K4.
or email: cblackman@cjnews.com



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**What's
New**

By REBECCA NADLER



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What's New deadlines: Monday, Feb. 11, is the deadline for the Feb. 21 issue and Monday, Feb. 18, is the deadline for the Feb. 28 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, Feb. 7

BOYCOTTING ISRAEL

Torah in Motion presents "Boycotting Israel: The Lie and its Perpetrators" with **Menachem Kellner**, 8 p.m. at Yeshivat Or Chaim, \$10, students free. www.torahinmotion.org or 416-633-5770

Friday, Feb. 8

BEACHES ONEG SHABBAT

The Beach Synagogue holds its monthly Oneg Shabbat beginning with a potluck dinner at 6 p.m. Bring a vegetarian main dish or dessert. Service at 6:45 p.m. featuring **Karen Gold** and **Susan Litchen**. 109 Ke-

neltown Ave. 416-694-7942 or www.beachsynagogue.com

Saturday, Feb. 9

FLOWERS AREN'T ENOUGH

The Toronto Miklat Committee raises awareness about domestic violence in the Jewish world. Join them for *Flowers Aren't Enough*, featuring Israeli-American actress, **Naomi Ackerman**, 8 p.m. at the Baycrest Terrace, \$36. Info, miklat.toronto@gmail.com.

Sunday, Feb. 10

SUPER DUPER FUN FAIR

Join Na'amat Club Rimmon for its

annual Preschool Super Duper Fun Fair with music by Sonshine and Broccoli, a visit from Elmo and other fun activities and support daycare centres in Israel. 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Bialik Hebrew Day School. \$15, babies under a year free. Tickets, clubrimmon@yahoo.ca.

DINOSAURS AT THE ROM

Rabbi Natan Slifkin leads a tour of the Royal Ontario Museum and a discussion about dinosaurs. 3 p.m. \$25, children \$15. Pre-registration required. 416-633-5770 or www.torahinmotion.org.

SINGLES WINTER DANCE

The Shaar Shalom Singles Com-

mittee 45+ holds a winter dance, featuring **James Regan** of the Old Scott House at 7:30 p.m. \$15. For info, call **David** at 416-224-9494.

BOOKS AND BAGELS

Beth Emeth Sisterhood Books and Bagels will discuss *The Ministry of Special Cases* by **Nathan Englander**. 10:45 a.m. Men and women welcome for bagels and coffee and lively discussion. Non-members \$3. Info, **Rosemary** at 416-633-3838.

SHMATTE SALE

Find unbelievable bargains and support Hillel's Social Action Programs at the "Good Taste Shmatte Sale," with resale clothing, gently used jewelry and household decor items at very affordable prices. 12-4 p.m. at the Wolfond Centre, 36 Harbord St.

ISRAELI FILM: CUP FINAL

The First Narayever film series continues with the film *Cup Final*, set in 1982 during Israel's invasion of Lebanon. In the film, the World Cup is underway in Spain, and a captured Israeli soldier and a PLO commander are both fans. Free. 3 p.m. 416-927-0546

Tuesday, Feb. 12

TUESDAYS AT THE MOVIES

Beth Tikvah Synagogue movie series, with **Larry Ankiewicz**, presents *Invincible*, a true story about a Jewish strongman who becomes a sensation in prewar Germany. 2 p.m. \$5. 416-221-3434

ISRAEL FILM AND PIZZA

Temple Har Zion hosts Israel Film and Pizza Night with **Karen**
Continued on page 25



Hazelton Place is pleased to announce an afternoon concert with acclaimed solo vocalist, Caroline Leslie!

Opera, Broadway, Theatre and Cabaret styles have all been brought together in this amazing performance.

Friday, February 15th, 2008

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Difficult History, Diverse Audiences:

The Holocaust & Antisemitism in Contemporary Perspective

A conference by the Mark and Gail Appel Program, which brings together future educators from Canada, Germany, and Poland to study the past in order to teach towards a better future. All talks take place in the Founders College Assembly Hall (152 FC), York University, Keele Campus, and are open to the public free of charge.

Saturday, 9 February 2008
8:00 PM

If It's So Bad, How Come It's So Good? Antisemitism in Britain and Europe Today

Sunday, 10 February 2008
2:00 PM

Panel Discussion: Holocaust Education in Multicultural Settings

Professor David Cesarani, OBE

David Cesarani is the author of award-winning books on the Holocaust and National Socialism and was a delegate to the Task Force for Inter-governmental Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research.

David Cesarani: Teaching London Inner-City Students

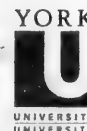
Jennifer Gerwlvich: Teaching Canadian Catholic High School Students

Elke Gryglewski: Teaching Germans of Palestinian Heritage

Parking is available nearby.

Contact: Cornelia Lahmann (clahmann@yorku.ca or 416 736-5695).

Program website: www.yorku.ca/tfff



What's New

Continued from page 24

Weiss. 6:30 p.m. \$8 for non-members. 905-889 2252

BIBLICAL ART

Rouhana Danto speaks about "Biblical Art: Paradise and the Garden of Eden" 7:30 at the Beth David Sisterhood meeting. 7:30 p.m. \$5. 416-633-5500

NORTH YORK CHORALAIRS

The Choralairs of North York are looking for new members. Rehearsals take place every Tuesday, 8-10 p.m. at the Earl Bales Park Community Centre. No auditions are required. Repertoire includes pop, Broadway and folk songs. The choir performs at nursing homes and seniors residences. Info, call **Brian**, 416 631 0029.

Wednesday, Feb. 13

MAH-JONG & RUMMIKUB

Join Beth Emeth Sisterhood for mah-jong and rummikub every Wednesday. Lunch 11:30 a.m., games 12:30-3:30 p.m. Cost, toonie for Torah Fund. 416-633-3838

LONDON LECTURE: ISRAEL

Lorne Gunter, executive director of the Canadian Centre for Libertarian Studies and former prime minister Pierre Trudeau's chief of staff, talks about "Why Israel's Security Should Matter to Canadians." 7:30-9 p.m. at the London JCC. 519-673-3310

CHRISTIAN ZIONISM

Beth Tzedec Congregation presents "Christian Zionism Part V: Why and How We Love Israel and the Jews," a lecture supplemented by live interpretive music and dance designed to illustrate Christian Zionism, with **Reverend Dean Bye**, founder and head of Return Ministries in Ontario. 7:30 p.m. 416-781-3511

NATIONALISM & HISTORY

Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism offers a mid-week study group on "Simon Dubnow and Nationalism and History." Non-members \$5. 7:30 p.m. at the Wagman Centre. RSVP, **Peter**, 416-250-0926 or **petergibbert@rogers.com**.

BOOK OF ISAIAH

Explore major themes in the Book of Isaiah, including the nature of the prophet and prophecy in general and specifically Isaiah's mission, and understand Isaiah in relation to the historic narratives in the Bible. With **Rabbi Eric Levy**. Tonight through March 5, 8-9 p.m. at Or Chaim Yeshiva. \$50. Register, 416-877-2050 or **www.mekorot.ca**

Other News

SEARCH FOR TRUTH

Torah in Motion hosts a conference on Torah encounters with secular knowledge, Feb. 9-10 at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. Feb. 9, 8:15-10:30 p.m. a panel discussion on "Rabbinic Authority vs. Worldly Wisdom" with **Dr. Menachem Kellner**, **Dr. Marc Shapiro**, **Rabbi Natan Slikin** and **Rabbi Daniel Sperber**. Feb. 10, 9:15 a.m.-4:15 p.m., Kellner on "Transforming Judaism: Philosophy, Kabbalah and the Legacy of the Rambam"; Kellner and Shapiro on "Are There Things a Jew Must Believe? The Controversy over Rambam's 13 Principles"; Rabbi Slikin on "Darwin and *Daas Torah*: Does Modern Science Oppose the Torah?"; Rabbi Sperber on "Halachah and the Challenges of Modernity"; Shapiro on "The Lives of *Gedolim* and the Truths of the History"; and Rabbi Sperber on "The Challenge of Faith." \$30. Register, **www.torahinmotion.org** or 416-633-5770.

TORAH AND SIDUR

Beth Tzedec Congregation welcomes **Rabbi Harvey Meirovich**, of the Schechter Rabbinical Seminary Jerusalem, as scholar-in-residence Feb. 12-16 on the subject "Torah and Siddur: Our Basic Texts." Rabbi Meirovich will be in the library for drop-in study sessions Tuesday, Feb. 12, 4-7:30 p.m.; Wednesday, Feb. 13, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. and Thursday, Feb. 14, 4-7:30 p.m. On Saturday, Feb. 16, he speaks during services on "What Makes Eitz Hayim a Conservative Torah Commentary?" Following service there will be discussion of the pulpit topic. Following 5:10 p.m. Minchah, he will speak on "The Search for Meaning: Insights from the Siddur." 416-781-3511

TRIVIA NIGHTS

Beth Emeth Brotherhood present Trivia Night, Saturday, Feb. 16, 8 p.m. with quiz master **Larry Ankiewicz**. \$12, table of 10/\$100. Reserve by Feb. 14 at noon. 416-633-6333

Bnei Akiva Schools hold a Trivia Night, Saturday, Feb. 16. Test your knowledge and have a great time. Light dinner served. To register, either teams or as individuals, call **Ellise**, 905-709-7499 or **gasnerbunch@sympatico.ca**.

FINANCES EXPLAINED

BAYT Sisterhood presents "Dollars and Sense for Women," taking control of all aspects of your financial life. Sunday, Feb. 17, 7:30 p.m. Free. 905-886-3810

PIRATES OF PENZANCE

North Toronto Players presents Gilbert and Sullivan's musical *The Pirates of Penzance*, Feb. 15-24 at the City Playhouse. Tickets, \$10-25. 905-727-2209 or **www.northtorontoplayers.com**

SPARKLE, SIZZLE & SONG

Regesh Family and Child Services hosts Sparkle, Sizzle & Song. The evening, dedicated to the memory of **Rabbi Yitzhak Witt**, features an auction and a musical tribute. Saturday, March 1, at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. The event will support Chezi's Corner, a transition house that offers youth 16 to 24 the opportunity to live in a safe, caring home and provides counselling services to youth at risk and their families. \$125. 416-495-8832

VENDORS WANTED

Bnei Akiva Schools first annual Spring Fashion and Boutique Afternoon with fashions, accessories, gift and children's items is looking for vendors. Tables are \$75. Sunday, March 30, 12-4 p.m. Contact **Ellise Gasner** at **gasnerbunch@sympatico.ca** or 905-709-7499.

Jewish Mosaic Festival '08, Sunday, June 1, at the Bathurst JCC is looking for vendors for this all-day community festival. Information, call **Joan Landy**, 416-663-1955.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. Information/registration 416-638-7800 or **www.jfandcs.com**.

Call **Shawna**, ext. 215, for info and registration for the following:

- Effective Parenting: A four-session group for parents of children ages 2-11 years. Begins Thursday, Feb. 14, 7-9 p.m. at the Promenade Mall, #313.

- Adolescents and Divorce: A workshop for parents of adolescents. Tuesday, Feb. 19, 7-9 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

Call ext. 246 for info and registration for the following:

- PALS: An eight-session activity-based social skills group for children 6-8, which includes a parent component. Tuesdays, Feb. 12-April 8 at Ventura Park Elementary School, 121 Worth Blvd.
- Parenting the Child with Challenging Behaviour: A series for parents who are frequently challenged by the behaviour of their children aged 6-12. Wednesdays, Feb. 20-April 2, 6:30-8 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

FOR SENIORS

Chai Shalom Social Club hosts **Adam Timoon**, vocalist and guitarist, Sunday, Feb. 17, 1:30 p.m. Refreshments served. New members welcome. Info call **Sandy** at 416-633-3838.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Casino Rama, Feb. 13, 27; Yiddish-speaking hairdresser and barber, Thursdays, 9 a.m.-noon; bridge, Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m. New members welcome. Info, Tuesday-Thursday 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 416-395-7881.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

"Overcoming Life's Obstacles" with **Judy Weiss**. Thursday, Feb. 7, 1:30 p.m.

"Love Is in the Air," lunch and concert, Wednesday, Feb. 13, 12:30 p.m. \$10, non-members \$13.

"Meeting Today's Challenges to Jewish Survival," a lecture by **Rabbi Michael Skobac**, of Jews for Judaism, Tuesday, Feb. 12, 10 a.m. \$2, non-members \$4.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or **www.bjcc.ca**.

Free Tax Return Clinic: To qualify income below \$17,000 no dependents; \$25,000 with dependents. Call ext. 0 for appointment.

The JCC Maccabi Games 2008 take place Aug. 17-22, 2008 in Detroit, Mich. For Jewish athletes ages 13-16. The Toronto basketball tryouts take place at the Bathurst JCC, for girls, Sunday, Feb. 3, 6-7:30 p.m. and for boys, Tuesday, Feb. 12, and Thursday, Feb. 14, 8-9:30 p.m. Info, call **Grant Smith** at ext. 257 or e-mail **gsmith@bjcc.ca**.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or **www.mnjcc.org**.

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Cordes, Claire	Jan. 25/08	880 Lawrence Ave. E.
Droplkin, Arthur	Jan. 26/08	4001 Bayview Ave
Unger, Sam	Jan. 29/08	7 Townsgate Dr
Smith, Ann	Jan. 29/08	3560 Bathurst St
Bittan, Haime	Jan. 28/08	
Guelfand, Nekhama	Jan. 28/08	Private
Machtin, Biniamin	Jan. 29/08	5935 Bathurst St
Tokman, Nora	Jan. 30/08	Private
Kantorowitz, Moses	Jan. 29/08	24 Leith Hill Rd
Charnaw, Zelik	Jan. 30/08	8 Covington Rd
Swadron, Minnie	Jan. 30/08	Private
Weinstein, Jean	Jan. 22/08	17 Barksdale Ave
Nagel, Ruth	Jan. 31/08	3560 Bathurst St.



Frances Steinberg	Jan 16/08	3560 Bathurst St
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Bradley Davis	Jan 24/08	28 Pantano Dr
Reuben Lerner	Jan 24/08	7250 Yonge St
George Zuckerman	Jan 25/08	37 Old Yonge St
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אין לא מקט במקבלי ההחלטות בישראל בשאלה מה לעשות בנושא טלי הקסאם בשדרות שי קולות רמים שקראים להם להכנס לעזה ולסיים את המצב הזה. מבטא לעזה תורה מלחמה קרוב לרואי באבידות ורבת לזלזול, כאופייני למלחמה בשטח בני. הוא הצבא ילאץ להישאר שם-מזרח שוב באבידות ימיומיות שהציבור בישראל אינו מוכן עכשיו לקבל. הסיכול הממוקד שמתנהל בימים אלה מצליח אמנם לחסל אנשי טרור, אך לא להקטין את מספר הטילים והאויס החיים ובלתי מתקבלת על הדעת בשדרות, שרבים ממאשיה נטשים אותה, ולי יכל-גם הנשארם היו עוזבים. מדובר באנשי חמאס שאין להם שום עניין או כבוד מנימימלי לסבל העליים והאויס הפלשתינאים, ושקורב לרואי שמחים על הטבל הזה, שנעד להגדיל את לחץ העולם על ישראל וזוי משוואה בלתי אפשרית כמעט, והדבר היחיד שגרם לי להרגיש שהנש לא מותר הוא שביאש ההחלטות עומד עכשיו אחד ברק, ומטכיל לשעבר האיש קומנדרו שידע על ברזין את האופציות שעובר עשרים שעות במסגה למצוא פתרון מיטבי.

מסכת ליצחק רפאל הכהן דוויטש

במסכת 'שלום טורונטו' כתב הקורא מר דוויטש: "אין מלא ששלוש מחנכים בארץ אבד את הקטן לאמה ולאף. קוצרים אנחנו כעת את פירות החינוך השמאלני הקלוקל שהעליט את העתיד במשך שנות דור...בטורונטו, למולו אבות הקהילה היהודית והמנהיגיה בני וטיפוח רשת חינוך רבנית מעלת-ההתחזקות חיוביות ביותר. לדוגמה, בירושתי רשימת חברי בית כנסת אחד 40% מבני ובנותיו עלו ארצה".

מסתב זה ושכמותו מציגים בעיני את העצוב והצבוע שבקהילה שלנו. מר דוויטש כתב את המסתב סבילו לאור גר בסמינל או בפנת תקווה ושתולת על "כשלוך העתיד". סליחה, אדון דוויטש, אותה חי בסטורטו, וטורונטו איננה כסמינל או פנת תקווה. מה זה "קוצרים אור"- אותה בעצמך היקף ומצבתי השכלון הישראלי, אותה איבדת את היקףך לארץ בבחירות לשבת כאן, ולא העתיד שישב בארץ. אותה מקיים את סיסמת ערוץ הטלביזיה הישראלי "לשבת כאן ולהרגיש שם", ומרגיש טוב מסיפק להאשים את השמאל הישראלי במצב סע ארצה, מר דוויטש, שב בסמינל או בפנת תקווה ואי יחיה מסתבך תקו. ועד לאותו יום שחבר- חסוך מציאות את הצביעות מנגלות העיניים הזו.

ולבני המצב הנפלא שתוארת בקהילת טורונטו-לחידוך, מר דוויטש, ששיעור ההתבוללות של העתיד יהיה כאן הוא כשלושים אחוז, והפלא והפלא אין פה שמאל ישראלי להאשים אותו.

Atonement

אם ופלא הוא איננה מוכרת לכם (יד על הלב- אין לא היסטוריה) - מדובר ב"פחד". סרט בריטי זה מבוסס על רומן מר מבר שמבא את סיפורו של בן אצילים בריטיטי שנקללה עלילת שוא על בחר צעיר משפחת עובדים ששבו באחוזה משפחתו, עלילה שהודתה את חייהם של מספר אנשים. הסרט וזה כפרס הגדול של נגובוס הוזהב, והוא איזו הסרטים הטובים שראיתי העת. הוא משלים מתחשקתי ועד למשחק, לעריכה ולמוסיקה. עשר בסולם קורן.

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Coast to Coast

Hamilton organizations, McMaster U commemorate victims of the Holocaust

By HOLLY GINSLER
Special to The C/JN

HAMILTON — McMaster University recently hosted an event in recognition of the United Nations International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust.

It was "an opportunity for Holocaust survivors to pay tribute to those that were murdered and those that survived," said Madeleine Levy, chair and organizer of the event.

Co-sponsored by McMaster, UJA Federation of Hamilton, and the Hamilton Branch of the United Nations Association in Canada, the event was held on Jan. 27, the 63rd anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

It was "a tribute to those brave Soviet soldiers who on Jan. 27, 1945, liberated the survivors of Auschwitz, the Nazis' biggest concentration camp," Levy said.

The event included a photographic exhibit called *A Vanished World*, by Roman Vishniac. Vishniac was commissioned by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee in the mid-1930s to take pictures of the Jews living in eastern and central Europe.

The commemoration, which was attended by about 300 people, began with a performance of *Children of a Vanished World*, with a soprano and tenor accompanied by piano, violin, cello and clarinet, along with a simultaneous slide show of Vishniac's photographs.

There were about 20 Holocaust survivors in the audience who stood up to be honoured at one point. After a moment of silence, Cantor Marshall Loomer, of Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue in Toronto, sang a breathtaking memorial.

Vera Barany spoke about how she lost her entire family at Auschwitz when she was 14.

Among the many others who spoke at the event were Secretary of State Jason Kenney; Government and Consumer Services Minister Ted McMeekin; Hamilton Mayor Fred Eisenberger; consul general of the State of Israel, Amir Gissin; and Dr. Ilene Busch-Vishniac, the wife of Vishniac's grandson, Ethan. She was recently made provost and vice-president, academic, at McMaster University.

Mara Vishniac Kohn, Vishniac's daughter, also spoke at the commemoration. "We must speak up," she said. "The greatest sin, the greatest killer of all, is silence."

Vishniac, who was born in Russia in 1897, moved to Berlin with his family in 1920, to try to escape anti-Semitic persecutions. By the 1930s, he had become aware of Hitler's mission to annihilate the Jews and realized that although he couldn't save his people, he could try to keep their memory alive by taking the pictures for the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, which commissioned the photographs for a fundraiser.

It was a difficult task as Vishniac had to use a hidden camera to avoid being accused of spying. Also, Orthodox Jews did not like having their pictures taken. Of the 16,000 photographs that he took, only 2,000 remain.

Vishniac's photographs are on display at McMaster University's Museum of Art until Raoul Wallenberg Day, on March 1.

The Hamilton Teachers' Credit Union, the Hamilton-Wentworth District Public School Board and the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board provided buses to transport thousands of students to the exhibit.

A series of other Holocaust-related events also took place in the city and surrounding area, including lectures at Redeemer University College and Mohawk College, and a film at the Art Gallery of Hamilton.

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Coast to Coast

Human rights museum gets \$1-million donation

By RHONDA SPIVAK

Special to the C/JN

WINNIPEG — HudBay Minerals Inc has contributed \$1 million in honour of its 80th anniversary to the Canadian Museum For Human Rights.

A jubilant Gail Asper, the national chair of the museum who is spearheading its fundraising efforts, said, "We are overwhelmed by the generosity of HudBay... We hope this gift will help inspire other donors to join the campaign."

The seven-figure contribution from HudBay brings private sector donations up to \$85 million for the \$265-million project, which is now just \$20 million short of its goal. Decision on a construction date will come once funding is in place, but the museum had previously been slated to open in 2010.

"I am very optimistic that we will be able to have the final \$20 million committed in the next few months," said Asper, whose late father, Izzy Asper, founder of CanWest Global Communications, came up with the idea for the museum. "Then the board of the museum, which the [federal] government will appoint, will have the assurance that it has the necessary funds to build the design that has been proposed."

The museum will be Canada's first federal museum devoted to human rights and the first federal museum outside of the national capital area. It is envisioned to be the largest human rights museum in the world, with a special focus on equipping young people to become human rights leaders and advocates.

Asper has previously said that April 2008 is her fundraising deadline, otherwise plans for the museum risk being downsized due to spiralling construction costs.

The \$1-million cheque from HudBay was presented to



From left, Gail Asper, MP Vic Toews, Former HudBay CEO Peter Jones, HudBay board member Lloyd Axworthy, and Premier Gary Doer.

Asper on Jan. 21 at Winnipeg's Inn at the Forks.

At the presentation, Asper said the museum has entered a "crucial point" in its campaign and that it's important to avoid complacency and to ensure every last gift comes in.

She said a meet-and-greet event that she co-hosted with Manitoba Premier Gary Doer in Toronto during Grey Cup week in November yielded some donations, which she said will be announced soon.

"We've been very busy and are thrilled with the national interest in the museum project. We've secured major gifts from other regions in the country outside of Manitoba," she said.

HudBay CEO Peter Jones (who has since been replaced by Allen Palmiere) said, "The company made the contribu-

tion in recognition of its employees, past and present, who have been vital to HudBay's success."

He said the donation was "by far" the biggest single charitable contribution that the company has ever made.

HudBay is Canada's third-largest producer of zinc and copper metal and the third-largest producer in North America of zinc oxide. It operates mines in North Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and owns a zinc oxide production facility in Ontario.

"Our company was built... with a spirit of exploration and perseverance. The museum will honour the same spirit of perseverance for human rights... We are thrilled to be part of this Canadian initiative," Jones added.

Asper said she's been receiving cheques of all sizes from Canadians of all walks of life in support of the project.

"We are getting gifts from people all across the country. More and more people are naming the museum as a charitable cause in honour of their birthday, their anniversary, their bar or bat mitzvah, or any other occasion," she said.

"On a personal level, I find it incredibly energizing and inspiring to sign all of the tax receipts for donations we receive on a weekly basis, be they for \$10 or \$10,000 dollars... I love getting the \$10 dollar gifts just as much as the \$10,000 dollar gifts," Asper added.

Other speakers at the presentation on Jan 21 included Doer, Manitoba's senior federal minister Vic Toews and former federal Liberal cabinet minister Lloyd Axworthy, who sits on HudBay's Board.

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Only executive decree can free Itzhayek, Cotler says

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

OTTAWA — If the Indian government does not exercise its discretionary "executive authority" power to free imprisoned Montrealer Saul Itzhayek, he could remain incarcerated for another "one or two years" while his case works its way through the Indian judicial system's appeal process, MP Irwin Cotler said last week after meeting with India's high commissioner.

If he remains imprisoned for as long as two years, Itzhayek would continue to languish in jail for most of his remaining sentence.

"Executive remedy in the only route," he told *The C.J.N.* "If you have to go before the courts, it will be protracted."

The former justice minister is taking a lead role in advocating on behalf of Itzhayek, the 42-year-old businessman now serving three years in remote Motihari Prison in eastern India for entering the country from Nepal eight months ago without a valid visa. Itzhayek also resides in Cotler's Mount Royal riding.

Itzhayek and his family say he was lured into India to retrieve documents under promise of safe passage, but once there, he was taken into custody and authorities tried to extort money from him. Cotler has used the term "entrapment" to describe what happened to Itzhayek.

An interfaith delegation from Montreal joined Cotler in Ottawa on Jan. 28 to meet with India's high commissioner, Rajamani Lakshmi Narayan, and with Helena Guergis, secretary of state for foreign affairs.

Guergis, Cotler said, stressed to the delegation that "the Canadian government has pressed its case at the highest levels," a position the delegation accepted and expressed its gratitude for. Efforts have included, most prominently, representations made at a Commonwealth conference late last year in Uganda and by foreign affairs minister Maxime Bernier to his Indian counterpart during his recent overseas trip.

But in interviews upon their return to Montreal, participants also said that while they were

satisfied with what seemed to be genuine efforts by the Canadian government to help Itzhayek, those efforts should not relent.

"The Canadian government has been extremely responsive," said Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz of Congregation Tifereth Beth David Jerusalem. "But we also have to ensure that the case is not forgotten. It is still an important and valuable thing to do."

Cotler agreed. "If it was my son, I would also want the Canadian government to do more."

Cotler said that Narayan emphasized to the delegation — which included rabbis Reuben Poupko, Michael Whitman, and Steinmetz, as well as Father John Walsh, and Rev. Darryl Gray — that "due process" in India should be allowed to run its course, because the government is loath to interfere with cases before the courts.

Cotler, however, said he stressed to Narayan that the Indian government also has the "unfettered discretion" to free Itzhayek unilaterally by pardoning him, deporting him, or the like.

"This is authorized under India's own constitution," Cotler said he told Narayan. "It is authorized under Indian law. It is its executive authority. There may be a generalized reluctance to use it, but [the government] has done so in the past."

Cotler noted that it is unusual for individuals to be jailed for a simple visa violation.

According to news reports and family members, Itzhayek has lost more than 60 pounds since being taken into custody. He is reportedly living in filthy jail conditions with people convicted of much more serious offenses, including rape and drug dealing.

However, in a recent report by reporter Paul Workman on CTV, Itzhayek sounded upbeat about eventually being released, and he urged Canadians to "continue to support me."

Indeed, participants hope the public will start to become concerned about his continuing imprisonment.

Rabbi Poupko said that one of the reasons for the interfaith visit to Ottawa was to sensi-



MP Irwin Cotler speaks to reporters in Ottawa Jan. 28 after an interfaith delegation met with the Indian high commissioner. Standing behind Cotler are, from left, rabbis Chaim Steinmetz and Michael Whitman, Rev. Darryl Gray, rabbis Reuben Poupko and Reuben Poupko, and Father John Walsh.

tize other Canadians about Itzhayek's plight. Plans include publicizing the case more in Canada and even approaching the Indo-Canadian community to lobby the Indian government for Itzhayek's release.

"This type of thing should give Canadians pause," Rabbi Poupko said.

Rabbi Steinmetz said: "This is beginning to percolate to the Canadian grassroots, to the Jewish community and to the people on the

street."

Cotler said Itzhayek's case is currently undergoing "appellate review."

Itzhayek's continued incarceration, Cotler suggested, could become an "irritant" to Canadian-Indian relations if the case is not resolved in a timely manner.

"The only thing I know is that he is languishing in jail," he said. "It is not the Hilton Hotel."

Two sides to every marriage breakup story



Family Matters

by
John Syrtash

B.A. (Hon.), LL.B.

Counsel

Garfin Zeidenberg LLP

Family Lawyer & Mediator

for 26 years

Question. I have been married for 25 years. I know nothing about my husband's successful construction business and have not worked for several years. We live in a big house. I have relied on him all my married life. Now our marriage is about to end. I have no idea where to turn or how I am to survive. I know he makes a decent six figure income. Our house is not entirely paid for and our kids are still in university. What happens to me?

Question. I have been married for 25 years. My wife wants out of the marriage. She has not worked all our married life. I work 12 hour days. I earn a six figure income but most of it goes to taxes, supporting my grown children in university and our expensive lifestyle, including paying the mortgage on a large house. I have no idea what lies ahead or how I'm going to pay for spousal support, for how long or what the consequences will be to my pocketbook. Will I have to quit my golf club? What happens to me?

AnsWER: You are both going to suffer a substantial change for the worse

Mr. Syrtash has now moved to a new law firm and has been appointed as Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, Ontario M5G 1E6. John Syrtash can be reached at (416) 642-5410, Cell (416) 886-0359. Visit www.freemylife.com; www.spousalsupport.com; www.garfinzeidenberg.com.

in your respective lifestyles. After such a lengthy marriage, the husband will likely have to split his after-tax income equally until such time as his wife remarries or cohabits for a while with another income supporting partner or until she dies, and this obligation will remain in effect until the date of his retirement. This support obligation is, however, tax deductible and continues until retirement unless his circumstances change, like illness or a loss of employment or reduction of income for some other reason beyond his control. So quitting work doesn't qualify.

The house likely be sold and the net proceeds split equally. The timing of the sale depends in part on the needs of your children and where they go to university. The value of all the assets, except the value of any premarital assets and inheritances, will be split equally, including the post-marital value of the husband's business, as will all the post-marital debts, valued as of the date of separation. The law encourages the wife to be retrained and to be reintegrated into the work force, but it is rare that Courts seriously follow up on enforcing such an obligation after such a lengthy marriage. After 25 years, the wife almost has a permanent pension from her husband if she has not worked for several years. The husband will also be obliged to support the kids until they obtain their first undergraduate degree, including tuition, books and incidentals.

Neither Garfin Zeidenberg LLP nor John Syrtash is liable for any consequences arising from anyone's reliance on this material, which is presented as general information and not as a legal opinion.

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בית צדק

And now for something completely different:

HEEBONICS

Adventurer finds his greatest challenge in the oil industry

By LAURA STRICKER
Special to The CJN

He's worked with poisonous snakes, milked cows in New Zealand and done a stint as a cowboy in the Australian Outback. But for Adam Wargon, the scariest day of his life was his bar mitzvah.

Wargon, 31, said he found the idea of singing in front of a crowd terrifying.

He has since moved on to bigger challenges, currently working as a directional driller in Alberta.

Wargon got into the oil industry to repay the debt he had incurred while working with wildlife, and also for the thrill of another adventure.

"I love the oil industry because there is great opportunity here," he said. "It is an unusual industry in that it is an exception to the idea that education

equals success in today's world. I work with many semi-literate people without high school diplomas who make between \$100,000 and \$400,000 per year.

"The oil industry is also extremely technical, and I enjoy that aspect as well... It is a physically and mentally challenging industry, but there are great rewards for those who persist."

Wargon makes \$1,000 a day in the oil industry, as opposed to the \$600 a month (on average) he earned while working with wildlife. However, he is quick to point out that he does not work every day, noting that the oil industry is "notoriously cyclical." People working in the oil industry are often isolated for months at a time, and Wargon says not everyone can handle the mental challenges that come with that isolation.

Wargon's passion for wildlife started at an early age. Although he was born and raised in North York, living along the "Jewish corridor" that is Bathurst Street, he spent every weekend and summer on a property south of Collingwood, Ont., along the Niagara Escarpment.

"The property was a rugged river valley with multiple waterfalls and hidden caves - a magical spot. I grew up experiencing the best of city and country life, and I am equally comfortable in big cities or remote areas," he said.

"Wildlife has always been a passion of mine. It comes from spending time in the country and exploring the natural world as a young child with my parents."

Wargon attended Sir Sanford Fleming College in Ontario to get an education in natural resources, but not without some bumps along the way.

"I used to go to the Schulich School of Business at York University. After going through the Hebrew school system I could see my traditional Jewish future as a doctor or lawyer very clearly," he said.

"Many people would consider these jobs a great success, but I had a sneaking suspicion that there was more to life, and I wanted to experience life at its fullest before I settled down."

Wargon promptly dropped out of Schulich and enrolled at Fleming. Upon graduating, he was at the top of his class and had an average of 100 per cent in two of his courses.

"My Fleming education allowed me to work in wildlife all over the world for five years and have countless adventures," he said.

Just a few of these "countless adventures" include working as a zookeeper at the late Steve Irwin's zoo in Australia, as a fisherman in the Bass Strait near northern Tasmania, and as a sheep shearer in New Zealand.

"Although I saw Steve Irwin around, I didn't work side by side with him. Terry Irwin [Steve's wife] was around, and she was very professional and committed to the zoo," Wargon said.

"To get the job, I submitted a volunteer application to Australia Zoo, and after it was reviewed I was approved to work there for a month. It was great seeing the realization of Steve's dream for the zoo and learning how to make the public's love for wildlife into a positive force for conservation."

Wargon has also worked in Costa Rica and all over the United States. His various travels have taken him to Europe, Korea and Thailand.

"I love the tropics," he said. "Life reaches its highest expression in the tropics. I love the heat, I love the lush vegetation, I love the ecological diversity. In my view, there is an energy and a passion in the air of the tropics that is not found in colder climates."



Adam Wargon shows off a freshwater drum he caught in Ontario.

Wargon takes a lot of pride in being Jewish. He received most of his education at private Hebrew day schools, speaks Hebrew fluently (it is his first language), and is the grandchild of Holocaust survivors.

"The Jewish experience is the deepest part of who I am," he said. "I have seen the tattooed numbers on my grandmother's arm and the black tissue on her legs resulting from the death marches during the war. She comes from a line of prominent and wealthy rabbis and scholars in Poland. Her husband [my grandfather] was a freedom fighter during the war who leapt off the trains to the death camps twice and survived. He was a great horseman and a member of the Polish Calvary. Some say I get my adventurous streak from him."

"On my father's side, my grandparents were deeply involved in the Workman's Circle (an aid society for Jewish families) and were responsible for settling

many Jews in Toronto during the first half of the 1900s," he added.

Back in the present, Wargon says he has no plans to shift his attention away from the oil industry.

"I am completely focused on the oil industry and the unparalleled financial and business opportunities in today's marketplace. In the business world, I find my greatest challenge yet. I spent years free-climbing unmapped cliffs in tropical rainforests and catching deadly

snakes alone while no one knew where I was. But the greatest adventure I have ever encountered is trying to make it in the business world. It requires all the alertness, all the discipline, and all the resourcefulness I can command.

"The greatest minds are engaged in the game of business, and I wake up smiling every day - I love every minute of it."



Wargon does research in Costa Rica as a brown vine snake looks on.



Wargon has a firm grip around the neck of a black iguana he caught while working in Costa Rica.

On Campus

Israel Apartheid Week gains momentum

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

The fourth annual Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW) lecture series was launched at universities last week across Canada, the United States, Europe and Africa, and the event, which promotes the idea that Israel takes part in "ethnic cleansing" and the "colonization of all Arab lands," seems to be gaining momentum.

Since IAW first launched in February 2004 at the University of Toronto, organizers – including the Arab Students' Collective, Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights and the Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid (CAIA) – have managed to spread the event to campuses in about 20 cities, including Ottawa, Montreal, Peterborough, New York, Oxford, London, Johannesburg and Durban, as well as in the West Bank and Gaza.

A website promoting the week-long event, which runs in Toronto until Feb. 9, provided a schedule for the events taking place at York University, Ryerson University and U of T.

The schedule included a full day of radio programming on York's radio station, CHRY 105.5 FM, under the banner "Anti-Apartheid Frequencies," (sic) as well as a lecture titled "Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Movement against Israeli apartheid: Lessons from South Africa" featuring addresses from Salim Vally of the Palestine Solidarity Committee of South Africa, Katherine Nastovski of CUPE Ontario, and Heather Kere, Ryerson Students' Union vice-president of education.

Orna Hollander, executive director of Betar Canada, said the fact that IAW is gaining momentum shows that the Jewish community can't afford to ignore it.

"The strategy has been... from an organized community end, to not lend credibility, to be quiet about it, not bring press around it... Four years later, I think we definitely learned that we can keep our heads in the sand, but it's going to go on with or without us. [IAW organizers] very much control the PR and rhetoric on campus, and it's time to stand up and take responsibility," Hollander said.

She said that the event's organizers have been able to gain credibility because of their efforts to build coalitions on campus and throughout the community.

"For example, at Ryerson, you not only have the Coalition against Israeli Apartheid and the Students against Israel Apartheid, but you have environmental networks, you have black students' associations... They've not only branched out with campus groups, but in community-based organizations that they can find support with as well," she said.

"This year, for the first time, there is a founding conference for high schools against Israeli apartheid – HAlA for short. That is something that we do need to be nervous about. Not only is there support on university campuses for this, they are sponsoring a conference exclusively for high school students."

Ben Feferman, the Hasbara Fellowships campus co-ordinator headed a program, sponsored by Betar, called Islamic State Apartheid Week.

From Feb. 5 to 7, students at York presented images and videos that depict human rights abuses such as stoning, honour killings, Muslim-only highways and executions of homosexuals in various Middle Eastern countries.

"We want to remove the connection that

modern-day students have to the word apartheid and Israel and refocus it to the countries that we think really exemplify the definition of apartheid, being a policy of separation and segregation. Through a week which encompasses the themes of gender, sexual and political apartheid, we

hope to get out a new message," Feferman said in advance of the event.

"As much as it is important to talk about the fact that Israel is a democracy, we really believe that we need to talk about the... atrocities that go on [in Islamic states]. People don't talk about them because they are afraid to upset Muslims... and it is because of our obsessiveness with being politically correct that these countries are suffering because of it," Feferman added.

Jewish student groups say they're also hoping to balance out the negative images of Israel on campus with positive ones.

Last week, in conjunction with the Canada Israel Experience and the Toronto Birthright

Alumni Community, Zionists at U of T held an event at on the downtown campus called Israelis on Israel.

Four Israel Defence Forces soldiers who had spent time with Canadian youth in Israel as part of the birthright Israel program answered questions to teach students about Israeli culture and life.

"We feel that one of the best ways to combat those hateful claims put forth by Israeli Apartheid Week is to bring forth those people who are being accused," Hollander said.

Tilly Shames, Hillel of Greater Toronto's associate director, said that Hillel has focused on education, dialogue and peace-building on campus to make Jewish students feel good about Israel during this week.

She said that when the IAW first launched four years ago, there was more of an opportunity to try to talk with the organizers of the event about the atmosphere they were creating on campus.

"But since then, for the last three years, dialogue is not part of their vocabulary, it is not part of their approach... It is very difficult to create a space of dialogue for those who don't want to find that common ground," Shames said.

"What we found is that the organizers of this event are very marginalized on campus... and we feel that it is more effective to focus on the 90 per cent of students who are not interested in politicized events and want to come together to find a common ground for dialogue."

Continued on page 32

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On Campus

OneVoice calls for Israeli-Palestinian co-existence

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL. — Two visiting young people from Israel and the Palestinian territories told Canadian university students that the great majority of their generation is fed up with the status quo and the way their elected representatives are handling the conflict.

Smadar Cohen, 24, from the Tel Aviv suburb of Herzliya that was the target of terrorists during the intifadah, and Adi Labadi, 20, from Jenin on the West Bank, an area Israel identified as the source of many suicide bombers, were recently in Montreal, the last leg of a tour of Ontario and Quebec campuses sponsored by OneVoice.

OneVoice, launched in 2002, describes itself as a grassroots movement of Israelis and Palestinians who want an immediate end to violence and resumption of active peace talks. They think their leaders should not leave the table until they have agreed on a two-state solution.

Last October, OneVoice Canada was officially launched with a rally on Parliament Hill, where Jason Kenney, secretary of state for multiculturalism, extended the Canadian government's support for the group's aims.

Cohen and Labadi are two of the 3,000 youth leaders OneVoice has trained in Israel and Palestinian territories, in both the West Bank and Hamas-controlled Gaza. Headquartered in New York, OneVoice has regional offices in Tel Aviv, Ramallah and Gaza City.

Cohen and Labadi believe the great majority of Israelis and Palestinians support their organization's basic goal of a Palestinian and an Israeli state based on the 1967 borders, living peaceably side-by-side.

OneVoice has collected more than 640,000 signatures on its mandate, including over 327,000 Israelis and

295,000 Palestinians of all ages, as well as close to 18,000 persons worldwide. Its goal is one million Israeli and Palestinian signatories by the end of this year.

This mandate also calls for "concrete confidence-building measures" by permitting freedom of movement for ordinary civilians and an ending to incitement. However, it offers no specific ideas on how to resolve where exactly the borders should be set and how to curb terrorism. Cohen said OneVoice is not a dialogue group, and that she and Labadi had no previous contact before they met at Toronto's Pearson Airport at the start of their Canadian tour.

In Montreal, they addressed a class of about 45 students at the Université de Montréal, as well as McGill University's Sauvè Scholars, who this year include Israeli Liran Gal, an activist with OneVoice. They were accompanied by Joel Tietolman, OneVoice Canada coordinator, and Laurel Rapp, from the New York office.

OneVoice's branches work independently, appealing to the national self-interests of Palestinians and Israelis across the political spectrum.

Mobilizing a broad-based public, they hope, will demonstrate to political leaders, and to Israelis and Palestinians themselves, that there is a viable partner on the other side with whom to negotiate, she said.

They think OneVoice differs from other peace groups in that it works on the ground, trying to make people unafraid to express moderate views. Fostering dialogue and unity among Palestinians and Israelis themselves is a more immediate goal than having them reach out to each other.

"All my life people have been talking about ending the conflict and nothing happens. I feel it is in the interest of governments to keep it going. It's easier than dealing with things like the economy and education," Labadi said.

Hillel holds a teach-in

Continued from page 31

Shames said that this year, Hillel put months of thought into the kind of programming it wanted to present.

She said that last semester, Hillel held a program during which students could play a video game called Peacemaker, which simulates the challenges of solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The goal is for the player, taking on the role as either an Israeli or Palestinian leader, to achieve peace.

"Our intention is to have it on three different campuses during the week in very public spaces so students can come together and try their hand at peace... It shows

that these are really complex issues that can't be narrowed down to slogans," Shames said.

Eva Zucker, 22, a fourth-year religious studies student at York and Hillel at York's president, said she is looking forward to the programming.

"We have a wide array of Israel advocacy programming, that is bringing forth a positive message. We're doing a full-day teach-in at the Wolfond Centre [for Jewish Campus Life, at U of T], we're having a wide array of different speakers on Israel advocacy to teach people about the situation, because a lot of the time, that education is kind of lacking," Zucker said.

The teach-in — titled "Drown out the hate. Educate!" — held Sunday at the Wolfond Centre — featured professors and Jewish community leaders who led workshops including "What's left of the Zionist left?" "Media Awareness: How to use the media to your advantage," and "Jewish and Democratic: Diversity in Israel."

"We obviously don't value the negative sentiments on campus, which is why Hillel is trying to take the attention away from the negative activities and really put the focus on celebrating Israel and being proud of Israel and standing up for Israel," Zucker said.

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Arbour criticizes Arab human rights charter

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Louise Arbour, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, has lined up behind several human rights and watchdog organizations that criticized the recently ratified Arab Charter on Human Rights for categorizing Zionism as a form of racism.

In a statement issued last week, Arbour noted the charter equated Zionism and racism, contrary to a UN General Assembly resolution which rejected that linkage. She also criticized the charter for sanctioning the death penalty for children and for its approach to the rights of women and non-Zionists.

"Throughout the development of the Arab Charter, my office shared concerns with the drafters about the incompatibility of some of its provisions with international norms and standards," she said.

The charter was drafted by a committee established by the Arab League and was first completed in 1994. Since then, it has been modernized to make it conform to international human rights laws. Earlier this month, the United Arab Emirates became the seventh jurisdiction to ratify the document, joining Jordan, Bahrain, Algeria, Syria, Libya and the Palestinian Authority.

Arbour's declaration came shortly after UN Watch, a Geneva-based monitoring group, criticized her for an earlier statement that applauded the Arab Charter without referring to its anti-Zionist provisions.

In a letter to Arbour, UN Watch urged her to clarify her endorsement of the charter, which "contains several provisions that promote classically anti-Semitic themes. We trust that Ms. Arbour was not aware of its contents, but this must be made clear, and the responsible person in her office must be held fully accountable," said Hillel Neuer, executive director of UN Watch.

Neuer said the Arab Charter twice attacks Zionism as a form

of racism and describes it as a threat to international peace and security that must be eliminated.

Neuer said the sections can't be dismissed as harmless rhetoric. The Syrian news agency SANA reported that Syria ratified the Charter in large part because of its anti-Zionist sections.

He called the charter's anti-Zionist provisions blatantly anti-Semitic and wondered why Arbour first applauded it after her office voiced concerns about the charter while it was being developed.

In 2004 her bureau called the anti-Zionist sections "contentious," he said.

Neuer speculated that Arbour didn't craft the first statement herself, but merely signed a document prepared by her staff. She should be given the "benefit of the doubt" to clarify her position, he said before she issued her statement last week.

Arbour's first statement on the Arab Charter was laudatory: "In this celebratory year of the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, I welcome the seventh ratification required to bring the Arab Charter on Human Rights into force.

"Regional systems of promotion and protection can further help strengthen the enjoyment of human rights and the Arab Charter on Human Rights is an important step forward in this direction."

Neuer welcomed Arbour's statement last week about the charter, saying that "she has shown courage in criticizing its 'incompatibility... with international norms and standards,' and that's a step forward."

But he added that UN Watch is waiting for "a response to our demand that the UN official who advised the High Commissioner to sign the initial Jan. 24 announcement be held fully accountable... We are talking about someone who recommended the endorsing of a charter that promotes classically anti-Semitic themes, describing Zionism, the Jewish national liberation movement, as uniquely evil, and advocating its 'elimination.'"



Louise Arbour

Al-Aqsa and Popular Front claimed 'credit'

Continued from page 1

U.S.-backed peace talks with Israel for the first time in seven years.

A Fatah source said earlier that the "Army of Palestine" wing of Al-Aqsa had carried out the attack, along with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

Fatah was quoted as saying that 2008 would be a year of suicide attacks, Channel 2 Television reported.

Yellow Fatah flags flew outside the Gaza home of one of the attackers, 22-year-old Luay Laghwani, and Al Aqsa gunmen fired in the air in tribute to him. His sobbing mother, Ibtissam, held up a picture of him as a young teenager, while male relatives scolded her for crying, saying she should be proud her son was a martyr.

She said her son had gone to Egypt three times after the border was breached, and last saw him on Wednesday afternoon. He gave no indication that he was about to embark on a suicide mission, she said.

Dimona, some 40 kilometers from Be'er Sheva, is the site of Israel's nuclear reactor. The explosion took place about 10 kilometers from the reactor site, where it is widely believed that atomic weapons were developed. Israel neither admits nor denies having nuclear arms, following a policy of ambiguity designed to keep its neighbours unsure of its military capability.

Shortly after the attack, Dimona, which has until now been spared an attack, shut down all the city's schools and kindergartens.

The last suicide attack in Israel was on Jan. 29, 2007, when a bomber killed three people in a bakery in the southernmost city of Eilat.

U.S. astronauts tour Israel

JTA

TEL AVIV — The commander of the U.S. Air Force Space Command, Gen. C. Robert Kehler, and a delegation of astronauts from the United States National Aeronautics and Space Administration, completed a four-day working visit to Israel over the weekend.

The visit was part of the International Space Conference held in Herzliya to honour Colonel Ilan Ramon, Israel's first astronaut, who perished in the 2003 Columbia space shuttle disaster.

An Israeli military spokesperson said that during the visit, the U.S. delegation discussed stepping up co-operation on space projects with the Jewish state.

Kehler held talks with Israel's armed forces chief, Lt.-Gen. Gabi Ashkenazi, and air force commander, Maj.-Gen. Eliezer Shkedi.

In their evaluations, Amnesty International and the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) were highly critical of many aspects of the Arab Charter, including its references to Zionism.

"Amnesty International believes that states and non-state entities should be held accountable for human rights violations under international human rights standards. For this to be done, Amnesty International believes that the reference should be international human rights standards rather than focusing on a particular ideology or ideologies."

The ICJ invited "the authors of the Arab Charter to remove the condemnation of Zionism... in order to devote the charter exclusively to protection of human rights in the Arab region, without digressions of a political nature liable to obscure the charter's basic purpose."

The ICJ identified 21 areas of concern in the Arab Charter, including the protection of minorities, women and the freedom of association.

UN Watch has been critical of Arbour in the past. In a report issued late last year, titled *The United Nations and Anti-Semitism, 2004-2007 Report Card*, the Geneva-based watchdog organization said Arbour had been virtually silent on anti-Semitism.

The former Canadian Supreme Court judge was also taken to task for limiting her response to Iranian President Mahmoud Ahamadinejad's Holocaust denial and threats to Israel to a private letter.

However, Neuer pointed out last week that Arbour had issued a statement coinciding with the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the victims of the Holocaust, which was marked on Jan. 27, the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. In it, Arbour said current expressions of anti-Semitism were a call on the world's conscience to confront intolerance and bigotry.



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The Second Lebanon War:

The following are remarks made by Eliyahu Winograd last week when he officially made public the report of his commission's inquiry into the Second Lebanon War.

The task given to us was difficult and complex. It involved the examination of events in 34 days of fighting and the scrutiny of events before the war, since the Israel Defence Forces had left Lebanon in 2000. This covered extensive, charged and complex facts, unprecedented in any previous commission of inquiry.

The fact that the government of Israel opted for such an examination and that the army conducted a large number of inquiries into a variety of military events is a sign of strength, and an indication that the political and military leaders of Israel are willing to expose themselves to critical review and to painful but required mending.

We have included in the classified version of the report all the relevant facts we have found concerning the Second Lebanon War, systematically and in a chronological order. This presentation of the factual basis was an important part of our work. It is reasonable to assume that no single decision maker had access to a similar factual basis. In this task we had a unique advantage over others who have written about this war, since we had access to a lot of primary and comprehensive material, and the opportunity to clarify the facts by questioning many witnesses, commanders and soldiers, including beleaguered families.

For obvious reasons, the unclassified report does not include the many facts that cannot be revealed for reasons of protecting the state's security and foreign affairs. We tried, nonetheless, to balance between the wish to present the public with a meaningful picture of the events and the needs of security. We should note that we did not take the mere fact that some data has already been published in the media as a reason for including it in our unclassified report.

We, the members of the commission, acted according to the main objectives for which the commission was established – to respond to the bad feelings of the Israeli public of a crisis and disappointment caused by the results of the Second Lebanon War, and from the way it was managed by the political and military echelons; and the wish to draw lessons from the failings of the war and its flaws, and to repair what is required, quickly and resolutely. We regarded as most important to investigate deeply what had happened, as a key to drawing lessons for the future, and their implementation.

This conception of our role was one of the main reasons for our decision not to include in the final report personal conclusions and recommendations. We believe that the primary need for improvements applies to the structural and systemic malfunctioning revealed in the war – on all levels.

Nonetheless, it should be stressed that the fact we refrained from imposing personal responsibility does not imply that no such

responsibility exists. We also wish to repeat our statement from the interim report: we will not impose different standards of responsibility to the political and the military echelons, or to persons of different ranks within them.

Let us emphasize: when we imposed responsibility on a system, an echelon or a unit, we did not imply that the responsibility was only or mainly of those who headed it at the time of the war. Often, such responsibility stemmed from a variety of factors outside the control of those at the head. In addition, a significant part of the responsibility for the failures and flaws we have found lies with those who had been in charge of preparedness and readiness in the years before the war.

Highlights of commission findings

The purpose of this press release is not to sum up the final report. Rather, it is to present its highlights. The report itself includes discussions of many important issues, which are an inseparable part of the report, its conclusions and recommendations.

In the final report, we dealt mainly with the events of the period after the initial decision to go to war, which we had discussed in the interim report. Yet the events of the period covered by the final report took place under the shadow of the constraints created by the decision to go to war, with all its failings and flaws.

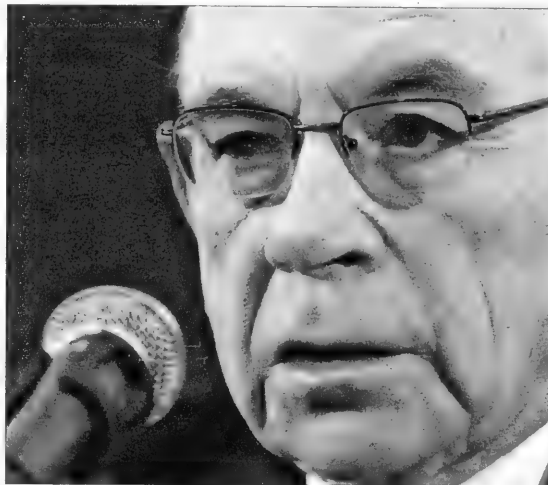
We want to stress that we stand behind everything we said in the interim report and [that] the two parts of the report complement each other.

Overall, we regard the Second Lebanon War as a serious missed opportunity. Israel initiated a long war, which ended without its clear military victory. A semi-military organization of a few thousand men resisted, for a few weeks, the strongest army in the Middle East, which enjoyed full air superiority and size and technology advantages. The barrage of rockets aimed at Israel's civilian population lasted throughout the war, and the IDF did not provide an effective response to it. The fabric of life under fire was seriously disrupted, and many civilians either left their home temporarily or spent their time in shelters. After a long period of using only standoff firepower and limited ground activities, Israel initiated a large-scale ground offensive, very close to the Security Council resolution imposing a ceasefire. This offen-

sive did not result in military gains and was not completed. These facts had far-reaching implications for us, as well as for our enemies, our neighbours, and our friends in the region and around the world.

In the period we examined in the final report – from July 18, 2006, to Aug. 14, 2006 – again troubling findings were revealed, some of which had already been mentioned in the interim report.

- We found serious failings and shortcomings in the decision-making processes and staffwork in the political and the military echelons and their interface.



Justice Eliyahu Winograd

[Israel Sun photo]

temporary occupation of the south of Lebanon and "cleaning" it of Hezbollah military infrastructure.

The choice between these options was within the exclusive political discretion of the government; however, the way the original decision to go to war had been made; the fact Israel went to war before it decided which option to select, and without an exit strategy – all these constituted serious failures, which affected the whole war. Responsibility for these failures lay, as we had stressed in the interim report, on both the political and the military echelons.

After the initial decision to use military force, and to the very end of the war, this period of "equivocation" continued, with both the political and the military echelon not deciding between the two options: amplifying the military achievement by a broad military ground offensive, or abstaining from such a move and seeking to end the war quickly. This "equivocation" did hurt Israel. Despite awareness of this fact, long weeks passed without a serious discussion of these options, and without a decision – one way or the other – between them.

In addition to avoiding a decision about the trajectory of the military action, there was a very long delay in the deployment necessary for an extensive ground offensive, which was another factor limiting Israel's freedom of action and political flexibility: till the

first week of August, Israel did not prepare the military capacity to start a massive ground operation.

As a result, Israel did not stop after its early military achievements, and was "dragged" into a ground operation only after the political and diplomatic timetable prevented its effective completion. The responsibility for this basic failure in conducting the war lies at the doorstep of both the political and the military echelons.

The overall image of the war was a result of a mixture of flawed conduct of the political and the military echelons and the interface between them, of flawed performance by the IDF, and especially the ground forces, and of deficient Israeli preparedness. Israel did not use its military force well and effectively, despite the fact that it was a limited war initiated by Israel itself. At the end of the day, Israel did not gain a political achievement because of military successes; rather, it relied on a political agreement, which included positive elements for Israel, which permitted it to stop a war which it had failed to win.

- We found serious failings and flaws in the quality of preparedness, decision-making and performance in the IDF high command, especially in the army.

- We found serious failings and flaws in the lack of strategic thinking and planning, in both the political and the military echelons.
- We found severe failings and flaws in the defence of the civilian population and in coping with its being attacked by rockets.
- These weaknesses resulted in part from inadequacies of preparedness and strategic and operative planning which go back long before the Second Lebanon War.

The decision made in the night of July 12 – to react (to the kidnapping) with immediate and substantive military action, and to set for it ambitious goals – limited Israel's range of options. In fact, after the initial decision had been made, Israel had only two main options, each with its coherent internal logic and its set of costs and disadvantages. The first was a short, painful, strong and unexpected blow on Hezbollah, primarily through standoff firepower. The second option was to bring about a significant change of the reality in the south of Lebanon with a large ground operation, including a

Continued on page 35

'A serious missed opportunity'

Continued from page 34

This outcome was primarily caused by the fact that, from the very beginning, the war has not been conducted on the basis of deep understanding of the theatre of operations, of the IDF's readiness and preparedness, and of basic principles of using military power to achieve a political and diplomatic goal.

The IDF failed

All in all, the IDF failed, especially because of the conduct of the high command and the ground forces, to provide an effective military response to the challenge posed to it by the war in Lebanon, and thus failed to provide the political echelon with a military achievement that could have served as the basis for political and diplomatic action. Responsibility for this outcome lies mainly with the IDF, but the misfit between the mode of action and the goals determined by the political echelon share responsibility.

We should note that, alongside the failures in the IDF performance, there were also important military achievements. Special mention should go to the great willingness of the soldiers, especially reserve soldiers, to serve and fight in the war, as well as the many instances of heroism, courage, self-sacrifice and devotion of many commanders and soldiers.

The air force should be congratulated on very impressive achievements in this war. However, there were those in the IDF high command, joined by some in the political echelon, who entertained a baseless hope that the capabilities of the air force could prove decisive in the war. In fact, the impressive achievements of the air force were necessarily limited, and were eroded by the weaknesses in the overall performance of the IDF.

The "Hannit" episode coloured to a large extent the whole performance of the navy, despite the fact that it made a critical contribution to the naval blockade, and provided the Northern Command with varied effective support of its fighting.

We should also note that the war had significant diplomatic achievements. Security Council Resolution 1701, and the fact it was adopted unanimously, were an achievement for Israel. This conclusion stands even if it turns out that only a part of the stipulations of the resolution were implemented or will be implemented, and even if it could have been foreseen that some of them would not be implemented. This conclusion also does not depend on the intentions or goals of the powers that supported the resolution.

We note, however, that we have seen no serious staff work on Israeli positions in the negotiations. This situation improved in part when the team headed by the prime minister's head of staff was established. The team worked efficiently and with dedication, professionalism and co-ordination. This could not compensate, however, for the absence of preparatory staff work and discussions in the senior political echelon.

This fact may have much significance to the way Israel conducts negotiations, and to the actual content of the arrangements reached. In

such negotiations, decisions are often made that may have far-reaching implications on Israel's interests, including the setting of precedents.

The staff work done in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs concerning the adoption of a favourable resolution in the Security Council was, in the main, quick, systematic and efficient. At the same time, for a variety of reasons, it did not reflect clear awareness of the essential need to maintain an effective relationship between military achievements and diplomatic activities.

We now turn to the political and military activity concerning the ground operation at the end of the war. This is one of the central foci of public debate.

True, in hindsight, the large ground operation did not achieve its goals of limiting the rocket fire and changing the picture of the war. It is not clear what the ground operation contributed to speeding up the diplomatic achievement or improving it. It is also unclear to what extent starting the ground offensive affected the reactions of the government of Lebanon and Hezbollah to the ceasefire.

Nonetheless, it is important to stress that the evaluation of these decisions should not be made with hindsight. It cannot depend on the achievements or the costs these decisions in fact had. The evaluation must be based only on the reasons for the operation, and its risks and prospects as they were known – or as they should have been known – when it was decided upon. Moreover, it is impossible to evaluate the ground operation at the end of the war without recalling the developments that preceded it and the repeated delays in the adoption of the Security Council resolution; and as a part of the overall conduct of the war.

Findings

Against this background, we make the following findings on the main decisions:

- The cabinet decision of Aug. 9 – to approve in principle the IDF plan, but to authorize the PM and the MOD [Ministry of Defence] to decide if and when it should be activated, according to the diplomatic timetable – was almost inevitable, giving the Israeli government necessary military and political flexibility.
- The decision to start, in fact, the ground operation was within the political and professional discretion of its makers, on the basis of the facts before them. The goals of the ground operation were legitimate, and were not exhausted by the wish to hasten or improve the diplomatic achievement. There was no failure in that decision in itself, despite its limited achievements and its painful costs.

- Both the position of the prime minister – who had preferred to avoid the ground operation – and the position of the Minister of Defence – who had thought it would have served Israel's interest to go for it – had been taken on the merits and on the basis of evidence. Both enjoyed serious support among the members of the general staff of the IDF and others. Even if both statesmen took into account political and public concerns – a fact we cannot ascertain – we believe that they both acted out of a strong and sincere perception of what they

thought at the time was Israel's interest.

We want to stress: the duty to make these difficult decisions was the political leaders'. The sole test of these decisions is public and political.

At the same time, we also note that:

- We have not found within either the political or the military echelons a serious consideration of the question whether it was reasonable to expect military achievements in 60 hours that could have contributed meaningfully to any of

delay required change processes, and thus produce dangerous results.

- Fear of criticism in case of failure may lead to defensive reactions, working by the book, and abstention from making resolute decisions and preferring non-action. Such behaviour is undesirable and also dangerous.

- In a dynamic complex reality, one should not prepare better for the "last" war. It is also essential not to limit oneself to superficial action, designed to create an appearance that flaws

had been corrected.

- It is also essential not to focus exclusively on coping with dangers, but to combine readiness for threat scenarios with an active seeking of opportunities.

- When speaking of learning, one should take into account that enemies, too, are learning their lessons.



Former chief of staff Dan Halutz, left, and former defense minister Amir Peretz, both resigned after the war.

[Isranet photo]

the goals of the operation:

- We have not found that the political echelon was aware of the details of the fighting in real time, and we have not seen a discussion, in either the political or the military echelons, of the issue of stopping the military operation after the Security Council resolution was adopted;
- We have not seen an explanation of the tension between the great effort to get additional time to conclude the first stage of the planned ground operation and the decisions not to go on fighting until the ceasefire itself.

A description of failures in the conduct of war may be regarded as harming Israel. There will be those who may use our findings to hurt Israel and its army. We nonetheless point out these failures and shortcomings because we are certain that only in this way Israel may come out of this ordeal strengthened. We are pleased that processes of repair have already started. We recommend a deep and systematic continuation of such processes. It is exclusively in the hands of Israeli leaders and public to determine whether, when facing challenges in the future, we will come to them more prepared and ready, and whether we shall cope with them in a more serious and responsible way than the way the decision-makers had acted – in the political and the military echelons – in the Second Lebanon War.

Our recommendations contain suggestions for systemic and deep changes in the modalities of thinking and acting of the political and military echelons and their interface, in both routine and emergency, including war. These are deep and critical processes. Their significance should not be obscured by current affairs, local successes or initial repairs. A persistent and prolonged effort, on many levels, will be needed in order to bring about the essential improvements in the ways of thinking and acting of the political-military systems.

For these reasons we would like to caution against dangers which might upset plans and

of Israeli society had preferred to suppress: Israel cannot survive in this region, and cannot live in it in peace or at least non-war, unless people in Israel itself and in its surroundings believe that Israel has the political and military leadership, military capabilities and social robustness that will allow her to deter those of its neighbours who wish to harm her, and to prevent them – if necessary through the use of military force – from achieving their goal.

These truths do not depend on one's partisan or political views. Israel must – politically and morally – seek peace with its neighbours and make necessary compromises. At the same time, seeking peace or managing the conflict must come from a position of social, political and military strength, and through the ability and willingness to fight for the state, its values and the security of its population even in the absence of peace.

These truths have profound and far-reaching implications for many dimensions of life in Israel and the ways its challenges are managed. Beyond examining the way the Lebanon War was planned and conducted; beyond the examination of flaws in decision-making and performance that had been revealed in it – important as they may be; these are the central questions that the Lebanon war has raised. These are issues that lie at the very essence of our existence here as a Jewish and democratic state. These are the questions we need to concentrate on.

We hope that our findings and conclusions in the interim and the final reports will bring about not only a redress of failings and flaws, but help Israeli society, its leaders and thinkers, to advance the long-term goals of Israel, and develop the appropriate ways to address the challenges and respond to them.

We are grateful for the trust put in us when this difficult task was given to us. If we succeed in facilitating rectification of the failings we have identified – this will be our best reward.

Authors & Poets

The C/JN is pleased to announce its

Annual Passover Literary Supplement

We invite our readers to submit unpublished, original works of fiction or poetry that explore Jewish themes. They should not exceed 2,000 words.

We must receive your submissions no later than Friday, March 14. E-mail submissions are preferred, but works can also be sent by mail or brought to our office.

E-mail: info@cjnnews.com. Mail: 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4.

Submissions will *not* be returned. The C/JN will not enter into any correspondence with participants.

C/JN Purim Art Contest

It's time again for our annual Purim Art Contest.

Who can enter: Children in grades 1 to 6 inclusive are eligible. The children of C/JN employees are not eligible.

Prizes: The judges will choose one drawing from two different students in each grade. These "winning" drawings will be published in *The C/JN's* 2008 Purim Poster. In addition, each of the 12 children whose drawings have been selected will receive a cheque for \$25.

How to enter: You may submit as many drawings as you want. However, they should not be too small nor too large. Please paint or draw bright, bold, colourful pictures. You may use markers, crayons, paint or pencils. Please send us your name, address, phone number, age and grade along with your drawings.

You may mail or deliver your drawings to: C/JN Community Contests, The Canadian Jewish News, 1500 Don Mills Road, Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4. If you want us to return the pictures to you, please provide a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Otherwise, we will be unable to do so.

The contest closes at 3 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 29, 2008. We will undoubtedly receive many wonderful submissions from children all across the country. But only 12 of the drawings will be chosen as the "winners." The judges will base their decisions on a number of factors such as: the use of colour, the imaginative quality of the drawing and the way it tells an aspect of the story of Purim. The judges' decisions will be final. The chances of winning depend upon the number and quality of submissions received.

How the winner will be announced: The children whose pictures are chosen will be notified by telephone before the start of Shabbat on Friday, March 7, 2008.

When the prizes will be awarded: The "winning" pictures will be published in *The C/JN* of March 20, 2008. Have fun and good luck.

Any litigation respecting the conduct and awarding of a prize in this contest may be submitted to the Régie des Loteries et courses du Québec.

Israel & the Jewish World

Israeli agency tracks down unclaimed Shoah assets

By SHELDON KIRSHNER

Staff Reporter

It's a unique Israeli organization, belatedly formed by the Knesset to bring a sense of justice to the heirs of Holocaust victims.

The Company for Location and Restitution of Holocaust Victims Assets Ltd., headquartered in an office building in the Tel Aviv suburb of Ramat Gan, was established by an act of parliament in August 2006.

It started work just two months later.

A public, non-profit organization with a staff of 24, it's empowered to track down the unclaimed assets of Holocaust victims in Israel — land, bank accounts, artwork and Judaica — and turn them over to their rightful heirs in Israel and the Diaspora.

Failing that, the company is required to transfer the assets to needy survivors in Israel — one-third of Israel's 250,000 survivors live in poverty — and Holocaust education and memorialization forums.

"We hope to find 20 per cent of the heirs," company chairman Avraham Roet said in a recent interview.

Roet, a survivor from Amsterdam, Holland, was hidden by a succession of Dutch Christian families, and settled in Palestine in 1946.

His parents and three brothers were also saved by Christians, but his two sisters and a foster brother were murdered in Auschwitz.

Currently, the company holds assets with an estimated value of 750 million Israeli shekels, Roet said.

In addition, it has more than 100 plots of land.

Artwork and Judaica are held by the Israel Museum in Jerusalem.

The company was created by the Holocaust Victims Assets Law, whose passage was spearheaded by Labor party MK Colette Avital.

A former diplomat, Avital started the process by investigating dormant bank accounts in Israeli banks and land held by various institutions whose original owners were assumed to have been killed during the Holocaust.

Under the Holocaust Victims Assets Law, the company has been given 15 years to fulfil its mandate.

"We hope to finish fulfilling the greater part of our objectives in a meaningfully shorter period of time," said Roet.

Last month, the *Jerusalem Post* reported, the company began returning 1.5 million shekels to a group of 15 heirs in Israel, South Africa and the United States.

The company's budget for the first two years comes from the government. After 2008, the budget will come from management fees "charged over the company's assets," explained Roet.

Company shares are held by the Israeli government, but it has no direct control over the company.

Cognizant that a host of European countries have been grappling with the issue for decades now, Roet was critical of the Israeli government, Zionist organizations and banks in Israel for not having acted sooner.

"We believe the act of restitution could have and should have begun years ago," he said.

Asked why Israel didn't take the initiative in addressing the issue long ago, he replied, "That is a question you will have to ask the Israeli government."

But banks, such as Bank Leumi, and the Israel Museum have been forthcoming and co-operative.

"Both are making efforts to resolve the situation," he said.

Bibi seeks early elections

Israeli opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu called for early elections to replace Prime Minister Ehud Olmert.

"Something serious has befallen Israel: a prime minister who failed in a war is evading responsibility," Netanyahu, a former prime minister, said. The Likud Party leader was alluding to the Winograd Commission's report on the Second Lebanon War, which censured both the military and political leaders. "The large majority of the public and most of the political spectrum want a proper and responsible leadership for the State of Israel, and this leadership can only be attained

through new elections," he said. The next general elections are scheduled for 2010.



Court upholds Gaza fuel cuts

Israel's High Court of Justice upheld the fuel reductions imposed on the Gaza Strip. The court rejected petitions filed by human rights groups that argued fuel sanctions against Palestinians in Gaza, ordered by the Defence Ministry after cross-border rocket attacks, constitute illegal collective punishment. The court said current supplies of fuel to Gaza are sufficient to prevent a humanitarian crisis. It noted that Gaza's ruling Hamas, a "murderous terror group,"

should be held responsible for the current crisis.

Questions on cluster bombs

Israel must consider whether it wants to use cluster bombs in the future, because its current manner of using them doesn't conform to international law, the Winograd Committee said. In a special appendix about the use of cluster bombs, the committee's report said the "cluster bomb is inaccurate, it consists of bomblets that are dispersed over a large area, and some of the bomblets do not explode [on impact] and can cause damage for a long period afterward." The committee recommended that non-military elements be involved in assessing their future use in light of international law.

PayPal buys startup

PayPal acquired an Israeli software startup firm for \$169 million (US). Fraud Sciences Ltd. has expertise in online risk tools. Fraud Sciences, which began marketing its product a year ago, is expected to remain in Israel and become PayPal's local research and development arm, the Israeli business newspaper *Globes* reported. "Integrating Fraud Sciences' risk tools with PayPal's sophisticated fraud management system should allow us to be even more effective in protecting eBay and PayPal's hundreds of millions of customers around the world," PayPal president Scott Thompson said in a release.

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Film foundation director promotes Canadian shorts

By SHERRY SMITHER
Special to The CJN

If the story can't be told in six minutes or less, Judy Gladstone doesn't want to hear about it. The executive director of Bravo!FACT (Foundation to Assist Canadian Talent) since 1997, Gladstone provides grants to aspiring and established filmmakers to produce artistic shorts.

Through this program, which began in 1995, Gladstone has launched the careers of many filmmakers and artists, introducing them to Canadian and foreign audiences.

"As Bravo!FACT finishes its bat mitzvah year and enters its bar mitzvah year, about 1,200 projects have received over \$12 million in funding across the country," Gladstone says, as she sips an espresso latte in her office in the CHUM building recently taken over by CTVglobemedia.

"It's a national program," Gladstone says, "with a variety of subject matters from animation to dance-based projects to spoken word – including short dramas.

"It's amazing how you can tell a very strong story, [provide] a big punch or a very poignant film in the short running time where filmmakers are obliged to make every second count, every frame count," she adds, referring to the fact that shorts must stay within a six-minute time frame.

"The amount of talent coming through the doors is astounding – like Larry Weinstein, who has won virtually every distinction possible for a documentary filmmaker in Canada and abroad. Or Guy Madden [award-winning director of *My Winnipeg*]," Gladstone says. "But we're open to people who haven't made a film, are committed to a project, write a careful script and put together a professional team even though they're lacking experience. When team members serve as mentors, amazing surprises come forth."

Gladstone recently received a Women in Film and Television –Toronto (WIFT-T) Crystal Award for outstanding achievement for her contribution to Bravo!FACT, whose short films have been honoured at festivals including the Toronto International Film Festival, Sundance and Worldwide International Short Film Festival.

She also acts as a mentor. At the WIFT-T awards luncheon, former prima ballerina



Judy Gladstone [Leanna Gosse photo]

Veronica Tennant remarked on film that "Judy Gladstone really helped me make the extra leap into becoming a director. The unthinkable happened because Judy Gladstone thought about it and imagined it. She inspired me with her vision."

Tennant's film career started when she received a grant to make *Cinnamon Peeler*, based on the Michael Ondaatje poem of the same name.

"Veronica's first opportunity to direct was through Bravo!FACT," Gladstone says. "Now, she's working on all kinds of film projects. Once she made up her mind to be a writer and director, she worked as hard as when she became one of the world's prima ballerinas."

Another project endorsed by Gladstone was a film made by Jesse Rosensweet. "Up until he made *The Stone of Folly*, he worked as a camera operator. At Cannes [Film Festival] later that year, his Prix de Jury Award totally put him on the map as an accomplished filmmaker in stop-motion animation [where sculptures appear to move]," Gladstone says, adding, "Jesse just wrapped up shooting his first feature film."

Before working in the Toronto arts community, Gladstone, a Montreal native, received two graduate degrees – from the Sor-

bonne in Paris, and from the University of Haifa, where she studied to become a psychiatric occupational therapist. Suffering from burnout, she began working with performing artists, and then at a cultural centre in Israel.

"I cut my teeth on the whole programming side of things before becoming a cultural and public affairs officer in Tel Aviv. Representing the best of Canadian culture to Israeli and Palestinian audiences was a true joy."

After two years of co-ordinating the Canadian International Development Agency-funded Canada Fund for Dialogue and Development, a ground-breaking cultural program that provides grants for Israelis, Palestinians, Jordanians and Egyptians to work together on various projects, she took the helm at the industry-funded Bravo!FACT.

Her initiatives have put Bravo!FACT on the map. Shorts receive national exposure on television on a half-hour program she helped develop in prime time on the Bravo arts channel on Fridays at 7:30 p.m., as well as on other channels.

"Because the talent's so extraordinary, many delivered works are gems," Gladstone says. "Since the filmmaking process is time-

consuming and filmmakers return to their day jobs or are exhausted by the project, it's hard to promote the short on its own. It's easier in my position to take a compilation to a festival programmer or to a media reviewer and say, 'Look at this wonderful compilation. Perhaps you'd like to program it or

do a story about it. There's a broadcast coming up.' I discovered through time it's easier for us to achieve success."

Gladstone also takes shorts into theatres across the country, triggering media coverage because the showing becomes a live event.

"Initially that idea came from Moses

[Znaimer, co-founder of Citytv] and evolved over time. We'll invite the film's talent up. Audiences see this person's connection to the film. If the actors can do comedy, they'll do a five-minute routine. Folks get the added value. Filmmakers meet and start new projects. Promoters also attend. Over time, there's a sense of community Bravo!FACT helped build."

Inspired by the Banff Centre, a respected arts, cultural and educational institution, Gladstone came up with the idea of "shorts in motion," very short films for mobile phones. She parlayed that into a co-production of Bravo!FACT and the National Film Board, spawning the project *Art of Seduction*, 10 two-minute films, many of them award winners.

As the interview comes to an end, Gladstone talks about the influences that shaped her life. She points to the example of her mother, Mia Gladstone, who died a few weeks before her daughter received the Crystal Award.

"Born in Palestine, my mother's first languages were Yiddish and Hebrew. She was a trailblazer – the only woman graduate in a class of 499 men to pass her chartered accountancy exams in Quebec. Once married, she worked at home because she had four children. Later, she became a college accountancy teacher and mentor. She reached for new goals – teaching herself to swim at the age of 40, taking up art when she retired, then having her first solo exhibit. My mother was a woman of outstanding achievements."

For more information on Gladstone and Bravo!FACT, visit www.bravofact.com.



Judy Gladstone, right, dances with her late mother Mia and her father Alex Gladstone.

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Arts & Travel

Flying Bulgars ready to strut new stuff on stage



The Flying Bulgars, standing from left, are Dave Wall, Peter Lutek, Tania Gill and Victor Bateman. In the front row are David Buchbinder, left, and Max Sennit.

[Roula Said photo]

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF

Staff Reporter

Twenty years is a long time for any group to stay together, let alone a klezmer band formed in the late 1980s.

But that's what the Flying Bulgars — known as the Flying Bulgar Klezmer Band back in 1987 — have done. Sort of.

It's true, various members of the group have left for other pursuits and been replaced by new Bulgars. But over the years, the band has been nominated for three Juno awards; released five albums; has been at the forefront of expanding the klezmer genre internationally with glorious experimentation and has since dropped the words "klezmer" and "band" from its monicker.

Along the way, the band has also attracted a large following, primarily due to its willingness to strike out in new musical directions, but also because of its ever-joyous live performances and top-notch musician-ship.

Yet some constancy remains, namely the band's 20-year creative force and originator, trumpeter-composer David Buchbinder and his relatively rookie co-leader of 13 years, vocalist-composer Dave Wall.

Speaking to *The CJN* last week — in advance of their upcoming 20th anniversary concerts on Feb. 9 and 10 at the Al Green Theatre (750 Spadina Ave.) — Buchbinder and Wall eagerly shared their feelings on the band's longevity and its new direction.

Buchbinder, 48, said he attributed the band's resilience to "sheer cussedness, perversion [and]... love for the music. There's always been a

healthy love of music."

Wall, 41, concurred and explained that this love has been redirected onto a new musical path for the band this year — an album, as yet untitled, of new compositions and all in English.

"We're taking our time on the new album because we want it to be perfect," Wall said.

Buchbinder said that the Bulgars' new path is an outgrowth of his partnership with Wall.

"We both agreed to take control [of the band] and explore our creative connection," he said.

The CJN obtained three songs from the album, and if they're any indication of things to come, the Flying Bulgars likely have another critical hit on their hands.

The themes may seem a little darker and edgier, but the

music is as vibrant as it has ever been. If not more accessible.

"I've been a songwriter for many years," Wall said. "And I'm a political creature. It wasn't a wilful thing to make this CD darker."

Buchbinder added that with this new album he wanted "to create a recording that was unified in its message... and take more of a pop approach to make it beautiful."

Both Wall and Buchbinder — critically acclaimed artists, each one a composer and a musician with his own body of work — agree that the initial buzz of the klezmer revival era from the late 1980s has dissipated somewhat. And the Bulgars have felt it.

"There was an initial rush and excitement to it," Wall said. "But there's more diversity [now] in the music. Because [strict] klezmer playing is kind of a closed system. So people have always had to inject creativity to make it watchable."

At this point, Buchbinder interjects, stating, "We've never been a straight-ahead klezmer band. We're always evolving into something [new] but still rooted in a Jewish sound. The past is great to celebrate, but we want to focus on the future."

Buchbinder said audiences this weekend can look forward to sets of mostly new music from the soon-to-be-released CD "with some old-time favourites for our longtime fans," and expects to reunite on stage some of the Flying Bulgar alumni in a nod to the anniversary.

Afterward, he intends to seed the radio market with the new CD and organize an extensive tour to promote the new offering.

In fact, the band is already booked to headline the 2008 Chutzpah! Festival in Vancouver on March 2.

"I feel as excited about what we're doing today as ever," Buchbinder said.

To which Wall, pausing a moment, added, "Yeah. This does feel like a new beginning."

Along with Buchbinder and Wall, the Flying Bulgars, in their current incarnation, include Peter Lutek on clarinet, Tania Gill on piano, Victor Bateman on bass and Max Sennit on drums. For more information about the Flying Bulgars, visit www.theflyingbulgars.com

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Arts & Travel



Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

WASSERMAN DIRECTS 'HOUDINI', A NEW MUSICAL, IN MONTREAL

Montreal theatre director **Bryna Wasserman**, recognized for her staging of large-scale musicals, was determined to bring Harry Houdini's story to a bigger audience after the success of the Dora Wasserman Yiddish Theatre's *The Great Houdini* in 2000.

Wasserman's perseverance has paid off. *Houdini*, an all-new musical with book by **Ben Goshor** and music and lyrics by **Elyan Kunin**, opens Feb. 10 at the Leonor and Alvin Segal Theatre in Montreal.

The new musical features some of the legendary escape artist's most famous routines and is described as an "entertaining, musical ride" through his life "from his humble vaudeville beginnings to the heights of his fame." (Perhaps his most quotable quote was, "What does he mean, 'be careful'? I hang myself upside down in straightjackets 100 feet in the air and he's telling me to be careful!")

With **Kevin Kraft** in the title role, and a live six-piece band, *Houdini* is in performance until March 2.

Corporate Pirates of Penzance: North Toronto Players perform an adaptation of *The*

Pirates of Penzance, one of **Gilbert & Sullivan's** most popular musicals, with a modern corporate twist. "As is our custom, we have adapted the original to create a more modern and currently identifiable production," said **John Ricciardelli**, music director of the 42-year-old community theatre group. At the City Playhouse, 1000 New Westminster Dr., Vaughan (wheelchair accessible, free parking) for six performances, beginning Feb. 15. 905-727-2209, www.northtorontoplayers.com

The Tiger Claw Reviewed: **Marilyn Herbert** reviews *The Tiger Claw* by **Shauna Singh Baldwin** as part of the Latner Jewish Library's Treasures in Jewish Literature series. The book tells the mysterious true story of a Sufi Muslim in war-torn Paris who falls in love with a Jewish pianist, leaves, but comes back to work as a spy, code-named Madeleine.

Two sessions are offered. The first is at the Lipa Green Building, 4600 Bathurst St., Tuesday, Feb. 12, refreshments 1 p.m., program 1:30 p.m. Also at the Reena Battle Centre, 927 Clark Ave. W., Thornhill, Wednesday, Feb. 13, 8 p.m. \$15 at the door. Also presented by Bathurst JCC Adult Services and Schwartz/Reisman Centre. RSVP, 416-635-2883, ext. 111, or lnobel@ujafed.org. Website, www.jewishtoronto.com/treasures

Arts in Brief

• *African Footprint* celebrates the vibrant

history of South Africa through a blend of Afro- and Euro-centric music and dance. South Africa's longest-running show, it has already been enjoyed by 250 million viewers worldwide. It's at the Sony Centre, Feb. 7 to 9.

• The 6th annual Winterfolk Blues and Roots Festival takes place Feb. 8 to 10 at various venues in Toronto. www.abetterworld.ca

• *The Band's Visit* (*Bikur ha-tizmoret*), a film by Israeli writer-director **Ernan Kolirin**, is an "absolute charmer" about an Egyptian police orchestra that arrives in Israel to perform at the opening of the Arab Cultural Centre, but ends up in the wrong town somewhere in the desert. Winner of the Jury Coup de Coeur prize at the 2007 Cannes Film Festival, the film is in Arabic, English and Hebrew with English subtitles. Opens Feb. 15 in Toronto and Vancouver.

• The Royal Ontario Museum's 29th Research Colloquium and Vaughan Lecture is a free, day-long event in which curators and researchers present highlights of their recent discoveries and research in 15-minute presentations. Topics range from solving the mysteries of an ancient Egyptian coffin, to the ROM's meteorite collection. (Participants must pay Museum admission.) Friday, Feb. 15, beginning at 9:15 a.m.

• Teatron Theatre presents *Chaim's Love Song*, a dramatic comedy by **Marvin Chernoff**. Directed by **Ari Weisberg**, the play focuses on **Chaim Shotsky**, a retired mailman in Brooklyn, who emerges as an American Teyve as he tells his colourful life story to a friend from Iowa. Leah Posluns Theatre, 4588 Bathurst St. Feb. 27 to March 9.

• The Royal Ontario Museum has temporarily installed a Serpentine sculpture, donated by **Joey and Toby Tanenbaum**, in the Hyacinth Gloria Chen Crystal Court, where it will be on view until the end of March.

At the Miles Nadal JCC

• Miles Nadal's new group for seniors, "55 forward," begins its planned series of Museum and Gallery Adventures with a visit to the Reuben and Helene Dennis Museum at Beth Tzedec Synagogue — an afternoon of culture, conversation and tea that features a rare behind the scenes visit to the beautiful Judaica collection and a curator's talk. 1700 Bathurst St. (rear entrance), Thursday, Feb. 7, 2 p.m. phyllisf@mnjcc.org or 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

• **The Flying Bulgar Klezmer Band** marks its 20th anniversary with two concerts. \$24 advance, \$30 at the door, \$15 for children up to 14. Al Green Theatre. Saturday, Feb. 9, 8 p.m. and Sunday, Feb. 10, 7:30 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

• **Jordan Klapman** continues his series on Great Jewish Composers with a talk on Records, Radio, Rhythm and Jews. \$9 admission with bagels and coffee. Sunday, Feb. 10, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

• Theatre @ the J presents Between Stages Playwright's Reading: Three Short Plays by **Hannah Moscovitch**. The plays are *USSR*, *Post-Democracy* and *Gulag/Love among the Russians*. Directed by **Natasha Mytnowich**. Suggested donation: \$8. Sunday, Feb. 10, 4 p.m. esthera@mnjcc.org, 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

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Arts & Travel

A look at Jewish life and history in Italy

By VIC PHILLIPS
Special to The CJN

Italy is without a doubt one of the most fascinating and beautiful countries in the world, steeped in history and filled with monuments to a great and wondrous past. On the other side of the coin, it's also the home of the Mafia, a Nazi-affiliated history and more pickpockets than any city in North America.

However, there are many more positives than negatives when one takes a close look at the entire country. Over the decades, it has become the world's second-leading wine producer and is sixth in cheese and wool output. But tourism is No. 1 money producing industry, as cities such as Florence, Venice and Rome are considered by many writers and experienced travellers as the most beautiful in the world. The art treasures are breathtaking and the history is overwhelming.

Italy is 90 per cent Catholic, yet Jewish Italy has attracted more interest from scholars than any other country in the European Diaspora. The Jewish community is one of the smallest and oldest in the world, with the history of the Italian Jews beginning in Rome in 168 BCE.

The story goes that the Maccabees went to Rome as ambassadors from Eretz Yisrael to ask for protection from the Romans against the Syrians who were harassing the Jews in Palestine. They obviously fell in love with the area even though life became rough when many more Jews were brought to Rome as slaves by Titus.

There are now fewer than 20,000 Jews in Rome, half the number living in the entire country. They are a hardy bunch of souls, having survived persecutions, slavery and concentration camps.

Jews were second class citizens when Italy entered the war on the side of Adolf Hitler in 1940. Some 9,500 Jews were arrested and deported to extermination camps.

A tour of the Jewish ghetto in Rome is a must and can be done on your own or by contacting one of the local guides who can be found through the Internet. The cost is about eight euros or \$12 per adult.

A visit to the main synagogue is a must. It is located in the heart of the ghetto and also houses the Jewish museum where books and Judaica are sold. Security is everywhere evident and has been in place at various Jewish buildings since several terrorism attacks in Rome in 1985.

There are also happy memories. Local residents fondly recall the visit by Pope Paul II to the temple in 1986. It was the first time in history that a pope had entered a synagogue, and his words to "my elder brothers" are remembered with pride. All synagogues in Italy are Orthodox.

Nearby is the Palace of Culture, Jewish schools, stores, a bookshop, fast foods and kosher restaurants. The old ghetto is the meeting place for Jews from Rome and around the world.

We sat outside with Jews visiting from Sweden, England and the United States and enjoyed the fish soup and carciofi alla Giudia (Jewish-style artichokes). Sitting in the sun, surrounded by history and enjoying ancient and traditional cuisine in one of the most beautiful cities in the world is a memory to be long cherished.

For a different diversion, try spotting pickpockets, but from a safe distance. It's easy in large centres such as Rome, especially at tourist sites like the Trevi Fountain, which is always lively and attracts thousands of tourists standing shoulder to shoulder every day, winter or summer.

People who like to throw money away toss coins into the fountain believing it will give them a wish and assure their return to Italy. It's the perfect location to watch nimble fingers pulling out wallets from back pockets and purses from the unsuspecting. I saw three thieves work their scam in a 10-



The synagogue in Rome. [Vic Phillips photo]

minute period. The best advice: wear a money belt.

Almost half the Italian Jewish population of approximately 40,000 are located in Milan, Turin, Trieste, Florence and Venice. A few hundred can be found in Bologna and Naples. Driving in Italy definitely takes courage so we travelled about the country in a luxurious bus that allowed us to enjoy the country's beauty at a leisurely pace.

It was a relaxing trip with plenty of time to enjoy some lengthy lunches and dinners while partaking of the best Chianti wines in the world in the Tuscany region.

Florence is the home of the Renaissance, but if history is not your main interest and food is, then you can fill up some of the best in the world. Florence is small, but it is noisy with attractive women in high heels and young men covered with expensive leather zooming about kamikaze-style on their scooters.

Jewish visitors should definitely visit the Piazza Santa Croce and see the church with the 19th-century facade showing the Star of David. It's a short walk to the Academy of Fine Arts housing the most famous statue in the world, *David* by Michelangelo. A visit to the Museum of Jewish History and Art in Florence is also possible if one is spending a full day in the city.

Not to be missed is Florence's archival Siena, which is a half-hour bus ride away and also has a synagogue. The city is considered by many Italians as "numero uno" for its beauty, with its historic centre that can be enjoyed quietly, as Siena is an almost vehicle-free city where pedestrians rule.

Jewish life and history are expressed most fully in this wonderful country and are considered by modern scholars to be an integral part of the Italian mosaic and heritage.

Insight Tours brochures are available from most travel agents. Vic Phillips is a writer and broadcaster and a member of the Travel Media Association of Canada.

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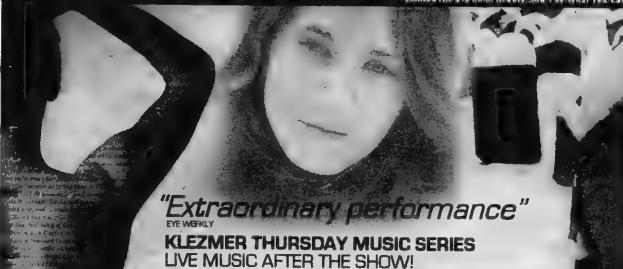
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Arts & Travel

Book chronicles Montreal theatre

By **HEATHER SOLOMON**
Special to The CJN

When Muriel Gold decided to record the history of Montreal's Saidye Bronfman Centre Theatre, she launched an intensive three-year book project. She aimed to complete it for the centre's 40th anniversary last year.

The centre will never celebrate its 40th, however, as it has divorced itself both from the YW-YMHA and the Bronfmans to morph into the Segal Centre for the Performing Arts at The Saidye.

As a result, Gold's book becomes more important than ever. It doesn't just record a period in the life of an institution. It is witness to an era.

The book, *A Gift for Their Mother: The Saidye Bronfman Centre Theatre, A History*, (MIRI Productions) was published late last fall.

Gold conducted more than 60 interviews for the book and pored for hours through hard-to-access archives and her own rich memory bank. The book tells the story of the theatre from its inception.

The main stage opened in 1967 as part of the building honouring the 70th birthday of Saidye Bronfman, mother and grandmother of the Bronfman family. It had been conceived as more of an all-purpose space that resembled a lecture hall, with no separate backstage area and uncomfortable vinyl banquettes that had audiences squirming their way through the first decade of productions.

Folding, upholstered theatre seats were a welcome relief during the 1986 renovations. A second stage that presented parallel productions was opened in the Y auditorium for a brief, four-year period.

Beyond the physical challenges, however, there was controversy, squabbling and the ups and downs of the reigns of successive artistic directors, described in fascinating detail in the 350-page book.

Gold was on-site for the first 13 years, as a member of the founding performing arts committee that worked with artistic director Marion André, and, from 1972 to 1980, she took over as artistic director.

Gold had been recommended for the job by Dora Wasserman, whom she had interviewed for her McGill master's thesis on *Three Montreal Children's Theatres in British, French and Russian Traditions*. Gold had been a teacher for the Montreal Children's Theatre run by the venerable duo of Dorothy Davis Stein and Violet Walters.

During her directorship of the Saidye Bronfman Centre

Theatre, Gold initiated the policy of producing Québécois plays in translation, original anglophone Canadian works, along with international repertoire. She was the first director to persuade Michel Tremblay to break his vow never to have his plays presented in English in Quebec.

Gold was recently named a member of the Order of Canada, in part for her tireless work in bridging the two solitudes (French and English), much of it having taken place during her tenure at the theatre.

The André years established the theatre as a polished, professional stage. However, all its artistic directors had to deal with the dichotomy of its being a mainstream Canadian theatre while, at the same time, being part of a Jewish cultural centre.

A prime example of this two-headedness was *The Man in the Glass Booth* debacle during André's tenure, detailed in Gold's book. While still in rehearsal, it both alienated Holocaust survivors and turned the press and grant-giving bodies against the theatre for what they felt was censorship when the show was cancelled.

Gold recalls ruefully how she inherited the theatre after its subscription base had been decimated to 300.

"Some people congratulated me on my appointment. Some gave me condolences. They didn't envy me at all," she says.

Yet Gold succeeded in bringing 6,000 audience members back into the fold.

Gold finds it ironic that André never warmed to the presence of the amateur Yiddish Theatre due to the vagaries of its rehearsal scheduling to accommodate cast members' day jobs, and due to its demands on the professional theatre staff.

The irony is that the Yiddish Theatre survived the English stage's wavering fortunes between the last strong season under Per Brask and the mostly outside productions brought in by Nathalie Bonjour. Also, the Yiddish Theatre, whose staunchest supporters are Leonor and Alvin Segal, served as the catalyst for the establishment of the new Segal Centre.

The brilliant Bryna Wasserman initially arrived on the scene to help her ailing mother Dora and, finally, took up her torch, going on to prove that she could combine the English and Yiddish theatres into a powerhouse of entertainment.

That we now have Muriel Gold's historical and anecdotal account of how it all came about makes the hard-won present even more of a gift.

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Books & Authors

Toronto Yiddishist keeps on kvetching

By BILL GLADSTONE

Special to The C/JN

With two new books in print to follow his bestseller *Born to Kvetch*, and enjoying a new popularity with Jewish audiences who delight in his erudite knowledge of Yiddish, Toronto writer Michael Wex can no longer be said to be languishing in obscurity.

In the round fullness of middle age, the Lethbridge-born Yiddishist put himself on the map – and on the *New York Times* bestsellers list for about 10 weeks – with the publication in 2005 of *Born to Kvetch: Yiddish Language and Culture in All of Its Moods*.

The book soon became a bona fide publishing sensation, a fact that seems doubly astonishing when one considers the witty tome focuses on the intricacies and psychology of a language commonly presumed to be deceased.

But Yiddish, Wex proclaimed in a recent interview, “is like Paul McCartney and Mark Twain. It might not be quite as dead as people thought it was.”

He had been writing the book for more than a decade without realizing it – collecting tidbits of information about Yiddish the way some people compulsively gather bits of string, not knowing how they may eventually be used. The previous author of *Shlepping the Exile*, a book that may have sold in the low hundreds, Wex was propelled into the media spotlight as *Born to Kvetch* sold about 90,000 copies in hardcover, then another 100,000 or so in paperback.

He appeared on NBC's *Today Show* just before the Christmas and Chanukah shopping season, and the publicity generated sales of 16,000 books in one week.

“I made more in that week than I made in a year teaching at Ryerson on contract,” he said.

The book's popularity apparently took its publisher, St. Martin's Press, by surprise. Bookstores ran out of the title and eager would-be readers flocked to order it online at Amazon.



Michael Wex

For a while, *Born to Kvetch* was the Internet bookseller's second-most requested title. – “What does that mean? You never do find out,” the happy scribe observed. “But it does wonders for your self-esteem, and it doesn't hurt your bank balance, either.”

Last year, *Born to Kvetch* earned a Canadian Jewish Book Award as well as an honourable mention from the American Library Association.

Wex recently followed up that remarkable publishing triumph with what he hopes will be another: *Just Say Nu, Yiddish for Every Occasion (When English Just Won't Do)*, also published by St. Martin's Press.

And Quattro Books of Thornhill has recently published his novella *The Adventures of Micah Mushmelon, Boy Talmudist*, in which the protagonist is a brilliant chassidic yeshiva bocher modelled after Sherlock Holmes.

Like the literary detective upon which his character is based, Micah Mushmelon has many rare qualities. For one thing, he graduated from high school at the age of just nine months.

“There's a Jewish folk legend that every Jewish soul who is about to be born spends his pre-birth time learning Torah from Moshe in heaven,” Wex explained. “Then, just before you're born, an angel taps you on the mouth and you forget everything. Micah was supposed to have avoided getting hit, so he's born with all of this knowledge.”

As for Wex, he was born into an observant, Yiddish-speaking home, never dreaming while he was growing up in Lethbridge and later Calgary that he would put the mamaloshen to such good use. He attended high school in Toronto and studied English and medieval studies at the University of Toronto. He's worked as a writer, translator, medical researcher and Yiddish instructor.

While *Born to Kvetch* isn't shy about raising touchy Jewish-Christian interfaith issues and pulls no punches when making barbed satirical references to gentile persecution of the Jews in centuries past, Wex, an innate satirist, makes no apologies for that.

“I've had people say, ‘That was very cute, but you shouldn't say that in front of them,’” he said. “But you'd think that after the Crusades and the Holocaust, they could take a little ribbing now and then.”

“These attitudes are so deeply ingrained in the development of the language, you can't not talk about them,” he continued. “It's like if you were to write a book about the development of black English, you couldn't ignore slavery and segregation and Jim Crow laws.”

Wex, who lives in midtown Toronto with his wife and daughter, is currently finishing a young adult novel about the exodus from Egypt for an American publishing house. When writing such a tale, “the Bible determines your plot lines,” he said, but that still leaves plenty of room for creativity because “the Bible goes from A to C, but you've got to get through B,” he observed.

Hoping to make himself even more of a household name, he's also planning a non-fiction volume called *Wexology*, to include an assortment of essays, stories and other pieces. Meanwhile, he's still receiving plenty of speaking invitations, which will necessitate numerous trips throughout Canada and the United States this year.

“They still want you for a dollar and a quarter,” he observed wryly. “Before, it was, ‘We don't have to pay you, you're a nobody.’ Now, it's ‘You're so famous, what do you need the money for?’”

For more information on *The Adventures of Micah Mushmelon, Boy Talmudist*, please visit the website www.quattrobooks.ca

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Plans underway for 2009 Israel hockey tournament

By **PAUL LUNGEN**
Staff Reporter

Preparations are already underway to reclaim for Canada another international hockey title as well as bragging rights in the Jewish sports world.

Canadian organizers of the World Jewish Hockey Championship are scouting potential talent and putting out the word they are looking for skaters interested in travelling to Israel in July 2009 to compete for the title. Last summer, the Jew-lagged Canadians dropped an early decision to the host Israelis and never recovered, finishing third in the four-team tournament.

The powerhouse U.S. team, bolstered by NHL prospect Nathan Davis (now with the Philadelphia Phantoms of the AHL), won the title, defeating Israel in the championship game. Canada finished ahead of only France.

The same quartet of countries is likely to reprise the 2007 tournament, said Alex Voihanski, general manager of the Canadian team. In addition, organizers are planning a junior tournament of under-17 players to run parallel to the senior competition. Canada is planning to ice two junior teams as are the Americans. Israel and a European team will round out the competition.

All games will be played at the Canada Center in Metulla, on Israel's northern border with Lebanon.

The tournament, which runs from July 5-17, will overlap with the Maccabiah Games, which get under way in central Israel later the same month.

In preparation for the hockey event, a training and orientation camp is planned for this summer, likely in June, Voihanski stated. Not only will it permit coaches to evaluate the players, but it will give organizers the opportunity to discuss the



Jacob Mieflikier

off-ice benefits of visiting Israel.

For many participants last year, the visit to Israel was a real eye-opener and it afforded the opportunity to reconnect with their Jewish roots. Many were in Israel for the first time and were moved

by the visit to the Western Wall as well as Tiberias and other noteworthy sites, he said.

What's more, the hockey was very high calibre. Players gave good efforts on the ice and then met their opponents in the local bar in an admirable display of camaraderie, he said.

Games were almost all sold out, with as many as 1,500 spectators taking in the action, including Israeli soldiers stationed on the border near by. The atmosphere was festive with fans employing soccer chants during the action.

"It was a massive success, beyond our wildest dreams," Voihanski said.

The only thing missing for Canada was a victory. Voihanski maintains that had all the eligible players suited up for Canada, the true north could have walked away with the title. But players like Michael and Adam Henrich, Eric Himelfarb, Corey Pecker and David Nemirovsky were unavailable, many because they were free agents looking for a contract.

With those players and the likes of Jacob Mieflikier, and East Coast all-star Trevor Smith, a forward with Bridgeport Sound Tigers in the American Hockey League, Canada will be tough to beat in 2009, Voihanski said.

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Israel loses to Russia in Fed Cup Singles tennis quarterfinals

By **RUTH MARGALIT**
Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

RAMAT HASHARON, Israel — Israeli tennis star Shahar Peer lost Sunday to newly crowned Australian Open Champion Maria Sharapova on the second day of the Fed Cup World Group quarterfinal.

The game ended in just two sets, with the

Russian easily defeating Peer 6:1, 6:1, after repeatedly breaking the Israeli's serve.

"I know Shahar well," Sharapova said after the match, which saw a large and noisy turnout of Israeli supporters. "She encouraged the crowd to cheer louder, but it ended up being in my favor because it seemed like she felt that she couldn't win this match on her own."

In the second match of the day, 81st seed Tzipi Obziler lost to seventh-ranked Anna Chakvetadze 6:4, 6:2, despite being 3:0 up in the first set.

The Russian team advanced to the semi-finals. After the first day of Fed Cup Singles, Israel and Russia ended on equal standings. Peer defeated Dinara Safina and Sharapova breezed past Obziler.

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Inside Back

Is there a Jewish marriage crisis?

By YONI GOLDSTEIN

Jewish history is in many ways the story of marriage. The various unions, too many to count in the Bible alone, define the generations and ancestries that lead from the first Jewish family through enslavement in Egypt, glory in Israel, expulsion and anti-Semitism.

This is perhaps why the Bible takes such pain to provide the details of various family trees, even though the majority of names on these lists are inconsequential to the larger biblical story: the notion of a cohesive family unit, sustained by marriages and births, is in and of itself endemic to Judaism.

So I can understand why some Jews have been sounding the alarms of a marriage crisis in various Jewish communities. And I can even fathom why one Jewish marriage expert recently called the situation an "epidemic" during a speech in Toronto – though likening "un-marriage" to an infectious disease is probably going a bit overboard. For Jews, it is not incorrect to define a falling marriage rate as a serious religious problem.

This explains the explosion of efforts over the last five years to help young Jews find mates: websites, singles events and an ever-growing army of shadchans have been established to help Jews of marriageable age find suitable husbands and wives, so that they, too, can join the religious tradition of expanding the Jewish genealogy. Yet the crisis persists, and no one seems to understand why.

There is, I think a simple answer: marriage isn't what it used to be. For thousands of years, marriage was closely related to family ties, economics and social class. And the decision of who should marry whom was made by parents and relatives, not the two immediate parties. Love was sometimes a byproduct of these unions, but almost never the predominant reason for marriage.

But over the last hundred years or so, the situation has taken a dramatic turn. Young people developed the notion that they should be the

ones to choose their spouses. And in many ways this revolution has made marriage a much happier, loving union: As marriage expert Stephanie Coontz writes in a recent essay titled *The Future of Marriage*, "A good marriage is fairer and more fulfilling for both men and women than couples of the past could ever have imagined."

That's the good news. The bad news is that the new marriage model has made the old standard so unattractive that singlehood has become the preferred state for those who don't, can't or haven't yet found the perfect match. Coontz again explains: "The forces that have

strengthened marriage as a personal relationship between freely consenting adults have weakened marriage as a regulatory social institution."

The rapid change in how people get married is a worldwide phenomenon. But it's easy to see why tight-knit religious and ethnic groups, Jews among them, would feel the effects more acutely than the larger trend. In these sorts of groups, reconciling an old standard with the complex redefining of marriage is bound to cause confusion.

The mere fact that the downward trend in Jewish marriages is being called a "crisis" indicates that the notion of marriage as law, or at least social law, is still alive even while union as personal preference takes hold with younger generations. There is a fundamental gap, then, between those who want to get married but only under the right conditions and those who simply want people to get married. Both groups view marriage as a goal, but seemingly under different circumstances and with different motivations.

Which leaves the question: is there a Jewish marriage crisis? I would argue no – that an evolutionary shift in the concept of marriage has led young people to look for something more when considering when, or even if, to get married. Where the crisis may lie is if those institutions so bent on helping Jews to get married cannot evolve to help today's marriage candidates find the partners they're looking for.



New Views

Jewish students standing alone

Rabbi Steven Greenberg, a gay Orthodox rabbi, a graduate of Yeshiva University, an author and a senior teaching fellow at the National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership (CLAL), was a keynote speaker.

Judy Cohen, an erudite Holocaust survivor, and Dr. Alchior Dor, a bold survivor of "Sudan," spoke on a panel titled

"Remembering Auschwitz To Defend Darfur."

I put my speech into a tikun olam context. I said one of the ways we can strengthen ourselves is by fully appreciating an idea from Pirkei Avot: Who is a wise person? One who learns from everyone.

I said there are at least four groups of people we might look to to grow as a Jew.

Firstly, it is imperative we investigate the very grassroots social services and acts of chesed done by the Orthodox community. This community regularly responds to hordes of

"collectors" who approach them on a daily basis in shul and/or at their homes for tzedakah for dozens of causes. There are volunteer and loan groups for everyone, including the bride without a gown. The strong and aggressive Orthodox Jewish response to the needy stems from years of thought and Torah learning.

I suggested to the 60 conference participants that they should study the successes of the Conservative and Reform community, as well as alternative groups, who have created sophisticated organizations and entities to respond to Jews and non-Jews in distress everywhere. Their activism, I believe, is one of the heart, an emotional appreciation and understanding of the despair and suffering of others in the world.

The third group I said we need to appreciate is the non-Jew. Throughout the world, you'll find veteran non-Jewish charities tending to the outcasts, the untouchables and the handicapped. Many NGOs driven by their faith and Christian goodness have managed to enlighten

the world about the basic needs of a child living at the base of Mount Kilimanjaro or a village struggling to build wells in war-ravaged Congo.

Finally, I said, watch the extraordinary giving spirit of a baby and/or a toddler. I used my son, Noah River, as an example, a gentle beautiful spirit who naturally offers me his cucumber or veggie dog with a smile and a look that says, "We're both here. Isn't it obvious we should both eat?" Learn from children because their selflessness translates into a drive to create oneness. Perhaps they are closest to God.

In Guelph, I met brave Jewish students who frequently stand alone on campus defending the Jewish people and Israel. When I was there, I realized I needed to inform you of the gratitude we owe these front-line students, who defend us against anti-Semitism and some of the underside of humankind found in campus lecture halls and the central squares of our great places of learning. I also wanted to let you know they need a lot more funding to fight on our behalf! Let's thank them through more generous funding.

Sederot/Sudan? Discuss on my blog at avrumrosensweigideas@blogspot.com

BRUNSWICK STEW

Ingredients

- 6 skinless, boneless chicken pieces
- 1/2 c each onions, celery, peppers, chopped
- Cayenne pepper or hot sauce (optional)
- 1/2 c oil
- chicken broth (enough to cover)
- 3 c lima beans
- 2 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 can tomatoes
- 5 bay leaves
- 5 cloves
- 3 c kernel corn

Directions

Dredge chicken pieces in seasoned flour. Sauté slowly in hot oil until light brown. Remove from pan. Brown onions, celery & peppers in same fat. Place chicken, veggies, tomatoes, broth, cloves & bay leaves in large pot. Cover and simmer until chicken is nearly tender (about 2 hrs). Add lima beans and corn and continue simmering until veggies are tender (about 45 mins longer). Season with Worcestershire sauce, hot sauce,

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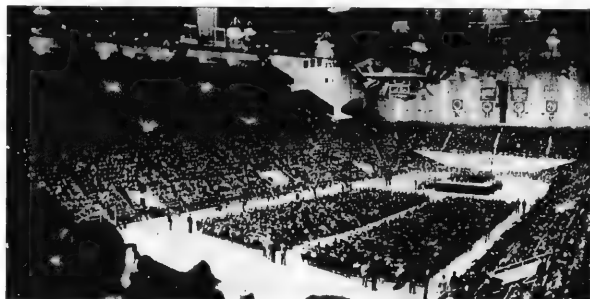
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REMEMBERING OUR YESTERDAYS



By BILL GLADSTONE

VAST THRONG PROTESTS NAZIS: In November 1938, shortly after the German Night of Broken Glass, or Kristallnacht, more than 16,000 outraged citizens of all faiths filled Maple Leaf Gardens in protest. Thousands of others were turned away and gathered in other venues. As reported in the *Toronto Star*, Mayor Ralph C. Day proclaimed that "Canadians were all Hebrews" in solidarity with the Jews against the Nazis. Numerous rabbis and church leaders offered prayers, and messages were read from Albert Einstein and others. A. B. Bennett, head of Canadian Jewish Congress, predicted the Jews would survive to witness the end of Nazism, and Christian pastor E. Crosley Hunter said that Hitler "will pass, as did Nebuchadnezzar." Sixty anti-Nazi rallies were held that week across Canada.

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

I was asked to speak at a Canadian Federation of Jewish Student (CFJS) and Guelph Jewish Organizations Challenge Weekend held in Guelph, Ont., last month.

It is a pleasure to speak at student conferences as it gives me the opportunity to meet and learn from inspiring young Jewish leadership who understand the Jewish community and tikun olam. I have spoken at similar conferences in Montreal, Kingston and Vancouver.

This conference was co-ordinated by superlative Jewish professionals such as Elyse Kayfetz, Ya'acov Fruchter, Haley Gottfried and CFJS volunteer president, Alex Halpern. Ontario university students, from Guelph, Waterloo, St. Catharines, Toronto, and London attended.

The theme of the conference was My Jewish Challenge. I was asked to speak on "How We Can Challenge Ourselves To Be Better Jews."



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...we were so filled with gratitude for the care Mount Sinai gave our very premature daughter.

— Amanda Demers & Brian Collins

Brian and Amanda's first child, Charlotte, was born prematurely, weighing only one pound, eight ounces. "Mount Sinai looked after my wife and child during the pregnancy; delivered Charlotte with great skill; and then cared for her in the Valentine Neonatal Intensive Care Unit for the first three and a half months of her life," Brian Collins says. "Her birth was an opportunity for us to reflect on the communities that have shaped who we are and reflect our values. Mount Sinai is definitely up there."

...ordinary people can sometimes do the most extraordinary things.

— John Honsberger

According to John Honsberger, attorney and executor for Doris Mack, she was a humble person who grew up in the Depression and was "never sure whether she would have enough. Mrs. Mack did know, however, that she wanted whatever she and her husband had left, to help young medical students. I don't think she had any idea of how important her contribution to Mount Sinai would be."



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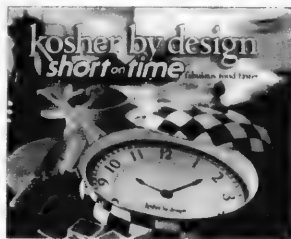
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To Your Health

Sharing the pain helps in the healing process

By SHAYLA GUNTER-GOLDSTEIN
Special to The CJN

When she speaks to groups about her cancer diagnosis, Isa Nevsky often jokes that she got a "bum rap." Over the past 15 years of her "journey" through colon, liver and lung cancer, she learned how to deal with her disease, and to face it with dignity, humour, and a healing spiritualism.

Now, as a cancer coach, she is helping others through their cancer journeys — sharing her experiences and her knowledge.

"When we need emotional healing, we know a psychiatrist or social worker can help. A cancer coach is just as important. No one should go through the healing process alone," she says.

Nevsky's services range from mundane tasks such as organizing a test-result filing system and steering clients toward medical resources to note-taking at medical appointments, accompanying clients to treatments and guiding them and their family and friends in the cancer journey.

"One of my clients had no family nearby. She was scared... felt alone and lost. I kept her company during her chemotherapy, and we worked together to keep her focused on the positives in her life. My goal is to help cancer patients regain their strength and motivation and to help cut through the chaos and paralysis of the unknown," Nevsky says.

She strongly encourages clients to be active with their doctors in planning their treatment. She does not provide medical advice or treatment.

Nevsky's own story is an incredible one, complete with years of misdiagnoses, culminating in a quick surgery to determine the extent of her cancer. Unfortunately, her colon cancer had metastasized into her liver and had become a stage-four tumour the size of a pear. She was told she had between six weeks and six months to live.

With radiation and chemotherapy, Nevsky experienced every known side effect — nausea, hair loss, fatigue and the eradication of her white blood cells, which landed her in a coma after just one week of chemo. "It was an awful time, and I became extremely depressed, which is common for cancer patients," she says.

"But, I kept seeing the three amazing faces of my children

and knew they were the reason I had to keep living."

It was then she read about the Healing Journey program at Princess Margaret Hospital and acknowledged that she had to help herself to heal her mind, body and spirit. "The program makes us look at ourselves closely. When we have 'dis-ease,' we realize there is too much stress for our bodies to handle. We must re-evaluate how we treat ourselves, and most importantly, we must learn to listen to our bodies. This is paramount to healing."

The Healing Journey also made Nevsky realize that we need others to acknowledge our illness and be able to share it with us. "Women especially, as wives and mothers, tend to hide their feelings from their families. They don't want those they love to see their pain," she says.

A cancer coach can take some of this burden off a family's shoulders. The coach will work with families and advocate for patients with their doctors. "People are often afraid to speak up and ask questions. We just take what our doctors say and don't follow our own gut," Nevsky says. "A coach can help people figure out their feelings and needs, and work with them before, during and after the cancer treatments, to make sure they're getting the best care they can."

She learned even more about the healing process after a diagnosis of lung cancer, four years after her first bout with the disease. Utilizing Wellspring — a program that offers alternative therapies such as reiki (therapeutic touch), yoga, tai chi and art therapy — Nevsky focused on mind/body/spiritual healing.

"I believe that HaShem has a purpose for me. I survived in order to give back and help other people on the same journey I had experienced," she says.

She began volunteering at Sunnybrook Hospital and Wellspring, serving as a peer counsellor, worked at hospices and in palliative care, and completed training courses with Circle of Care, the Healing Journey and with George Brown College, in a life skills coaching program. Through her continuing volunteer efforts, she works with individuals and families to help them cope and deal with cancer.

Nevsky recently turned this passion for helping people into her business, IsaAngel, and offers lectures to groups, plus a wide variety of services to individuals and families.

For more information, visit Isa Nevsky's website at www.isaAngel.com or call 416-457-6331.



Seniors are caring for seniors
see page 5

The Canadian
Jewish news

To Your Health

Kids and chiropractic: proceed with caution

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to the CJN

Fed up after years of aches and pains, Renée Czukar did what four million Canadians do each year — she turned to a chiropractor. And when she noticed after a few months that the treatment was having a positive effect, not just on her joint pain and backaches, but on her asthma and life-long eczema, she immediately thought of her daughter, Olivia, then four years old, who also suffered from eczema.

"She's had it really bad: behind her knees, behind her ears... in the winter, around her fingers," Czukar says.

Three months after Olivia began seeing chiropractor Dr. Ron Nusbaum, her eczema was gone. After a year and a half, Czukar says, and through two winters, "it still hasn't

come back at all."

That's not surprising, Nusbaum says. Chiropractic — although often used as an adjective, it's actually a Greek noun, meaning "treatment by hand" — works in resonance with the body's natural function, removing neurological barriers to healing caused by subtle injuries or lifestyle factors. Chiropractic "makes people better from the inside out."

"There are so many conditions people don't think to go to a chiropractor for," beyond neck and back pain, says Nusbaum, who left dental school more than 20 years ago to become a chiropractor, and established the Carrville Family Chiropractic in Richmond Hill, Ont., 10 years ago.

Kid-friendly posters greet even the youngest patients, who see him for everything from eczema to bedwetting and recurrent ear infections.

Chiropractors believe most medical conditions — even those that seem completely unrelated, such as diabetes — have a neuromusculoskeletal component, a nerve blockage sometimes called a subluxation that prevents healing. Through realigning the neck and spine, they say nerve function is improved, leading to better health overall.

"The whole concept makes sense to me," Czukar says.

"All the nerve endings come out of [the neck and spine] — everything attaches."

In children as in adults, subluxations are caused by chemical, emotional or physical trauma. Many chiropractors even believe that the birth process can potentially irritate the spine, and hold that this underlying trauma is one potential explanation for colic and other conditions of infancy.

But that assertion is "highly, highly non-scientific," cautions Montreal pediatrician Dr. Denis Leduc. Parents should be wary of any "practitioner who says that the birth experience misaligns the spine," requiring "preventative therapy for the next year or so and regular visits for readjustments."

As past president of the Canadian Paediatric Society (CPS), Leduc stands behind CPS' official statement that few chiroprac-



Melanie Silver, age 8, visits "Dr. Ron" for her regular chiropractic appointment. [Jennifer M. MacLeod photo]

tic methods have been scientifically validated, and expressing concern that chiropractors may overstep the bounds of their training and expertise.

The CPS statement suggests "rational" use of chiropractic to treat specific musculoskeletal conditions. Of serious concern, Leduc says, is that some chiropractors give parents information that may dissuade them from immunizing their kids. In one very small study, one-third of surveyed American chiropractors believed immunizations "cause more disease than they prevent."

While the Canadian Chiropractic Association (CCA) officially accepts vaccination "as a cost-effective and clinically efficient public health preventative procedure" and reiterates that immunization is not a "chiropractic specific issue," Leduc worries that individual chiropractors' attitudes, combined with U.S. anti-vaccination literature, could mislead parents.

"Any chiropractor who... suggests to parents that vaccines are not useful, I would certainly be very, very cautious about that chiropractor's expertise in anything else he or she does."

Another factor parents must watch out for, he says, is "making sure the chiropractor doesn't do any forceful manipulation of baby's spine."

But Nusbaum says that contrary to popular belief, chiropractic adjustment is neither violent nor painful, especially where children are involved.

When Czukar first brought Olivia to see "Dr. Ron," he just chatted with her for a couple of visits until they'd established a rapport.

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Continued on page B14

It's essential for new parents to get adequate sleep

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

The miracle of birth has been well described over the years. Parents the world over know the blissful joy that comes with bringing a new life into the world and creating a new family.

Slightly less talked about is the dark side to becoming a parent – sleep deprivation.

Whether it's colic, rounds of breastfeeding or just raw nerves, new moms and pops can expect some fitful sleep in the first few months after birth.

For new moms particularly, the lack of sleep can present some medical issues that shouldn't be ignored.

Dr. Bev Young, a psychiatrist and head of Toronto's Mount Sinai Perinatal Mental Health Program for the last three years, stresses the importance for new moms to find ways to sleep through the night in order to help stave off post-partum depression.

"I'm very strict about [sleep]. Because I think that if it doesn't necessarily cause it, it may exacerbate post-partum," she told *The C.N.* "Every woman I [treat] says their problems started when they couldn't get to sleep."

Young and her team at Mt. Sinai have treated thousands of new mothers and always prescribe sleep as an initial treatment for post-partum and other stress disorders in new parents.

"Anxiety is more common than depres-

sion," Young said. "And what's the first thing anxiety effects? Your sleep. Because you're ruminating and can't shut your mind off."

What happens next is something many new parents can relate to: excessive irritability.

Earlier this year, Doug Salomon, and his wife, Linda Martel, welcomed their second son into the world. While this second child is taking it easy on them in the sleep department, they remember the days of sleep deprivation from their first baby.

"We were told we should sleep when the baby sleeps," Salomon recalled. "The problem was, he slept for 10 minutes at a time. At one point, I was so tired I was almost crying. It wasn't so much that I was irritable, I felt more depressed. We just wanted sleep."

Eytan Hadad of Bradford, Ont., remembers his family's early days and advises parents that sleep should never take a back seat lest crankiness occur.



Dr. Bev Young

"Take turns, and try to nap during the day when the baby is napping. Housework can get done together later in the day," he said.

Young concurs wholeheartedly.

"I educate women and their partners about shift work. What's the point in both of you being up? There is none," she states.

"You have to do a tag-team approach. If there's a way of implementing a bottle, even if it means pumping, get the baby used to the bottle so the woman can go to bed earlier. Once the mother is on somewhat of a schedule, she can go to bed [and]

then the partner can [take over for] the next feed."

Young advises against parents trying to stay awake by ingesting excessive amounts of caffeine.

"I'm against using stimulants like coffee as a Band-Aid," she said. "Why are you trying to stimulate yourself? It can have an

effect on sleep, no matter how early [in the day] you take them. A lot of these women tell me they're drinking coffee or cola, and it's just going to make their anxiety worse, make them more agitated and irritable."

And if all else fails, call in the cavalry.

"I say, if you can afford it, get a night nurse or a nanny... someone to watch that baby at night," Young says. "Get in your mother or mother-in-law, get your husband to take time off work. This is a mental health issue, a medical issue."

Sleep deprivation can lead to reduced mental alertness, memory impairment, decreased decision-making and problem-solving abilities, heart disease and hypertension, among other reactions.

The Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care website cites the following as top causes of sleep deprivation among adults in the province: stress, drugs, nicotine, caffeine, conflict, pain and depression.

Crying newborns are not listed.

"Before retiring for the evening, a brisk walk, a hot bath or even meditation can help you relax and take your mind off these stressors," the ministry advises on its website. "Sticking to a regular sleeping schedule (waking up and going to bed at the same time everyday, even on weekends), exercising regularly (morning preferably), sleeping on a comfortable bed and avoiding heavy meals before turning in for the night can also greatly enhance your sleep quality."

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Families learn to deal with dementia

By CYNTHIA GASNER
Special to The C/JN

Family caregivers often find the responsibility of caring for their loved ones who have dementia or Alzheimer's disease overwhelming.

The family members are faced with loss, pain and often a feeling of helplessness.

The emotional trauma of watching a loved one who is fading away from the people and the world he or she once knew, becomes a grieving period while family members grasp for any method of prolonging memory.

The diagnosis of the disease was made 100 years ago by Dr. Alois Alzheimer. It's a progressive dementia that robs sufferers of their memory, judgment, cognition, motor skills and the ability to function independently.

Steven Shulman and his cousin are responsible for their 94-year-old aunt who has no children. He has watched his Aunt May (not her real name) gradually having to cope with vascular dementia.

"She now has forgetful periods where this independent

woman is not able to live at home and is in a retirement residence with additional help," says Shulman who is the Ontario regional director and national general counsel at Canadian Jewish Congress.



Sharon Galway, owner of Home Instead Senior Care in Toronto

He explains that his aunt was always very active and worked in the family business. Her husband died 10 years ago and she continued to live independently in her own apartment.

"Unfortunately, things changed the level of her independence five years ago when she was hit by a car while crossing the road. And over the past few years, there have been varying degrees of forgetfulness, such as forgetting what happened earlier in the day," Shulman explains.

But there are new things being tried that help people like Aunt May.

Shulman says, for example, that along with the care his aunt receives at the retirement residence, "we decided that our aunt required additional activities and mental stimulation, so we turned to Home Instead Senior Care to provide that extra assistance and companionship for her."

According to Sharon Galway, owner of Home Instead Senior Care in North York, when it comes to



A caregiver from Home Instead Senior Care is seen with a client.

the aging mind, more and more research is giving new meaning to the popular phrase, "use it or lose it."

"An increasing body of evidence indicates that keeping the mind active can help prevent or slow down the onset of disease common to the elderly, such as Alzheimer's or dementia," says Galway.

Galway, who is a registered nurse, says that years ago, when her in-laws became ill, the family hired caregivers, but then had problems with theft. With her background as a nurse in mental health, abuse of women, and palliative care, she set up the Prevention of Elder Abuse Committee in York Region and became its chair.

In 2004, she made caring for elderly people her new career when she bought Canada's first franchise of Home Instead Senior Care, the world's largest home care service provider.

"I saw that seniors were not getting the care they needed," she says. Home Instead Senior Care, whose goal is to keep the mind active, provides non-medical care services for seniors. There are 21 independently owned locations in six provinces in Canada and 700 franchises throughout the world.

Galway says that to keep mentally fit, today's seniors are saying goodbye to traditional games like bingo and gravitating to video-game technology and such activities as Scrabble and bridge tournaments.

According to the Alzheimer's Society of Canada, 300,000 Canadians over the age of 65 have Alzheimer's disease and research indicates that the figures are expected to grow. Two-thirds of the victims of Alzheimer's are women.

At this time, there is no cure for Alzheimer's disease but there are medications that alleviate the symptoms and improve the quality of life for some patients for a period of time.

Continued on page B5

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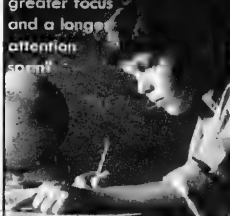
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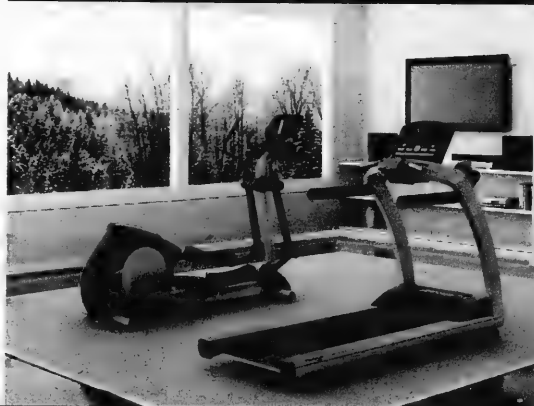


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To Your Health

An Emerging Trend

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The C/JN

Seniors caring for seniors

Being a senior is supposed to be a golden time, right?

Well, in our society, that is the common dream for the future. The idea is that after working hard for 40-plus years, retirement should be a glorious period to do the things you've always wanted to do — take it easy, enjoy the finer things in life and so on.

But there's a phenomenon that's throwing a wrench in the lives of people 65 and older: seniors taking care of seniors.

Modern medicine has increased life expectancy significantly, and as a result, it isn't unusual for a 70-year-old to have parents or a spouse who are in need of hands-on care.

And as more and more baby boomers age, millions of Canadians will find themselves in a role they didn't expect.

"I always thought my wife and I would do all kinds of travelling once we retired," says Dr. Bob Lester, a 71-year-old recent retiree. "That's all gone now."

Lester, who retired as chief medical executive at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre after 41 years with the hospital, is coping with the demands of caring for his wife Judy, who has dementia.

She needs constant care with everything from getting in and out of bed to eating meals.

Like many seniors in a similar situation, Lester feels his own age limits his ability to care for his wife, so he has hired a professional caregiver.

"I am in fairly decent shape, but I don't have the mobility and strength that I had

when I was younger," Lester says.

"Moving her around or lifting her out of bed is a little more difficult now."

As well, the expense of paying for a professional caregiver was not part of the retirement plans he made years ago.

"It's a financial worry that I had not planned upon," Lester says. "It has made a total difference."

There are also the emotional challenges that come with looking after an elderly parent or spouse with many needs.

Frustration, anger, anxiety and a sense of being overwhelmed are all emotions that can affect a senior who cares for another senior.

But the news is not all bad.

Because seniors have common health ailments, they will likely be better able to empathize with their ill parents or spouse.

In Lester's case, he is currently spending part of the winter with his wife in Arizona, and he feels that on a mental level, his age and life experience are somewhat beneficial.

"I tend to be a positive person, and I think that with my life experience, this is something I am able to cope with fairly well," Lester says.

"As you get older, you tend to be a little more accepting of things. And not working full time also makes this a little easier."

After retiring, seniors have much more free time, which provides many opportunities to be with their grandchildren, socialize with friends, or exploring and discovering whatever they want to.

"I have never been in this situation before where I have three months to play golf, swim, exercise and see my grandchildren regularly," Lester says.

"I can now think a lot about this next phase of my life."

Lack of companionship cited

Continued from page B4

The Alzheimer's Society notes, however, that there are things people can do to reduce the risk.

The organization recently began a two-year awareness program called "Heads up for healthier brains," which claims that varying one's routine and doing word puzzles, jigsaws and memory games can help keep the disease at bay.

A study at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia, published last year in *Psychology Medicine*, found that even a late-in-life surge in mental activity can stave off effects of the disease.

The current best seller, *The Brain That Changes Itself* (Viking 2007) by Canadian psychiatrist Dr. Norman Doidge, explains the revolution in neuroscience that says the brain is malleable and can overcome serious brain injuries and illness.

It details case histories of people whose plight was considered hopeless. It's all about having the brain change its structure and function, even in advanced age.

Galway told *The C/JN* that one of the problems for many seniors who want to stay men-

tally active is lack of companionship, especially for older adults who live alone.

"Through games and puzzles, cards and music, Home Instead caregivers have seen lives change for many older adults throughout the community. Sometimes, seniors just need a little encouragement from family and friends to help them pursue interests that can keep their minds stimulated."

Home Instead Senior Care includes companionship, meal preparation, medication reminders, light housekeeping and escorts for errands, shopping and medical appointments, Galway says.

"We offer an Alzheimer's training program which is the first of its kind for non-medical caregivers," she says.

Among their list of "Mind-Stimulating Fun Tips," Home Instead includes interactive video games, computer games such as solitaire or joining an online bridge game, music, playing an instrument, game tournaments, jigsaw puzzles, attending concerts and lectures, maintaining an interest in politics and companionship.



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To Your Health

Insurance can subsidize cost of home care

By JANICE CLOTH
Special to The CJN

'If you need a caregiver every day or every second day, it can add up'

care will increase as well.

"As the generations are lasting longer, the chances of needing some kind of attendant care will increase. It's more likely women will need long-term-care insurance because women outlive men," Tomlinson said.

Landen says there is one thing he wishes he had during his father's final years. "I wish we had long-term-care insurance. If my father had purchased it before he became disabled, it would have helped handle the bills and expenses."

Long-term-care insurance is now available in Canada. Through the insurance, you can receive up to \$300 a day to subsidize or cover the cost of home care or facility care when you or a loved one can no longer perform specific tasks or are cognitively impaired. Currently, the cost for a private long-term-care facility can range from \$4,000 to \$7,000 a month.

Tomlinson advises families to consider buying long-term-care insurance and to think about the potential consequences to their family's future if a family member should require long-term care, either at home or in an institution.

Long-term-care insurance is as important a part of retirement and estate planning as mutual funds and life insurance are. With the insurance, you and your family will be ready with a contingency plan and not have to react in a panic should a crisis occur.

Long-term-care insurance allows us to control the options we will have available when we or our parents grow older and need help. Through the purchase of long-term-care insurance, we can give ourselves and our families the best chance of making the best choices regarding quality of life and the level of dignity.

Life insurance is for those who are worried about what they leave behind after they die. Long-term-care insurance is for those who are concerned about living longer and not knowing if they will have enough money to maintain their quality of life.

Long-term-care insurance may be the way to ensure that you are financially prepared to look after your health without putting a strain on limited financial resources. Otherwise, you may deplete what you intended to leave your children as their inheritance or, worse, leave your children financially responsible for your care.

Some people feel that the government will take care of them. Public facilities are available for those who cannot afford private care. However, there may be long waiting lists and lack of choice in the location of the facility. You could be rooming with three other people and sharing one bathroom.

The care you provide for your parents will set an example for your children about how you would want them to care for you.

When Rachel Weiss broke her hip in 2006, she was happy that she and her husband had purchased long-term-care insurance. As long as she is on claim, she will have her care subsidized. The insurance has allowed her to stay in her own home with a live-in caregiver, without being a financial burden to her husband or children.

Long-term-care insurance is "selfish insurance" you purchase to insure that you will be looked after in the manner you feel you are entitled to.

Janice Cloth is a living benefit specialist.

Barry Landen thinks back to when his father was suffering from Alzheimer's disease before his death. Deprived of his capacities, Sid Landen needed care around the clock.

"The nurses couldn't give him the attention he needed, so we were forced to hire a private caregiver. The hospital encouraged us to hire our own caregiver because the facility was so understaffed from the budget cuts," said Landen.

Sid was one of a growing number of Canadian seniors who needed a live-in attendant, which can cost upward of \$200 to \$500 a day.

"Private care costs about \$20 an hour, with a minimum of three hours per visit. So that's \$60.00 right there," said Mary Ellen Tomlinson, founder of Senior Care Options. "If you need a caregiver every day or every second day, it can add up."

According to a Statistics Canada publication titled *A Portrait of Seniors in Canada*, people are living longer than in the past. Near the beginning of the 20th century, the average 65-year-old Canadian could expect to live another 13.3 years. In 2003, that individual could expect to live another 19.2 years.

Over the next 20 years, this trend will accelerate, particularly as the baby boomers begin turning 65. Stats Canada reports that by 2026, the number of seniors is projected to increase from 4.3 million to 8.0 million. As the senior population increases, you can be sure that the cost of attendant

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To Your Health

Agency seeks to streamline local health services

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Hy Eliasoph wants to start a health-care dialogue with residents in the northern parts of the GTA.

He is CEO of Central Local Health Integration Network (LHIN), one of 14 not-for-profit community organizations set up by the province with responsibility for planning, integrating and funding local health services in 14 different geographic areas of the province.

Central LHIN, which stretches from north central Toronto through York Region to the shores of Lake Simcoe, works with more than 130 health-care organizations for the more than 1.5 million residents in its catchment area.

Eliasoph said that LHINs are based on the principle that local people – two-thirds of the Toronto-area Jewish community live in the area – are best able to determine their health service needs and priorities, and his LHIN is trying to reach them through newspapers and community groups.

He said he recently finished a round of consultation sessions, some targeted at the Jewish community.

"Our plan is driven by engaging with the community and identifying their priorities, such as aging at home and chronic care. We are mandated to build services at local levels."

The benefit of LHINs – the concept is about two years old – Eliasoph said, is that

health-service decisions affecting communities are made by local people.

"We develop ways to improve access to health services, respond to concerns, and look for ways for service providers to improve quality of care."

Central LHIN plays a role in ensuring patients have better access to co-ordinated and integrated services, he said. "In Central LHIN, there are 140 organizations that fall under our umbrella. Previously, each of them would have to be approached individually. There really was no system."

"We've brought folks together and co-ordinated their planning. We're trying to create a platform so they don't have to run around from one organization to another."

By working in collaboration with health-care providers, Eliasoph said, Central LHIN is easing the flow of patients across the health-care system and improving access to services in the community.

People can reach Central LHIN through phone or e-mail, he said, or they can attend one of the many information sessions it runs. "Ideally, groups can have us come out and chat with them."

Aging at home is a big issue, Eliasoph said, and his organization has a three-year commitment to build an aging-at-home program.

"The concept is that people can continue to live in their home environment with help and support," he said.

"At some point it becomes impossible for

people to remain in their own homes without help. We're trying to find an alternative to building more facilities. It's really very exciting."

For more information about upcoming events, check the agency's website at centralhin.on.ca, call the Central LHIN office at 1-866-392-5446, or e-mail central@lhins.on.ca.

Website offers info on basics of natural health

By LAURA STRICKER
CJN Intern

People looking to make the switch to living a naturally healthy lifestyle often find the wealth of information available confusing and overwhelming. Two Toronto-based women are trying to change that.

Andrea Donsky and Randy Boyer, co-founders of The Healthy Shopper, a coupon book filled with natural and organic products, started Naturally Savvy in March 2007. Naturally Savvy is an information-based website on the basics of natural health.

"Our goal is to educate people on the benefits of natural and organic products," Donsky said. "We use easy to understand terms that speak to the general public in a non-fear-based, purely educational way."

The Naturally Savvy website is designed in a user-friendly, interactive way, complete with naturallysavvytv, which includes videos

on everything from the Whole Foods Market to the differences between natural and organic versus conventional meats. There is also a blog written by dentists, entrepreneurs and everyone in between. Visitors to the site can browse through many delicious – and healthy – recipes and sign up for the Naturally Savvy monthly newsletter.

Also featured is a section on Natural Nutrition, where people can send in questions to the Naturally Savvy nutritionist, Lisa Tsakos.

"Lisa is one of the smartest people I know in her field," Donsky said.

Naturally Savvy only features content that has something natural about it, and works only with companies that have similar beliefs as her and Boyer, Donsky said.

"Everyone and everything mentioned on our site has a natural component to it," she said.

Continued on page B8

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Lisa Weinberg

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Here, then, are some of my favourites. I chose these carefully, realizing that purchasing a book is an expense, and I would not want you to buy one you will use only once or twice. I think you'll agree that these are worth the money. The next time you're trying to come up

with a creative hostess gift, consider giving a cookbook – she'll love it!

The Joy of Cooking by Irma S. Rombauer, Marion Rombauer Becker and Ethan Becker (Simon & Schuster) – This is very simply my bible, the book I use most often and refer to always, from when I was first married. It has it all, whether you're making a roast, a sauce, a dressing, sushi, baking, it's all there and I have never made a bad recipe from it. This is a fabulous gift for a bride!

The Eat-Clean Diet Cookbook: Great-Tasting Recipes That Keep You Lean by Tosca Reno (Robert Kennedy Publishing) – This is a new book and I love it. The recipes are easy, healthy and delicious, and the book will inspire you to wake up tomorrow and have oatmeal for breakfast. Try egg white and turkey scramble, garlicky couscous, whole

wheat flax cookies and wheat berry salad. This book has many good vegetarian recipes too.

Kosher by Design, Short on Time by Susie Fishbein (ArtScroll/Shaar Press) – This is an excellent, picturesque book.

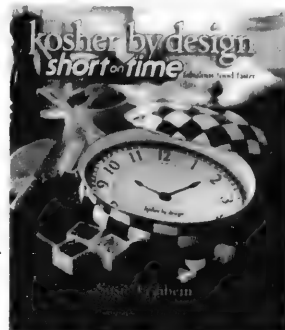
Try spinach, strawberry, banana salad; cookie brittle; cherry tomato crisp; and turkey marsala with artichokes.

Norene's Healthy Kitchen: Eat Your Way to Good Health by Norene Gilletz (Whitecap Books) – I have long been a loyal user of all of Gilletz's books, from her food processor book to *Meal-Lean-i-Yumm*, now called *Healthy Helpings*, and the newest, *Healthy Kitchens*. Her recipes are healthy, easy and family friendly. Try crunchy roasted chick peas, confetti vegetable strudel, chocolate zucchini walnut muffins and Passover meat lasagna.

Food to Live By by Myra Goodman (Workman Publishing Company, Inc.) – This is an Earthbound Farm organic cookbook, but you don't have to buy organic to love the fresh flavours in the book, which has interesting sidebar information. You'll love these recipes. Try hearty cauliflower bisque, roasted beet and arugula salad with walnuts and feta, fusion coleslaw and pumpkin pecan muffins.

Real Simple, Meals Made Easy, published by *Real Simple* magazine – This is from one of my favourite magazines. The book is colourful, and the recipes are easy and delicious.

Continued on page B9



Are you morbidly obese?

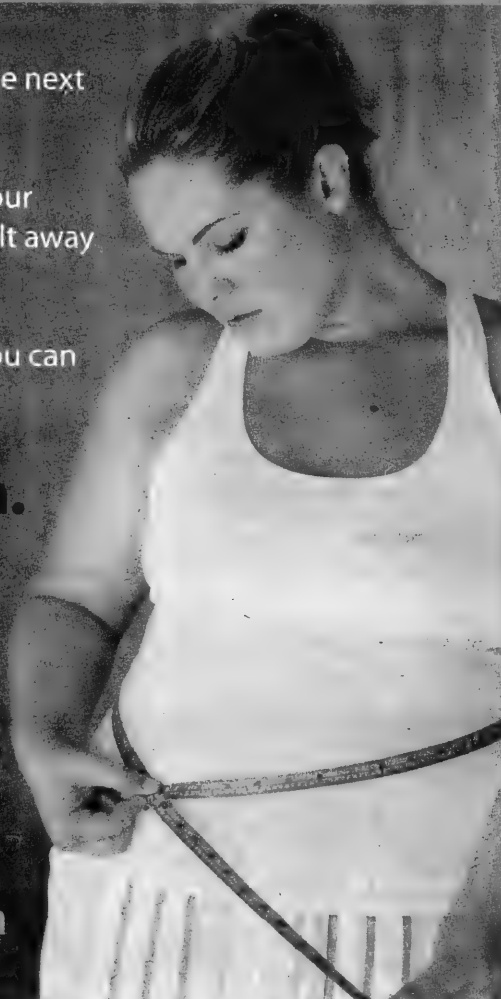
You may think that the next diet plan will work.

You may think that your excess pounds will melt away with exercise.

You may think that you can get off the meds.

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Pair hopes to expand

Continued from page B7

"We work with companies who are true to our beliefs."

Donsky and Boyer have many future plans for Naturally Savvy, as well as for other projects. They are currently working with a literary agent and are writing a book together.

"We want to be the number 1 source for trusted information," Donsky said.

The two health connoisseurs are also hoping to expand into the media, whether it is through radio or on television – anything that will get Naturally Savvy more publicity, she said.

For people who want to adopt a healthier lifestyle but are not sure how to begin, Donsky has some simple tips.

She suggests starting by taking one or two products that get a lot of use, such as milk, and substituting it with something natural or organic. Donsky also recommends buying organic fruits and vegetables.

For cleaning products, she suggests gradually replacing chemical ones with natural products. When you run out of a certain cleaning product, Donsky says to replace it with something natural.

What is important to remember, she added, is that trying natural cleaning products requires patience.

"Your expectations have to be altered," she said. "Chemical products tend to work faster than natural ones, so you need to be patient."

"Natural products might take a bit more patience and experimenting. It's all about finding the right product that works for you."

To get started on the path to a healthier lifestyle, visit the Naturally Savvy website at www.naturallysavvy.com. For discounts on natural and organic products, visit Donsky and Boyer's other site, The Healthy Shopper, at www.healthysupplier.ca.

To Your Health

Keeping a journal can promote weight loss

I have long been a fan of keeping a journal, and often recommend it to my clients as a fantastic tool in their overall success.

So whether it's to help you focus, set goals, cope with stress, have a catharsis or just keep your thoughts in one place, keeping a journal can have a myriad of positive outcomes.



Life
Coach
Corner

Judy
Sibling-Librach

When we write things down, we gain clarity, inspiration, focus, wisdom, joy and creativity, all elements that can improve our lives both personally and professionally.

Julia Cameron, in her book *The Artist's Way*, suggests a technique I absolutely love. It's called the "morning pages."

Every morning, you write three pages in a journal on whatever comes to mind. Initially, this is a way to release your stress, worries and anxieties, which clears your concerns and frees you to write about what excites and delights you. Once you have released all of the negative chatter, there is room to record your inspirations, exciting dreams, goals and ideas. But probably the most advantageous reason to keep a journal is that by committing to do something in writing, you really do make things happen. In Henriette Klausner's book, *Write It Down to Make It Happen*, she tells story after story of celebrities who wrote down their dreams and goals, which contributed to their success.

Cameron suggests writing in a journal every day for 21 days to get into the habit; to write in the morning and don't aim for perfection, just aim for writing three pages the moment you get up. Keep the journal with you for inspiration and don't judge your writing in any way.

As a longtime fan of these "morning pages," I was thrilled to discover Cameron's latest book, *The Writing Diet: Write Yourself Right-Size*. As I am someone who is constantly looking for inspirational weight-loss aids and is often being asked by people to help them get to their ideal weight, I thought the book was worth perusing.

Essentially, Cameron suggests writing the "morning pages" every day, along with writing every time you feel like eating.

She says: "Writing brings motion into our lives. A habit of daily 'morning pages' brings us into contact with our thoughts and feelings. We learn what's eating us. From our food journal, we learn what we ourselves are eating. This is good as far as it goes, but it doesn't go quite far enough. We need to exercise as well, and the best way to do this is by walking. Twenty minutes a day can be chiselled out of the busiest life simply by replacing our worrying with walking, and walking does help teach us not to worry. When we walk, our problems are drawn to scale."

She also talks about the four questions, which should not be confused with the four questions we ask at the Passover seder. They are: Am I hungry?; is this what I feel like eating?; is this what I feel like eating now?; and is there something else that I could eat instead?

By asking these questions, we become more aware, and have more energy and optimism, Cameron says. Another tool she recommends for weight loss is to use the word HALT, which stands for what to do if we get too hungry, angry, too lonely or too tired, and how those are all conditions that make us vulnerable. This technique is a reminder to eat regularly, write things down to make them happen, and keep tracking your experiences.

There are many other tools that Cameron recommends, including "triggers," "body buddies" and how to "picture

yourself perfect," but it all comes back to this – whether you're on a "writing diet"; a "writing your dreams and goals"; or "writing away your worries," keeping a journal is an easy, effective and enjoyable way of making things happen. And any kind of reflection, when practiced through keeping a journal, has been shown to have a variety of positive outcomes. As TV talk-show host Oprah Winfrey says, "Writing in a journal will change your life in ways you've never imagined."

So whether you want to win a Pulitzer Prize, get a promotion, find love in your life, lose weight, solve a problem or find more joy, fun, adventure and peace of mind, pick up a pen and paper and start writing!

Judy Sibling-Librach is an Adler-trained coach. Website: www.findingyourbliss.com, e-mail: judyelle@ican.net

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I love reading magazines

Continued from page B8

Try steamed halibut and asparagus in parchment, crisped leftover pasta, lasagna-style baked ziti, turkey noodle soup, and the fluffy corn and goat cheese omelet.

The Complete Canadian Living Cookbook by Elizabeth Baird, published by *Canadian Living* magazine – This book is packed with outstanding recipes. It offers seasonal favourites and hasn't steered me wrong. Try pasta e fagioli, quick chicken in wine, orange and sour cherry buttermilk cake, raspberry chocolate bundt cake and a multitude of great salad dressings.

A final note: I love reading magazines. I love reading them and I love recommending the light cooking ones to patients. Many offer wonderful seasonal recipes with great pictures and are inexpensive. The next time you're in the grocery store or bookstore, pick up a few. You're sure to get some great new ideas.



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To Your Health

Israel's skin-care industry goes natural

By ORIT ARFA
ISRAEL21c

In biblical, talmudic and medieval times, it was not unusual for the empires that ruled Israel's soil to exploit the healing properties of trees and plants indigenous to the country. Over the last decade, a growing number of Israeli researchers and companies have rediscovered these ancient herbal formulas and repackaged them as healthy natural alternatives to mainstream skin-care and hair products.

"The herbal remedies have always existed, but we never granted them importance," said herbalist Shimon Shemla. "But today, more and more people are finding that they lack effective answers to viruses, allergies, and even cancer, so they are returning to the sources."

Fifteen years ago, Shemla left his career as a real-estate developer to study botany, naturopathy, and ancient herbal remedies. Five years later, he founded Merapeh Habosem (Simple Natural in English), a study centre and small-scale manufacturer specializing in ancient Hebrew remedies.

Shemla has studied and documented the properties of more than 500 herbs, plants and trees, many of which feature prominently in his serums, shampoos, soaps, ointments, toners and peels. Using homeopathic techniques, he concocts recipes for the hair and skin using plants and trees mentioned in the Bible and Talmud.

In the Judean desert, Herbs of Kedem specializes in plants cultivated in a specific desert region: the dunes located between the Dead Sea, the lowest place on earth, and the cool Hebron hills. Research conducted by Nissim Amzallag, the company's founder, has shown that these plants contain compounds that allow them to adapt to the harsh and extreme climates of the region.

"If they can regenerate themselves effectively, Amzallag assumed they would have a similar effect on humans," explained chemical engineer Amir Kitron, CEO of Herbs of Kedem. The company's products have been shown to effectively treat nail fungus, psoriasis, dermatitis, acne, scars, and hair loss. The company has set up a non-profit research and development center near its factory in Moshav Carmel to further explore scientifically the medical uses and benefits of the plants.

Herbs of Kedem has established itself as one of Israel's leaders in the field of natural skin care in part because of the purity of its products and ingredients.

"We are fanatic about using no synthetic ingredients whatsoever," Kitron told ISRAEL21c. He considers moisturizing creams particularly problematic, since they are created by bonding oil and water, an unstable compound which usually requires preservatives to ward off bacteria. As an alternative to

lotions, Herbs of Kedem has created a line of moisturizing ointments made from essential oils.

In Afula, Moraz Galilee Medical Herbs specializes in a unique plant prolific in the Galilee: polygonum, which contains natural anti-oxidant and anti-bacterial compounds that have been found to repair tissue and promote the healing of wounds. About 90 per cent of the company's products feature this ingredient.



**Jamal Hamoud,
co-founder of Aya Natural.**

"Polygonum is found in other countries and cultures, but the strain grown in Israel is known to have higher healing properties than other strains around the world due to the climate, atmosphere and minerals in the Galilean soil," says Moraz's CEO Ofer Mor.

The Galilee is not only a breeding ground for a variety of herbs and plants, but for coexistence between the variety of peoples and cultures represented in Israel.

Aya Natural, a natural cosmetics company, is headquartered in the Druze village of Beit Jann. The Druze people, an offshoot of Islam since the 10th century, have been taking advantage of the medicinal properties of herbs, plants and trees growing in the Galilee for centuries.

Aya's two founders, Ziad Dabour, a pharmacist, and Jamal Hamoud, a chemist, deliberately built their boutique and visitors centre in Beit Jann to bring employment to their village. Their mission is to combine modern pharmaceutical knowledge with Druze tradition.

"In the Druze tradition and in Beit Jann in particular, we wrapped babies in olive oil and myrtle powder for immunization," said Hamoud.

Most of Aya's products are 100 per cent natural and biodegradable, made from Galilean olive oil and other essential oils, and they are sold across Israel and Europe.

While Israel has long been recognized in the skin-care industry for its Dead Sea products, there has been a surge of worldwide interest in Israel's plant-based products as well.

"The demand for alternative cosmetic or pharmaceutical products in Israel and the world is growing 15 to 20 per cent annually, compared to a two to five per cent growth of conventional skin-care and cosmetics products," says Mor.

"More people are in search of natural products, particularly Israeli-made products," says Gilia Gilad, a naturopath based in Jerusalem. "The awareness of what people put in their mouth is increasing, but so is what they put on their body."

And while several Israeli companies are expanding their markets abroad, Gilad thinks the best beneficiaries are Israelis.

"It's known that the organism of the human body is an inextricable part of nature, and therefore it responds better to ingredients found in their natural habitat. This is true for food, and certainly with regards to ingredients that come in contact with the skin."

To Your Health

Mindfulness meditation can prevent depression's return

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

For the millions of people who suffer from depression, Dr. Zindel Segal, the chair of psychotherapy for the psychiatry department at the University of Toronto, has good news.

Based on clinical and scientific research, the practice of mindfulness meditation can reduce the likelihood of a relapse into depression by 50 per cent, Segal said.

In October, Segal was in Atlanta at a conference called Mindfulness, Compassion and the Treatment of Depression, sharing a stage with the Dalai Lama, and giving his findings about the benefits of mindfulness meditation, in which people learn to watch their thoughts in a non-judgmental way. It is a technique that plays a central role in Buddhism.

"Part of what happens to the brain when we pay attention and learn how to watch our thoughts is that... we're developing a platform from which we can watch what our minds are doing," said Segal, who heads the

cognitive behavior therapy unit at the Center for Addiction and Mental Health and authored a book titled *The Mindful Way Through Depression*.

"When we are able to do that, we are less likely to be hijacked by the messages that our minds give us. The training in meditation is really how to develop a platform of observation and non-judgment. You could be practising mindfulness meditation and get very good at watching your thoughts, and you might also notice that you have a lot of negative thoughts during the day."

He added that if you're not aware of the prevalence of negative thoughts, it can lead to physical tension in the body, and even changes in the levels of stress hormones.

"You basically believe and buy into those messages. With mindfulness meditation, part of what you're helping yourself do is to develop an awareness that these thoughts are going through my mind. I don't necessarily have to believe them or act on them, I can just watch them," said Segal, who is conducting a study funded by the National Institute of Mental Health in

Washington, D.C., on the prevention of relapse in recurrent depression.

"It is unusual for the United States to fund a study in Canada, and it looks at the use of this mindfulness program with people who have been treated with anti-depressants for their depression."

He said that this work is meant to help people who have recovered from bouts of depression and anxiety, and want to find ways of preventing a recurrence.

"Depression is one of the most common mental health problems faced by our society. It is so common that it has been called the common cold of mental illness. In general, close to eight per cent of the population suffer from depression, which is very high... The difficulty faced by many of these folks is that depression tends to come back into their lives at an alarming rate."

But Segal said that advances in this area have shown that there are different ways to stay mentally healthy.

"You can use an anti-depressant drug, you can go speak to a therapist to help pull you out of the depression, but then to stay well, there are a number of practices that have been found through clinical trials to promote wellness, to increase people's ability to work wisely with their emotions and, ultimately, they will have lower risk for the recurrence of their illness."

"One of these happens to be learning about mindfulness and mindfulness meditation. It

is an unusual thing to be doing in terms of secular health care and part of the interest is that it is an approach that is being used more broadly with physical problems that is now starting to find a home in the treatment of psychiatric problems."

Segal said the Dalai Lama was very interested in understanding how the practice of mindfulness meditation, which originated in Buddhism to calm and still the mind, has been imported into the field of medicine and psychiatry.

"When we teach people these practices, we don't teach them anything about Buddhism or anything that has to do with a religious basis. It is taught as a way of taking care of yourself as a kind of treatment, not as a doctrine," Segal said.

"[The Dalai Lama] is very encouraging of these different forms of mental training being used by as many people as possible. He's not trying to say that to do this you need to be a Buddhist... He feels that if this practice can help people reduce their suffering and help them feel more positive then that is enough."

Mindfulness meditation has been developed and clinically tested as an eight-week group program. During the group sessions, patients practice mindfulness, and they also are given CDs with which to practise at home.

Segal said that two of the clinical trials that have been done have used the mindfulness meditation method on its own.

Continued on page B14



Dr. Zindel Segal

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Dentist fights bad breath

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

For Dr. Harold Katz, a California-based dentist, eating a raw onion during an interview is routine.

Known as the bad breath guru, Katz is an expert in the field.

"Bad breath can ruin your career, your romance, your chic designer outfit... and your life," says Katz, founder of the California Breath Clinics and creator of the TheraBreath System, an oral rinse and toothpaste that act on the bacteria that cause bad breath.

In Toronto recently, Katz, who has appeared on such shows as *20/20*, *The Today Show* and *Good Morning America*, said his interest in bad breath dates back to the early 1990s, when his then-13-year-old daughter had a severe and chronic breath problem.

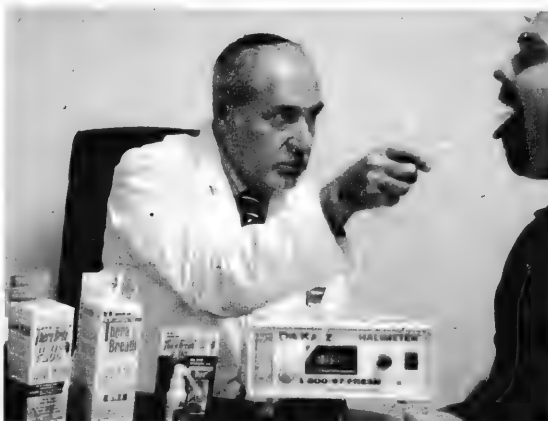
"Despite immaculate oral hygiene with the most popular products, the problem persisted. You can imagine how a young girl felt about that. She was in tears."

Armed with a degree in bacteriology, Katz realized that her bad breath was caused by a group of bacteria that breed within the tongue's surface and throat. Under certain conditions, these bacteria initiate the production of the volatile sulfur compounds found in bad breath.

"Despite what some highly advertised products falsely claim, bad breath does not come from the digestive system."

He began to experiment with products that would attack these bacteria, and the resulting products, refined over and over again, "have shown astonishing results. Tests have resulted in the complete elimination of over 98 per cent of the compounds that cause bad breath within the mouth."

It was at this point in the interview that Katz took out his halimetre, a hand-held device that measures the acceptability



Dr. Harold Katz and his trusty halimetre tests a patient's breath.

ty of people's breath, and chomped down on the onion.

While most products did nothing to hide his onion breath, TheraBreath oral rinse took it away.

"I've proven with my onion breath that over-the-counter breath mints, mouthwashes, chewing gum and breath-freshening toothpastes — they are a \$6-billion business in Canada — don't even make a dent [on bad breath.] In fact, they make bad breath even worse. Our aim is to get rid of the odour, not add flavour."

With the Los Angeles branch of his clinic located next to the Twentieth Century Fox studios, Katz said that he has helped

a number of celebrities with their oral health problems, especially those who are filming scenes involving kissing and extreme close-ups.

"Throughout the day or evening, even during a quick break in their schedules, stars would dash into my office to grab some TheraBreath to give to their co-stars whose bad breath was interfering with their concentration and even making them forget their lines.

"Hollywood stars are obsessed with the challenge of constantly maintaining sweet-smelling breath.

They've learned the hard way that over-the-counter mints, gums, toothpastes and sprays don't give them 24/7 results—and peace of mind. Imagine greeting an adoring fan or a journalist with stinky breath."

TheraBreath has become popular on the Hollywood circuit, he said. "Everybody is using it — stars, agents, producers, even production crews [because] the toothpaste and oral rinse contain natural ingredients that maintain good oral health. No alcohol, peroxide, harsh chemicals — just brush and rinse twice daily. Today, Hollywood is into heavy breathin' n' smoochin' without the worry."

Asked for tips about avoiding bad breath, Katz advised to avoid alcohol, cauliflower, cabbage, sugar — it feeds bacteria — dairy foods and high protein diets.

"As well, certain medications such as antihistamines and birth control pills, and hormonal changes such as menopause or puberty can cause bad breath," he said.

Drink a lot of water to replenish saliva and eat fruits and vegetables such as celery, watermelon and strawberries, he said. "They are nature's way of keeping breath fresh."

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Finding relief from annoying migraines

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Although doctors are still learning about what triggers migraine headaches, sufferers need to know that there are several methods of treatment that could reduce their suffering.

"We do know a lot more than we did 10 to 20 years ago, but there is still a lot that evades us. What we do know is that it is a biological disorder, just like asthma, diabetes and high blood pressure," said Dr. Ian Finkelstein, director of the Toronto Headache and Pain Clinic who specializes in treating chronic headaches and other forms of chronic pain.

He said that according to a national migraine survey done in 2005, about 38 per cent of migraines don't seek medical help and suffer in silence because of a misconception that migraines can't be treated.

"One of the big problems for patients is that it is either under-diagnosed or misdiagnosed, or when it is diagnosed, it isn't properly treated," he said.

"If you're going to get migraines, there are lifestyle modifications, there are things you can do to try to decrease attacks," Finkelstein said.



Dr. Ian Finkelstein

But first, it is important to understand how a migraine affects a sufferer.

Many people who have migraines experience nausea and vomiting with their attacks. It has been reported that some experience an "aura"—blurred vision, numbness and tingling—before an attack.

Finkelstein said that migraine is a disorder of the central nervous system in which the central nervous system becomes hyper-sensitive to specific triggers or various stimuli.

"You typically hear these migraines are sensitive to change in weather or sensitive to their period, or sensitive to certain foods," he said, adding that there is also often a genetic connection.

"It is a disorder of both the nerve cells in the brain and the blood vessels surrounding the outside of the brain. These nerve cells in the brain... tend to be activated by a mechanism that we still don't understand. What we do know is that once these nerve cells do become activated in the brain, it precipitates this cascade of other events," Finkelstein explained.

"These events will cause the release of what we call inflammatory substances that surround the blood vessels in the brain and the surrounding tissue on the outside of the brain. By virtue of having these inflammato-

ry substances around the blood vessels and the surrounding tissue outside the brain, these pain pathways become activated and then these patients end up with horrid migraines."

Finkelstein said that on top of the challenge of living with these attacks that are "extraordinarily disabling," many patients are misunderstood.

"People who don't suffer from migraines don't understand migrainers. A migraine patient calls in, or is at work and says, 'I have a horrible migraine. I have to leave.'"

"You mean, you have a headache?"

"No, I have a migraine."

"Well, you know, take two Tylenol and get back to work. That's what I do when I get a

headache." The idea that a migraine is just a headache is a misnomer," Finkelstein said.

Women tend to suffer from migraines at a rate much higher than men—at a ratio of three to one—and they often have their first attack around the time of puberty because their estrogen levels change.

"It is the fluctuation of hormone levels that cause women to be more sensitive to migraines."

Many women stop having migraine headaches after menopause because their estrogen levels "settle right down," Finkelstein said.

Continued on page B14

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To Your Health

Doctors rely on patient's description

Continued from page B13

Since there are no blood tests or X-rays that can help a doctor make the diagnosis, doctors rely on a patient's description of their symptoms.

Although there is no cure for migraine attacks, patients should work with a doctor to establish a treatment plan that could lessen the frequency and duration of the attacks.

Eating a healthy diet and avoiding triggers such as alcohol, could help lessen an attack. Biofeedback, which involves learning to control how your body reacts to stress, yoga, and more sleep can also help, Finkelstein said.

"Exercise is key for these patients because it releases endorphins in your body, which is beneficial. If you exercise, you'll sleep well, and if you sleep the same every night and you sleep the same hours, that will improve your migraines."

He said that when it comes to treatment while you're suffering from a migraine, patients are often prescribed triptan medications that relieve pain by narrowing blood vessels and balancing the chemicals in the brain.

Migraine sufferers are also encouraged to take anti-inflammatory medications such as ibuprofen.

"What the recent literature is now showing, is that the combination of both an anti-inflammatory and a triptan medication is far superior than either alone."

He said that there is also an option to take drugs such as beta-blockers, anti-depressants and anti-epileptic medications on a daily basis as a preventative measure.

"They aren't necessarily going to get rid of the migraine headaches completely, but they will change the frequency, severity and duration of the headaches."

Finkelstein said he is currently involved in a phase-three clinical research trial to get approval by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Health Canada to use Botox in chronic migraines.

"What Botox does is that it is supposed to relax the muscles by inhibiting the release of acetylcholine. It relaxes the muscles and people don't frown. What the literature suggests is that Botox will inhibit the release of various chemicals that are involved in a migraine attack. By virtue of injecting Botox in set areas in the head, it will stop the release of these chemicals and stop that migraine cascade from going on and on and causing recurrent attacks," Finkelstein said, adding that he expects to hear if this technique has been approved by the summertime.

For more information about migraine attacks and how to deal with them, visit www.headachenetwork.ca or www.headaches.org.

Chiropractic, conventional medicine can be complementary

Continued from page B2

Later, when she was comfortable, she started lying down in the chair to receive the light adjustments that are so gentle they can even be used on newborns. (In adults, adjustments sometimes cause an audible "crack" as trapped carbon dioxide is released; this type of adjustment is not done with children.)

Done right, Nusbaum believes chiropractic and conventional medicine can be complementary, as long as patients and doctors are open with one another. "All my patients' MDs know that they come to see me," Nusbaum says.

He's seen mostly positive responses from the medical community and received many referrals from local doctors.

In Czukar's case, it was actually her family doctor who first suggested she try chiropractic before consulting a rheumatologist. "We're working towards the same goal," says Nusbaum. "If it's possible to get better without taking medication, I think that's terrific."

When Czukar first told her pediatrician that her kids were seeing a chiropractor, the doctor "was neither here nor there," she says. "He didn't jump up and down and say, 'Are you crazy?'"

About Olivia's vanishing eczema, he simply said, "It could happen."

"We don't see much relevance to it in terms of pediatric care," Leduc explains. If there is benefit, it's probably attributable to a placebo effect. And he remains concerned about the expense of repeated chiropractic visits with so little scientific validation.

But as Czukar says: "If it's not showing a benefit, I'm not going to spend money for it... I saw the results for myself, and [saw them] so quickly for my daughter."

"Most doctors aren't giving enough credit to patients," Nusbaum says. Like the patient whose doctor told him chiropractic was far too risky, without mentioning the risks associated with the anti-inflammatory drugs he prescribed instead: unpleasant complications ranging from gastrointestinal bleeding to death. The patient had no idea. He simply trusted his doctor.

Although Leduc and the CPS remain skeptical about birth trauma and the use of chiropractic adjustments to eliminate colic and chronic conditions in childhood, Nusbaum says the proof is in the calmer, happier, healthier kids - even if medical science doesn't understand it fully.

"Ask a mother: if it works, it works."

What people are doing is learning how to look after their emotions

Continued from page B11

"This has been done with people who were treated with an anti-depressant and then when they were no longer on their anti-depressant. They went through the mindfulness program, and they were able to reduce their risk of relapse of depression."

He said they are also testing the method on people who are on an anti-depressant, and tests have shown that it can be combined with drugs as well.

"What people are doing is learning how to look after their emotions in a way that is more helpful, more kind, and eventually more effective."

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An afternoon nap proven great for the brain box

A 90-minute daytime nap helps speed up the process of long-term memory consolidation, a recent study by Prof. Avi Karni and Dr. Maria Korman of the Center for Brain and Behavior Research at the University of Haifa found.

The research was published last fall in the journal *Nature Neuroscience*.

"We still don't know the exact mechanism of the memory process that occurs during sleep, but the results of this research suggest that it is possible to speed up memory consolidation, and in the future, we may be able to do it artificially," Karni says.

Long-term memory is defined as a permanent memory that doesn't disappear or that disappears after many years. This part of our memory is divided into two types – memories of "what" (for example, what happened yesterday or what one remembers from an article one read yesterday) and memories of "how to" (for example, how to read Hebrew, drive, play basketball or play the piano).

The new research, conducted by researchers at the University of Haifa in co-operation with the Sleep Laboratory at the Sheba Medical Center and researchers from the psychology department at the University of Montreal, revealed that a daytime nap changes the course of consolidation in the brain. Two groups of participants in the study practised a repeated motor activity that consisted of bringing the thumb

and a finger together in a specific sequence. The research examined the "how" aspect of memory in the participants' ability to perform the task quickly and in the correct sequence. One of the groups was allowed to nap for an hour and a half after learning the task, while the other group stayed awake.

The group that slept in the afternoon showed a distinct improvement in their task performance by that evening, compared with the group that stayed awake, which did not show any improvement. Following an entire night's sleep, both groups exhibited the same skill level.

"This part of the research showed that a daytime nap speeds up performance improvement in the brain. After a night's sleep, the two groups were at the same level, but the group that slept in the afternoon improved much faster than the group that stayed awake," Karni says.

A second experiment showed that another aspect of memory consolidation is also accelerated by sleep. It had previously been shown that during the six to eight hours after comple-



(Edward Dunbar photo)

tion of an effective practice session, the neural process of "how" memory consolidation is susceptible to interference – if, for example, one learns or performs a second, different task, one's brain will not be able to successfully remember the first trained task.

A third group of participants in the University of Haifa study learned a different thumb-to-finger movement sequence two hours after practising the first task. As the second task was introduced at the beginning of the six to eight hours during which the brain consolidates memories, the second task disturbed the memory

consolidation process and this group did not show any improvement in their ability to perform the first task, either in the evening of that day or on the following morning.

When a fourth group of participants was allowed a 90-minute nap between learning the first set of movements and the practising second, they did not show much improvement in the evening, but the following morning, these participants showed a marked improvement in their performance, as if there had been no interference at all.

"This part of the study demonstrated for the first time, that daytime sleep can shorten the time 'how to' memory becomes immune to interference and forgetting. Instead of six to eight hours, the brain consolidated the memory during the 90 minute nap," explains Karni, who added that while this study demonstrates that the process of memory consolidation is accelerated during daytime sleep, it is still not clear which mechanisms are accelerated in the process.

The elucidation of these mechanisms, the researchers say, could enable researchers to develop methods to accelerate memory consolidation in adults and create stable memories in a short time. Until then, if you need to memorize something quickly, or if your schedule is filled with different activities that require learning "how" to do things, it is worth finding the time for an afternoon nap.

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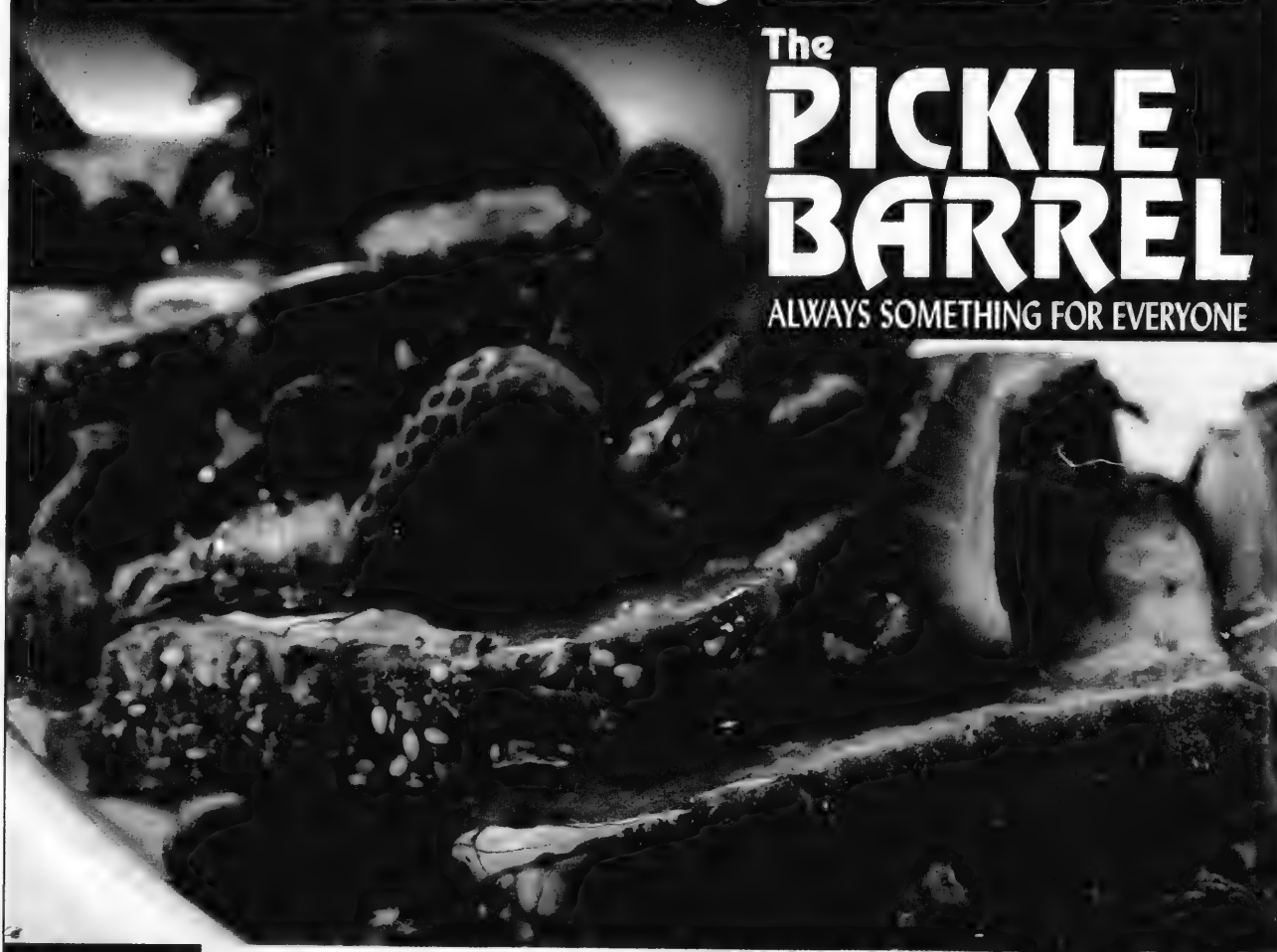
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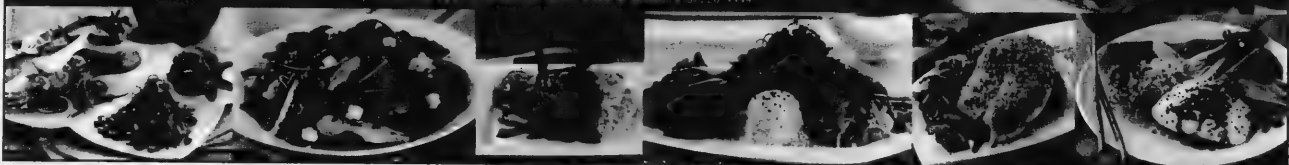
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The Canadian Jewish news

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This Week

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Israelis from Tel Aviv and elsewhere joined residents of Sderot on Sunday to protest what they said were the failed policies of the Olmert government regarding the unceasing barrage of Qassam rockets into Sderot from Hamas-ruled Gaza. The Tel Aviv protest followed a similar one in Jerusalem. Please see related stories on page 4 and 29.

[Israel Sun photo]

Gaza's Hamas rulers go into hiding

© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

JERUSALEM — Leaders of the ruling Hamas movement in the Gaza Strip have scaled back their public appearances and stepped up other security measures, fearing Israeli assassination attempts in response to a wave of Palestinian rocket attacks on southern Israel, Hamas officials said Monday.

The Israel Defence Forces (IDF) and the Shin Bet internal security service are preparing to step up assassinations against key Hamas figures in the Gaza Strip, in response to the continued Qassam rocket attacks against Sderot.

The renewed campaign of targeted killings is not likely, at this stage, to include members of the Hamas political leadership.

Hamas spokesman Fawzi Barhoum said: "We are taking all the precautions. We take the Israeli

threats seriously."

He declined to elaborate, but top Hamas officials, including Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh, have not been seen in public for several days.

The *Al-Quds Al-Arabi* daily reported on Sunday that Haniyeh has gone underground as a result of Israel's assassination campaign. According to the report, Haniyeh has disclosed his whereabouts only to his closest aides and guards.

Hamas' spokesman in the Gaza Strip, Sami Abu Zuhri, warned that Hamas would use "all means necessary" against such an assassination campaign, Israel Radio reported.

"Our response to attacks on Hamas leaders will be unprecedented," he said.

Israeli Deputy Prime Minister Haim Ramon said on Monday that a number of actions could topple Gaza's Hamas leaders within months.

Continued on page 29

Durban II counter-conference to proceed

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

A proposed counter-conference that would run parallel to Durban II continues to gather support from parliamentarians around the world, says Senator Jerry Grafstein, the Canadian lawmaker behind the alternative event.

Grafstein has been calling on his contacts among parliamentarians around the world for their support for an anti-Durban conference that would run in the same city as Durban II — the followup to the 2001 United Nations anti-racism conference in Durban, South Africa —

but would focus on anti-racism and anti-Semitism.

The parallel conference would serve as a corrective to the UN-sponsored gathering, which is likely to reprise the anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism that characterized the original Durban conference, Grafstein said.



Jerry Grafstein

U.S. Congressman Alcee Hastings has agreed to join Grafstein as head of an organizing committee.

MPs from a number of western democracies and other states have given verbal support to the parallel conference. "I've discussed it with parliamentarians in Europe, Africa, the United States, Australia and Canada, and so far the response has been positive," Grafstein said. "They like the idea in principle."

Grafstein said he expects many will sign on to assist in assembling a program "of outstanding international speakers" and to offer

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Iran helping Syria develop deadlier missiles → please see page 31

The News in Brief

CANADA

Jews Honoured

TORONTO — Two Jews were among 13 people honoured with an Ontario Medal for Good Citizenship from Lieut.-Gov. David Onley Jan. 31 at Queen's Park. Judith Rosenberg, a Guelph nurse, was honoured for creating Spark of Brilliance, a mental health program that promotes healing through the arts, and Daniel Greenglass of Toronto was honoured for helping to

found Best Buddies Canada, which fosters friendships between students and people with intellectual disabilities.

Hatemonger Jailed

VANCOUVER — Canadian Jewish Congress and the Friends of the Simon Wiesenthal Center commended the B.C. Supreme Court last week for convicting Keith Noble, 32, of rural Fort St. John, for wilfully promoting hatred against Jews, gays and non-whites in Internet postings he made on

his own website from 2003 to 2005. He was sentenced to four months in jail and three years probation, and he was ordered to stay off the Internet. His computer equipment was also to be forfeited and destroyed. Police said the Wiesenthal Center tipped them off to Noble's postings.

Natives Visit Israel

TORONTO — Seventeen aboriginal women are back in Canada after a recent 11-day tour of Israel organized by Canadian Jewish Congress and financed by Toronto businessman Larry Tanenbaum. The women on the trip included lawyers, tribal chiefs and academics from such places as Calgary and the Yukon. CJC has organized tours to Israel for native Canadians in the past and said it plans to do more.

Canadian Forces Report Raps Israel

OTTAWA — A Canadian Forces inquiry blamed Israeli forces for the killing of four UN observers, including one Canadian, during the Second Lebanon War.

An Israeli air strike on a UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) post in southern Lebanon on July 26, 2006, was "tragic and preventable," said the investigative report, delivered Feb. 1.

"The board was unable to determine if a specific individual was to blame for the death; the board does however find that, as an organization, the [Israel Defence Forces] is responsible," it added, complaining of limited co-operation from Israel in the probe.

Aside from Canadian Maj. Paeta Hess-Von Krudener, the others killed were from China, Austria and Finland. Israel apologized for the incident, calling it an accident.

The UN secretary general at the time, Kofi Annan, angered Israel by calling the attack "intentional." Israel's Winograd Commission of inquiry into the war, which published its conclusions this month, provided no new details on the controversial shelling.

"This was a tragic accident that demonstrates the very real dangers inherent in the work that members of the Canadian Forces are asked to do on a daily basis," Canada's chief of defence staff, Gen. Rick Hillier, said.

New Prayer Rapped

ROME — A coalition of Jewish groups expressed disappointment at the new text of the Catholic Church's Prayer for the Jews. The prayer removes offensive language, including a reference to Jews' "blindness" and a call that God "may lift the veil from their hearts," but still prays for the salvation of the Jews through conversion to Christianity. Pope Benedict XVI on Feb. 5 unveiled the replacement for the Good Friday prayer in Latin, which

is not used by most Catholics. "We had hoped that the prayer in the Latin rite would be the same as that of the universal Catholic liturgy in use since 1970," said Rabbi David Rosen, chairman of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations. "This new version for the Latin rite appears to be a regression from the path advanced by the declaration of the Second Vatican Council... [which affirmed] the eternal validity of God's divine Covenant with the Jewish People."

WORLD

U.K. Shoah Initiative

LONDON — Britain will send students to visit Auschwitz and have them report on what they see. Two students from every high school and college will visit the death camp, then speak to their peers at special programs. The trips will be funded in part with \$9.2 million from Britain's Holocaust Educational Trust.

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Trustee to seek Jewish programs in TDSB schools

By **ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF**
Staff Reporter

While the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) continues to struggle with the divisive idea of an "Africentric" school, Josh Matlow, the trustee for St. Paul's who opposes the plan, says it could open the door to more faith-based programming in the public system.

As a dissenting voice in the board's 11-9 vote on Jan. 29 to approve a publicly funded black-only school for Toronto, Matlow believes there's a better way to foster cultural harmony in the city.

Speaking to *The CJN* last week – after unsuccessfully calling for an emergency meeting to try to reverse the board's decision – Matlow said that once the Africentric school issue calms down, he hopes to renew his push to have the TDSB fund more multicultural programming for Jewish and other ethnic children in public schools.

Following up on his statements from last fall's provincial election campaign – when he took a middle-ground approach between the

Liberals' stance against any public funding for faith-based schools and the Conservatives' call to fund them as part of the public system

– Matlow said he will put forward proposals this summer to "explore" more ways to bring "faith-based programming" into public schools.

Matlow said he believes that when TDSB staff table a report in May on issues such as operational budgets and enrolment figures for a black-only school, the idea will lose steam and possibly be overturned due to a lack of finances and a projected lack of enrolment.

That's when he hopes to begin his push for public cultural programming.

"I've always been advocating for more optional programs and courses for all kids... African, aboriginal and many other cultures,"

said Matlow, who is Jewish. "The reality in our society is we have Muslims, Jews and others who need to learn about one another."

During the 2007 election campaign, he said he planned to urge the TDSB to study options for funding alternate programs for ethnic communities.

"There are several models... One might be to create Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, etc. 'immersion' or 'enrichment' programs at some of Toronto's public schools where there is interest and demand," Matlow told *The CJN* last September. "Another model might be to welcome some faith-independent schools into the TDSB, with full funding."

Despite his public calls for cultural co-existence, Matlow said he was the target of anti-Semitic remarks for his "nay" vote during the

heated Africentric school debate.

"One of the comments [from a supporter of the Africentric school] was 'We're gonna shut down your Jewish schools,'" he said. "It was absolutely uncalled for and was repeated in various forms throughout the night."

The next evening, on Jan. 30, Matlow said he faced more bigotry, this time from a woman with whom he said he'd previously had an "affable" working relationship.

"I was told, 'It's the rich Jews that built the projects the black people live in.' I stared in disbelief. I hadn't received a blatant anti-Semitic comment like that since I was a child and am still getting over it," he said.

Trustee Stephanie Payne, who is black, reportedly also faced threats and derogatory comments because of her opposition to the proposal. Police are investigating.

Speaking to *The CJN* last week, TDSB chair John Campbell said that before taking any action in Matlow's case, he wants to meet with the woman who allegedly uttered the anti-Semitic remarks to him.

Continued on page 14



Josh Matlow

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Greater Toronto Area

Ghouls govern Gaza

The leadership of Hamas in Gaza must be feeling quite robustly smug about their achievements in the past few days.

Last weekend, their ongoing fusillade of Qassam rockets "successfully" targeted Israelis.

Two brothers in Sderot were severely wounded on Shabbat. The younger of the two, an eight-year-old, lost one of his legs.

Many residents were treated for shock. And a number of others, long past the boiling point of their anger, travelled to Jerusalem to protest what they described as the government's failure to defend against the continued rocket fire. The Sderotis and a number of Jerusalemites blocked the main highway entrance to the city and then picketed in front of the prime minister's residence.

The rockets that landed near the brothers were part of a barrage of some 40 rockets launched into Israel from Gaza on Friday and Saturday. Israel, of course, correctly retaliated for the attack on Sderot that harmed the two brothers. The Hamas leaders who govern in Gaza with such ghoulish glee should not be allowed to feel they are protected by any sense of immunity for the atrocities they continue to perpetrate on Israel. Merely hours after the two brothers were hurt, the IDF sent its own missile that killed a local leader of Hamas in Rafah, in southern Gaza, who was part of the network that smuggles arms from Egypt.

The Hamas leaders who plan and direct the rocket attacks against the Jewish state are of two minds regarding Israel's retaliation. They cringe at the possibility that the arm of the Israel Defence Forces might reach them personally. Yet they cheer for the chance that women, children and other non-violent bystanders could be killed in the inevitable Israeli reaction. They have capitalized on the fact

that the western media seem little bothered by the unceasing barrage of Qassam rockets. The rockets are invariably described in the western reports as "home-made devices" that will indeed kill what they land on but seem to land mostly in fields or on buildings but not on people.

The Israeli retaliation is more accurate and thus more deadly, the reporters always note, animated very often by a barely masked outrage at the "unfairness" of the duel.

The debate in the Israeli cabinet on Sunday was charged with emotion as the ministers and the government try to grapple with the Gaza quandary.

The frustration among the ministers is mounting. They observe that Hamas maintains its cruel offensive yet enjoys a protective cover of sorts from western governments, the United Nations and a host of NGOs. Hamas seldom, if ever, is condemned for its murderous campaign against the Jews. Israel, on the other hand, seldom, if ever, is not condemned for its retaliation, even when the means of that retaliation is non-military, such as cutting the supply of power to Gaza.

The Israeli cabinet thus issued the following emotionally controlled statement on Sunday: "We must act [against the Hamas regime in Gaza] in a systematic and orderly fashion over time. This is what we are doing. This is what we will continue to do. We will continue to reach all the responsible terrorists including those who dispatch and operate them. We will not give anyone special consideration. We will do this in order to make sure that it is possible to reduce the danger and alleviate the pressure and distress that is hitting the residents of Sderot and the communities adjacent to the Gaza Strip so severely."

Emboldened by the "success" of the

Qassam campaign, a spokesman in Gaza for the Popular Resistance Committee, one of the groups that fires rockets at Israel, boasted last Friday that worse barrages of rockets were on the way.

The surrealistic approach by the West to the terrorists is simply becoming too much for the government of Israel to bear with its usual diplomatic equanimity. It prompted Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni to make the following statement on Sunday:

"When an Israeli child is hit by a rocket and loses his leg, and the world relates to that as one of the casualties of the conflict, our response is no. An Israeli child who suffers terror-inflicted injuries is not similar to a civilian who is injured unintentionally by defensive measures anchored in international law. I say to the world: You want to judge Israel, do it by your own criteria. Intentional murder can never be compared to unintentional injury. Here too, terror is terror is terror, and there can be no justification for it. Gaza is today a problem for anyone who seeks peace, and therefore can never be part of a future Palestinian state."

Later, Livni added: "There is a need for the international community to understand that there are certain steps that Israel needs to take in order to stop it [the almost daily barrage of Qassams]."

In an effort to pre-empt Israel from taking those "steps," chief Palestinian peace negotiator Ahmed Qureia warned on Sunday that any Israel Defence Forces escalation on the Gaza Strip would "affect the negotiation process."

A deleterious effect on the peace process is, of course, precisely what the Hamas rulers of Gaza are counting on when they set out to kill Israelis.

If Mahmoud Abbas and his Palestinian Authority do not understand this, if they expect Israel not to take "steps" to stop the Qassams, then the peace process is doomed.

—MBD

See|N



FIVE YEARS GONE

Col. Ilan Ramon, Israel's first astronaut, left, and his six colleagues who comprised the crew of the Columbia space shuttle, died five years ago on the 29th day of Shvat, the first day of February, when their craft burned up during reentry into the earth's atmosphere. [C/JN archival photos]

Deputy mayor offended by handshake snub

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Richmond Hill's deputy mayor says she was the victim of "blatant gender discrimination" when local Orthodox rabbis refused to shake her hand at a menorah-lighting ceremony last year, and at another event where Muslim men wouldn't acknowledge her presence.

In addition to making comments to the media last week, Brenda Hogg also wrote about the two events in an article for this month's *Richmond Hill Post*, describing the incidents alternately as an "experience of rejection" and something that "didn't feel right."

In a Feb. 7 *National Post* report, Hogg said the refusal by rabbis to shake her hand at a Chanukah event at York Central Hospital was a "shock," and she called their actions incompatible with "Canadian laws and traditions... based on acceptance and inclusivity."

Later that day, Hogg re-iterated and expanded on her feelings on AM640's John Oakley morning radio show.

"I'm 55 years old this year. I've never experienced that kind of absolute rejection," she told Oakley.

Hogg added that she'd once attended a "religious seminar" to educate herself about various cultural mores and was impressed with what one Muslim imam said about cultural respect for Canada.

"He said if you have come to Canada, your host country, and cannot respect their laws – and certainly gender discrimination falls within those laws – then you do not belong here," she recalled to Oakley.

"Shaking hands is a big part of [Canadian] culture. It creates an aura of equality," Hogg told the host. "One older rabbi jumped back and looked at me with shock [when she stuck her hand out to shake his]. I didn't know what I had

done. Then a younger rabbi said to me, 'Out of respect for you, we will not shake your hand.' And I thought, there's really something wrong here."

Hogg continued: "If you want equality... the other side better be able to shake my hand or not invite me [or] don't get involved in politics. They're reaching out to us, you know?"



Richmond Hill deputy mayor Brenda Hogg

There's something wrong."

Rabbi Mendel Kaplan, the director of Chabad @ Flamingo in Thornhill, who attended the Chanukah event in question, said he couldn't remember if he was one of the rabbis who met with Hogg and didn't shake her hand, but he took issue with her assessment of the events.

"It's a modesty issue, not a discrimination issue," he told

The C.J.N. "My wife doesn't shake men's hands either. [For Hogg] to make accusations or stir up the pot is irresponsible. It's unfortunate that a deputy mayor in a city... with a vast Jewish population wouldn't have the time or patience to do a little bit of research [on Jewish Orthodox modesty protocols] before she went around dropping accusations like that."

Rabbi Kaplan was referring to the halachic principle of *shomer negiyah*, which forbids a man from touching a woman he is not married to.

On Monday, Hogg spoke to *The C.J.N.* after considering her comments and after having followup discussions with Rabbi Kaplan.

"That question of 'touch' never came up [at prior] Chanukah events I've attended," Hogg said. "It would have been fine, except for how totally off-guard I was. I've dear friends for years who are Jewish, but I never heard of the touch thing."

Although her talks with Rabbi Kaplan softened her position somewhat, Hogg maintained that there is inherent discrimination in Orthodox modesty practices.

"To me it's discrimination. To him, it's the laws of modesty. I can see the intent of the law is to strengthen monogamy. I understand that," she said. "He told me not everyone practices it. But when all of my male colleagues have treatment that is denied me, that isn't part of my culture."

Hogg said she knew the rabbis never intended any embarrassment or harm, but she said she wished she'd been warned in advance of Orthodox protocols.

"I've never been a fan of... silence. But I do think we need to talk about [these events] and I think the community is grateful for the opportunity to have this discussion," she said.

Last week, Richmond Hill Mayor Dave Barrow told *The Post* his office would continue to foster understanding between cultural groups.



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Greater Toronto Area

JDL is back – protests Israel Apartheid Week event

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The Jewish Defence League of Canada is back – again.

The on-again, off-again organization has been reconstituted under its former leader, Meir Weinstein, in response to a growing radical Islamic element in Canadian society, Weinstein said last week.

About 50 JDL members along with supporters from other Jewish organizations, held a vigil last week at Ryerson University to protest an Israel Apartheid Week (IAW) event.

Weinstein, who used to go by the name Meir Halevi, said the JDL's purpose is "to confront anti-Semitism. We see it as worse than ever before."

"We believe this Israel Apartheid Week program is an

attempt to foment hatred for the Jewish people and justification for the terrorists."

JDL members handed out leaflets and attempted to turn the tables on IAW organizers, arguing Israel's Arab neighbours routinely practice discrimination but do not come under the microscope the way Israel does, he said.

In addition to protesting anti-Israel events – earlier, the group picketed outside the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) during an appearance by anti-Zionist speaker Norman Finkelstein – JDL monitors various organizations on the Internet and "we have moles in anti-Israeli groups to gather more information," Weinstein said.

He said the JDL is also highlighting the participation of Canadian Arab groups at a conference in Cairo last year that forged closer links between the international antiwar move-

ment and Islamic radical organizations, including Hamas and Hezbollah.

Referring to an *Ottawa Citizen* story from May 2007, Weinstein said representatives of the Canadian Arab Federation and the Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid as well as Not in My Name – Jews Against Israel's Wars, attended the conference.

The *Citizen* reported that "according to conference literature, the main purpose of the gathering, sponsored by the officially banned Muslim Brotherhood and Egyptian opposition parties, was to forge 'an international alliance against imperialism and Zionism'."

Weinstein said "the situation today is more serious than ever."

People from Islamic states that do not recognize Israel and "who have a negative view of Jews" are immigrating to Canada and bringing those attitudes with them.

It was at a pro-Hezbollah rally during Israel's 2006 war with the Islamic terror group that Weinstein felt the need to reconstitute the JDL. (It had been most active in the 1980s, was moribund for a time, then was re-invented for a few years as the United Israel Action Committee before again lapsing into inactivity).

The Hezbollah flag was being flown freely even though Hezbollah had been designated a terrorist organization by the Canadian government. Some chanted "death for the Jews," he said, and police stood by and did nothing.

The JDL got back together around September 2007. Its first activity was to protest a forum sponsored by the Coalition against Israeli Apartheid at OISE. Fistfights broke out when supporters of the Coalition confronted JDL protesters, Weinstein said.

"We don't think it's fair that when we're protesting that people should put fists in our faces and try to push us around. That doesn't happen," he said.

Last week's protest at the IAW event was peaceful. "We are not looking to start any confrontation," he said. "The emphasis is on defence."

Weinstein distanced the JDL in Canada from the American JDL whose leader Irv Rubin was jailed for planning bomb attacks against Muslims (he died awaiting trial). Weinstein said there were no organizational links between the two groups, though he did contribute to its website.

The JDL name "has more positives to it than negatives. I think haters of Jews are used to seeing Jews as timid and easy to push around. The JDL makes it clear this is one group you can't push around," he said.

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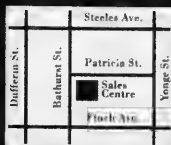
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Editorials & Letters

Vital ally against Iran

These words were written as Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert arrived in Berlin for a two-day visit to Germany. The main topic of discussion with his counterpart Chancellor Angela Merkel was no secret. "The issues that will be raised in Germany are vital to Israel's security," Olmert told reporters on the plane to Germany. The subject was Iran.

To be sure, other items of bilateral interest were on the agenda as well. For example, a new, upgraded relationship between the two countries is evolving. Indeed, as a visible demonstration of the fact, Merkel will visit Israel next month, along with a large contingent of her cabinet, in honour of the Jewish state's impending 60th anniversary. There has even been mentioned the possibility of an historic joint sitting in Jerusalem of the Israeli and German cabinets.

But the key reason for Olmert's visit on Sunday was to try to secure German agreement to a new, stiffer round of sanctions against Iran for its refusal to halt uranium enrichment in defiance of the United Nations. The timing could hardly be more propitious.

Two weeks ago, after Tehran received the final shipment of the 82 tons of enriched uranium from Russia needed to start the process of bringing the Bushehr nuclear reactor on line, Iran's president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, again inveighed against the Jewish state.

In a speech from Bushehr carried live on state television, he urged the international community to "abandon the filthy Zionist entity, which has reached the end of the line. It has lost its reason to be and will sooner or later fall." Ahmadinejad added: "The ones who still support the criminal Zionists should know that the occupiers' days are numbered."

Last week, Israeli defence officials announced that Iran had assisted Syria in developing a new surface-to-surface missile. According to Israel, Tehran has shared technical know-how with Damascus that enabled Syria to upgrade the Iranian-made Zelzal. The missile now has a range of approximately 250 kilometres and is capable of carrying a large warhead and is also believed to be more accurate than other similar weapons in the Syrian arsenal.

Also last week, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon called on Iran and Syria to respect the arms embargo on the militias in Lebanon (i.e.: Hezbollah). A report submitted by Ban to the Security Council said that the two states are transferring anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons across to Hezbollah in violation of the terms of the UN-brokered agreement that ended the Second Lebanon War in 2006. We trust that Ban was not surprised with the findings of the report.

Given the circumstances of Iran's increasingly brazen actions aimed at harming Israel and the uncertainty attached to the outcome of the presidential elections in the United States, it is of vital strategic importance for Israel that Germany becomes an ally against Iran. We hope that Olmert's visit was successful.

25 years ago in The CJN

U.S. President Ronald Reagan told 150 people at the biennial meeting of the World Jewish Congress in Washington that the United States won't impose sanctions on Israel to hasten its pull-out from Lebanon. He said U.S. goals for Lebanon were a speedy withdrawal of all foreign troops, a strong central government and a guarantee that southern Lebanon won't be a staging ground for attacks on Israel.

Dry Bones speak volumes

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Israeli Apartheid Week

A full-page ad titled "Why you should care about Israel Apartheid Week," sponsored by Jewish Students for Self-Respect, was published in your Jan. 31 Toronto issue. What shocked me was the question the group asked: "Why has our Jewish leadership let us down?"

I have been involved with Jewish life on campus for five years and have personally dealt with the University of Toronto administration regarding Israeli Apartheid Week. The Jewish students at U of T are not to blame when it comes to the continuation of this annual hate-fest. Instead of choosing to turn our campus into a battlefield, as other educational institutions have, we continually attempted to build bridges on common grounds with the Muslim students groups. Our programming is always of the highest quality and always sends a powerful message of peace to the administration.

I challenge UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, Canadian Jewish Congress, the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy and B'nai Brith to continue to show active support to those students who seek to rid campuses of this event across Canada, the United States and Britain. I encourage these organizations to provide educational workshops for students, as well as other tools necessary to keep our campuses a safe environment for all.

Noam Gilboord

Immediate Past-President

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Response to Held

As a rabbi at one of the so called "big-box establishments" described in Daniel Held's column, "We need to create our own shuls" (CJN, Feb. 7), I feel obligated to respond. One of the great gifts of the Ontario Jewish community, which I have observed as an American-born Jew who moved here eight years ago, is the fact that this community is multi-generational. Many of the large congregations in the Greater Toronto Area comprise three- or four-generational families.

Because of the demographic challenges facing our community, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and the large congregations formed a think-tank. In terms of an alleged lack of creativity, many of our shuls are experimenting in one way or another with "synplex" models of pluralism and choice, so that a menu of davening and spiritual options can be found in our synagogues.

Frankly, all of our congregations are desperately seeking the younger demographics to come into our synagogues. Many of the larger ones have gladly worked with the younger echelons in structuring age-appro-

priate spaces for university students and young professionals. At Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue, for example, over the several years that I have served as its rabbi, we have graciously opened our doors to independent Shabbat experiences for university students and young professionals.

I am quite confident that if our spiritually seeking young people asked for creative liturgical options that respect the basic religious and/or halachic tenets of a particular congregation, such options would be explored and provided. Don't create your own shuls. Help the existing ones to thrive and grow so that the great gift of our multi-generational community will continue to flourish for decades to come.

Rabbi Howard Morrison

Toronto

Response to Lootsteen

Yair Lootsteen, in his column "Supreme Court's authority must be maintained" (CJN, Jan. 24), presents a very one-sided account of Israeli Justice Minister Daniel Friedman's proposed changes to the functioning of Israel's Supreme Court.

In Israel, Supreme Court judges effectively control the selection of new judges, which has resulted in a monolithic Supreme Court producing, more often than not, unanimous rulings on highly controversial and significant public issues. Moreover, it is questionable whether the Supreme Court should be intervening at all in matters of national security, in which they lack the military expertise.

Supreme Courts, in any democracy, tread a fine line between overseeing laws passed by a democratically elected government and usurping the role of government for themselves. The late Supreme Court of Canada chief justice, Antonio Lamer, was resolute in his conviction that the Supreme Court of Canada was not to usurp the role of Parliament. In contrast, Israeli Supreme Court Chief Justice Dorit Beinisch recently met with the U.S. ambassador to Israel to discuss the Israeli Supreme Court's position on the settlements — a meeting that provoked a controversy for the perception of allowing politics to interfere with or influence judicial independence.

Friedmann's proposal would encourage the selection of a more varied and pluralistic judiciary. Friedmann's attempt to limit the role of the Supreme Court judges in a self-perpetuating ideological process has rattled certain judges and others on the Israeli political left. Volunteer lawyers from the Canadian Legal Forum for Israel are in the process of drafting legal opinions in support of Friedmann's proposals.

Yehudit Shier Weisberg, Co-ordinator

Gordon Wiseman, Legal Consultant

Canadian Legal Forum for Israel

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Just another day in Jewish communal work

By AVIVA MILLSTONE

I am sitting in a brightly coloured room on the fourth floor of a small and cozy Jewish community centre (JCC). I am tired but energized from teaching the aleph bet (Hebrew alphabet) and the rituals of Tu b'Shvat (New Year for Trees) to two kindergarten classes. I just finished a long conversation with the program director about the location for the summer camp and details surrounding the budget. I am looking forward to meeting with a group of madrichim (counsellors) about a program for teenagers that will take place next weekend.

I sound like I could be at any JCC in North America working as an educator and community builder. But I'm not sitting a community centre in North America. I am sitting in the JCC in Tallinn, Estonia, a city and country that most people have not heard of, and if they have, have not even considered that Jewish life exists here.

I never thought that I, in my mid-twenties, would end up in Estonia. What is a Jewish girl from Toronto doing in Estonia? I'm asked this question on a regular basis, no matter where I am. What I am doing in Estonia is what I believe to be important

work for the continuation of Jewish life in the world today. I am doing what I feel is significant in terms of building on existing Jewish communities and providing Jewish education. These are part of what I feel helps sustain and develop Jewish life.

I am able to do this work thanks to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), an organization operating in 66 countries that helps ensure the continuation of the Jewish faith and the Jewish People. It provides many services in Israel and also has a non-sectarian aid program. I feel lucky to have connected with the JDC last year through the Jewish Service Corps volunteer program, through which I spent the year volunteering in Warsaw, Poland. Fortunately, an opportunity arose for me to continue to work in eastern Europe as a professional member of the JDC team.

I feel that I need to share what's going on in Estonia with not only the people on my e-mail list, but with the greater Jewish commu-

nity of North America, the Baltic region, Europe and the world. I am using the experiences that I have so fortunately had in my Jewish life in Canada to try to help the Jewish community in Estonia build and develop itself. I am also learning more than I ever could have imagined. I find it empowering to know that Jewish life is thriving in communities where people have tried to wipe it out and in places where we wouldn't have ever thought that Jewish life exists. I see myself as a very lucky young woman, because I am able to learn, work and share some of the special and regular aspects of Jewish life in Tallinn.

In the time I have been here, I have continually found myself amazed at the care and ded-



The author, Aviva Millstone, centre, teaches the aleph bet to her young pupils.

[Photos courtesy of JDC]



Children prepare to light Chanukah candles.

ication that community workers and members (a very small group of people) provide. The JCC, which is state funded, and the synagogue, which opened in May 2007 (until then, the synagogue was inside the JCC) are located on a small side street just outside of the Old Town of Tallinn. This is where all Jewish life takes place in this city. In this space, you can find a newly opened kosher restaurant, youth programs for all ages, a social centre for seniors, dance classes, Hebrew lessons, Shabbat services and, of course, a functioning Jewish elementary and high school.

A small team of dedicated, hardworking and intelligent individuals supports these programs. There's something for everyone, and there are many occasions where almost everyone comes together. The are about 2,500 Jews in Estonia, and some 1,500 of them live in Tallinn. There are several smaller communities, and I have had the opportunity to visit some of them and give talks there. The numbers might be small, but the warmth and

energy that comes from within the community and from those who work within the community is powerful.

I experienced that kindness and vigour the first weekend after I arrived in Tallinn, when I joined 300 members of the community for a special weekend called Yachad, a celebration of 15 years of Jewish life in Estonia since the fall of Communism. Before the early 1990s, Jewish life existed here on a very minimal scale, but in the past 15 years, the community has grown and developed tremendously.

At the opening Shabbat dinner, you could just sense that people felt warmly connected to their Jewish lives. The organization and effort that was put into the weekend was tremendous. Throughout the weekend, there were different Jewish-themed lectures, concerts and fun-filled children's programming exhibiting a strong Jewish spirit and powerful connecting energy. What a way to be welcomed into a community. Their obvious valuing of Jewish life and education encourages me in what I'm here doing. Whether it's helping to develop youth programs or teaching the youngest members of the community in kindergarten, nothing is undervalued.

Jewish holidays in Estonia are about fun, spirituality and community-building. During the eight days of Chanukah, there were nine different programs offered in total by the synagogue, the rabbi, the school and the JCC. There was something for everyone, and there were many opportunities for people to celebrate in programs together. I felt empowered on a weekend that I shared with the 20 local madrichim. A seminar was created by the local youth co-ordinators and the JCC program director to provide a weekend of Jewish learning, leadership and team building for the local Estonian madrichim who work in the weekly youth programs, local spring camp and Baltic region summer camp. The energy of the group – some veteran madrichim and some recently trained madrichim – was strong, and participants were interested and involved.

These young people had questions related to rituals and their Jewish identity and the role

it plays in their community. Throughout the weekend, they covered topics such as: "Jewish Leadership and Me," "The Arab-Israeli Conflict," "How to Educate About The Holocaust," "Judaism and the Environment," and "Shabbat – Many Different Elements." Members of the community joined the group for Shabbat dinner, where they enjoyed a performance of the weekly parashah created by the madrichim, and the seminar ended with a special *Havdalah* service. It was a small seminar that had a large impact, and it will continue to have an impact, because these young people are the Jewish future here.

I get to teach small children in kindergarten, as well as young adults, about Judaism through my work teaching English. I educate at seminars, help develop youth programs, visit with seniors, and plan local and regional camps. But most importantly, I am getting yet another view of how Jewish life continues to not only survive but thrive in places all over the world. Jews here might not have the same resources, libraries and endless Jewish "products" that I was once used to being surrounded by, but I have become creative, open and resourceful in working around this. They have different things, and through those different things, I am introduced to other ways of being Jewish.

I am learning a new language and the customs and traditions that are specific to this special community. I am welcome to bring my knowledge, ideas and enthusiasm here, too. My customs and traditions are being combined with the ones here, and each time I introduce a new treat from my kitchen, or a song, or a Jewish idea, it is examined and enjoyed.

Estonia might be a small, cold place in the Baltics that sometimes feels very far from my home and life in Canada, but the Jewish community here is filled with kindness, thoughtfulness and warmth from within, and I'm lucky to be a part of it.

Aviva Millstone is working for the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, helping to build a sense of Jewish community in Estonia.

Opinions

Honouring broken tablets

Funerals make me uncomfortable. Unlike most people, I attend dozens of them every year. As a rabbi, performing funerals is one of my responsibilities. Yet, despite my familiarity, each one is still a difficult rendezvous with grief and a painful reminder of my own mortality.



Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz in Montreal

Remarkably, an uplifting spiritual feeling pulses underneath all the grief and pain. I was unable to put my finger on what exactly this feeling was until I went to the smallest funeral of my

career. The graveside service for "Leah" was attended by five people: two cousins of the deceased, along with myself, the cantor, and the funeral director.

Leah's story was not that unusual. She and a cousin were the sole survivors of a family wiped out in the Holocaust. Leah's concentration camp experiences left her scarred and shattered. She was no longer functional, and her cousin (and her cousin's children) provided for her care. Leah lived the last 50 years of her life as a broken person, unable to fulfil the potential of her youth.

A rabbi's job at a funeral such as this is a bit complicated. Jewish law requires that a eulogy praise the deceased. That's the easy part. Jewish law also requires that the eulogy tell the truth. The problem I faced at Leah's funeral was: what sort of honest praise could I give about someone who lived most of her adult life as a broken person?

For my eulogy, I referred to a talmudic lesson. The Talmud writes that one must honour a Torah scholar who, due to infirmity, has forgotten his learning. The Talmud explains that there were two sets of tablets inscribed with the Ten Commandments. The first set was broken by Moses after the sin of The Golden Calf and later replaced by a second set.

Remarkably, both the broken and unbroken tablets were given equal honour and placed together in the Ark of the Covenant. The Talmud concludes that just like the broken tablets, a Torah scholar who has forgotten his knowledge still deserves to be honoured as a scholar.

Leah's life was a story of broken tablets. It was filled with potential until it was shattered during the Holocaust. In my eulogy, I explained that people such as Leah deserved our honour, just like the broken tablets.

At Leah's graveside, I learned what the essence of a funeral is. Beyond the grief and pain, there is something deeply spiritual as well. By showing honour and dignity to each and every person, even if their lives were only broken tablets, we declare that every person is important, every person is holy, and that every person is created in God's image.

As much as I hate funerals, I find this feeling to be uplifting.

Will they ever love their children enough?

In early February, I wandered into a coffee shop directly across from Concordia University's main building in downtown Montreal. As I entered, I saw a big poster that read "End Israeli Apartheid" which detailed all of Israel's alleged crimes from its founding to the Second Lebanon War.

As usual, the charges were distorted, hysterical, one-sided and completely wrenched out of context. Moreover, the main accusation falsely linking Israel (and Zionism) with the South African crime of apartheid not only misrepresents today's realities, it robs South Africans of their own authentic historical experience – and suffering. South Africa's apartheid system in South Africa treated blacks as biologically and legally inferior to whites. To equate the resulting South African crimes against humanity with the fallout from a nationalist clash between Jews and Palestinians turns history on its head and minimizes South Africa's real evil.

This time, I was also struck by the nihilism of Palestinian nationalism. There was nothing positive about Palestinian identity in the poster. It was only a bill of indictment against Israel. And it's not just one poster. Examine the websites promoting what I call "Let's make-a-false-equation-between-Israel-and-the-racist-South-African-Apartheid-regime Week." Program after program bashes Israel, demonizes Zionism, and bemoans Palestinian suffering.

Compare that hurricane of hate to the websites celebrating Israel's 60th anniversary. If

anything, those websites could be accused of barely acknowledging the complexity in Israel's history – actually, in any country's history. But ask yourself, with which movement would you rather associate – and which has a greater chance of success?



Gil Troy in Montreal

This is the great weakness of Palestinian nationalism. Golda Meir captured it decades ago with her observation that has become a truism: there will not be peace until they love their children more than they hate our children. The weakness is also reflected in the jab that one of my peacenik friends once made at one of his Palestinian friends: "Your problem is that you say you want justice and mostly

mean you want revenge. Zionism wanted to solve problems – and it did."

Palestinians and their fellow travellers will attribute this difference to the fact the Israelis won and the Arabs are oppressed. But this difference between the two movements could be found in the 1940s, after Jews lost six million people in the Holocaust, and one per cent of Israel's Jewish population during the War of Independence – more than 6,000 people.

Nationalist movements only work if they are forward-thinking, if they are building something. Becoming addicted to hatred of the other fosters a temporary state of unity, but it ultimately degenerates into violence and destructiveness. Too much of the Palestinian national movement – and far too much of it on campus and in North America – is devoted to Israel bashing. It creates a culture of martyrdom that celebrates suicide bombers rather

than nation builders. It honours leaders such as the late Palestinian Authority president Yasser Arafat, who preferred the purity of perpetual violence to the complexity of compromise. It results, as we now see, in a cult of violence, so that when Hamas turned on Fatah, Palestinians took the violence they directed toward Israelis and turned it on each other.

The entire Arab world seems engulfed by this irrational hatred of Israel and Zionism. Even when Arabs draft an Arab Charter On Human Rights, they include a gratuitous assault on Zionism. The fact that people such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour, failed at first to see that perversion demonstrates just how ubiquitous and automatic it has become. History will judge enablers such as Arbour harshly for failing to warn the entire Arab world of the danger of succumbing to this mass demonization.

In contrast to all this negativity, over the last 10 years, for every Israeli that was murdered by Palestinians, nearly 1,000 Israeli children were born. Nefesh B'Nefesh, the organization that has brought thousands of North American Jews to Israel over the last few years, began with the founder's desire to balance Palestinian murders by bringing more Jews to Israel.

Closer to home, Montreal's Hillel decided to respond to this year's Israel apartheid hate-fest by embracing the beleaguered citizens of Sderot.

History is clear: in the long run, bet on those who love life, not those who worship death.

Bet on the builders, not on the haters.

Playing the numbers game

A professional organization in which I am active recently surveyed its membership. For the first time in the organization's 40 years of existence, each member was given the opportunity to respond to a set of questions that would offer the organization a clear picture of the interests, needs and priorities of the constituency that it serves.

The questionnaire was developed by the organization's leadership and then fine-tuned by a professional who is experienced conducting surveys. Finally, it was made available online to all members, who were reminded several times by e-mail to submit their responses. Filling out the questionnaire took 15 minutes, tops.

Roughly 45 per cent of members filled out the surveys. The professional who helped the organization put together the survey and interpret the results noted that a response rate of almost 50 per cent is usually high. Without even examining the actual results of the poll, he said that such a figure indicates a membership that's very committed to the organization, one that cares deeply about its operation and future.

I, untutored in the ways of surveys, did not realize until then that, in the world of organizational involvement, when less than half the members of a group respond to such a poll, that represents an overwhelmingly high level of engagement.

But it makes sense. Because the truth is that

far, far fewer numbers frequently determine an organization's policy and direction. Call it the numbers game – it's important that we pay attention to it.



Sara R. Horowitz in Toronto

Take, for example, the resolution brought forth (and, ultimately rejected) at the recent convention of the Modern Language Association, which I described in detail last month in this column. You may recall that the proposed resolution called for the MLA, which represents thousands of language and literature professors worldwide, to defend the academic freedom of professors to criticize Israel on university campuses.

Let's consider the MLA as representative, in many ways, of similar professionally based organizations. Any member in good standing may put forth a resolution, but few do so. Any member may attend the delegates assembly and debate the merits of a resolution, but few do so. All members are invited to vote yes or no, by mail and Internet ballot, on resolutions passed by the assembly, but very, very few do so.

These dynamics, which are typical of many organizations, permit a small group of people with strong – and one might even say extreme – views to run the show, while the rest of us sit it out.

All too often, a small, vocal and motivated group has a voice out of proportion to its numbers because most people – members of an organization, faculty at a university, members

of a union, and so on – are distracted by, well, life.

Most of us have so much on our plate, professionally and personally, that we are more than happy to let an essentially well-run and productive organization or institution do its business without deeply engaging in it, at least most of the time. Often, people with more extreme positions engage more actively, because they feel more passionately about a particular set of issues, and because those issues are at the centre of their lives, rather than simply being part of a constellation of matters they think about. The rest of us would simply let things be.

If we care deeply about certain things, however, simply letting things be may be an indulgence that we need to rethink.

Reluctantly – and being mindful of the many other things that beckon to us, or of our discomfort with public speaking, or of putting ourselves visibly on the line or in the minority – we may need to weigh in and shift the numbers.

Because the numbers game can work in our favour. We can be among those few who bother themselves to move – to articulate a view, to push for or resist a change. It could be our values, our agenda or our causes that the apathetic majority will allow to move forward.

I have been sometimes surprised by how little effort it takes to shift the mood of a group, the feel of a room, the result of a vote. Other times, I have been frustrated at how intractable an issue has become. But you have to play the numbers game to know.

Olmert clings to power after final war report

Ehud Olmert, Israel's embattled prime minister, has done it again, having survived the intense scrutiny and scathing conclusions of an official inquiry charged with investigating the Second Lebanon War in the summer of 2006.

The Winograd Commission's second and final report described the war as "a serious missed opportunity" and the performance of Israel's political and military leadership as less than inspiring.

It was released on Jan. 30, exactly nine months after an interim report singled out Olmert for a "severe failure in exercising judgment, responsibility and prudence."

The first report led to the resignation of two of the principals in Israel's inconclusive 34-day war against Hezbollah – the defence minister, Amir Peretz, and the armed force's chief of staff, Gen. Dan Halutz. Citing a need to remedy failures, Olmert refused to step down, defying a demand from his deputy, Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, to do so, and ignoring livid editorials in the press and a massive demonstration in Tel Aviv.

Focusing on the opening phase of the war, the preliminary report was particularly critical of Olmert. He was criticized for his haste in going to war, following a Hezbollah ambush on an Israeli army patrol inside Israeli territory, and he was reprimanded for setting "over-ambitious and unattainable goals."

The commission concluded that Olmert bore "supreme and comprehensive responsibility" for the decisions taken during the war, during which Hezbollah killed 119 Israeli soldiers and bombarded Israel with some 4,000 rockets, causing the deaths of 43 civilians.

The latest report apportioned the blame more evenly, claiming that the Israel Defence Forces, "the strongest army in the Middle East," was stymied by "a semi-military organization of a few thousand men." As the commission added, "The power and force of the IDF was not brought into play."

This time around, Olmert was not the sole fall guy, although in a speech in the Knesset last week, he accepted "full responsibility for the failures" and promised "to fix the flaws."

Clearly, the commission did not exonerate Olmert. Nonetheless, an argument can be made that he alone does not bear the full moral

stigma for the outcome of the war. If nothing else, the second report may have given him a new lease on his political career, if only temporarily. The self-serving opposition leader, Benjamin Netanyahu, lambasted Olmert as unfit and incompetent. But lest it be forgotten, Netanyahu wholeheartedly backed the war, as did the vast majority of Israelis, and if Netanyahu had been in Olmert's place, it would likely have ended similarly.

In any event, Olmert won an important victory on Feb. 4 when, in reaction to his response to the commission, 59 members of the Knesset voted to support him. Fifty-three parliamentarians, however, voted against Olmert, a sign of dissatisfaction with his leadership and management style.

Better still, from Olmert's viewpoint, Livni, though having observed that the Winograd report "holds a mirror to Israel's leadership that reflects a very harsh image," is no longer calling for his head. Now she says that unity is of the utmost importance at this juncture. In addition, many key individuals in Olmert's Kadima party, notably Deputy Prime Minister Haim Ramon and Finance Minister Ronnie Bar-On, have rallied behind him. Some backbenchers, notably Marina Solodkin and Avigdor Yitzhaki, oppose him.

Best of all, perhaps, Defence Minister Ehud Barak, the Labor party leader and a pivotal member of the coalition, has rescinded a threat to leave the cabinet.

Last May, when he was a contender for the Labor party's leadership, Barak – a former IDF chief of staff and prime minister – said that he would not serve in a government headed by Olmert, whose term of office ends in November 2010. His rival, Ami Ayalon, a former commander of the navy, made a similar pledge.

Subsequently, Barak declared that he would seek to form a new government, and press for fresh elections, if Olmert had not stepped aside by the time the Winograd Commission issued its last report. Much to Olmert's relief, Barak had a change of heart, as did Ayalon. If Barak had bolted, Olmert's government would have fallen, forcing an election.

Barak cited compelling reasons for staying on. Hezbollah has rearmend since the United Nations ceasefire in August 2006, thanks in

no small part to two patrons, Iran and Syria. Hamas, which won the Palestinian election in January 2006 and proceeded to take over the Gaza Strip in a violent confrontation with Fatah last June, is in firm control of Gaza.

Hamas, Islamic Jihad, the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade and the Popular Resistance Committees continue to fire Qassam rockets and mortars at Israeli settlements and towns adjacent to Gaza, and are constantly trying to send armed terrorists into Israel. Israel has retaliated by launching frequent raids into Gaza and resuming targeted assassinations.



Ehud Olmert

Last week, in an ominous development, Hamas' armed wing, the Qassam Brigades, claimed credit for a suicide bombing in Dimona, the first such attack on Israeli soil in more than a year.

Barak is also propping up Olmert due to his concern about Iran's campaign to acquire a nuclear arsenal, notwithstanding a U.S. intelligence report that claimed that Iran froze all such efforts in 2003. Another reason for Barak's reluctance to bolt is that Israel has plunged into peace negotiations with Hamas' bitter adversary, the Palestinian Authority, led by Mahmoud Abbas, a moderate.

These are certainly important calculations, but Barak's prime consideration may have been internal politics.

Judging by polls, most Labor party supporters did not want Barak to quit, though some influential figures, such as Eitan Cabal, the secretary general, and Danny Yatom, the ex-

director of the Mossad, urged Barak to ditch Olmert. Lastly, Barak realizes that if new elections are called, Netanyahu may well triumph and consign the Labor party to the wilderness.

This much seems certain, as long as Olmert can rely on Barak's support, he has a good chance of remaining prime minister.

Yet no matter how you look at it, Olmert remains a deeply unpopular leader, according to newspaper surveys conducted after the Winograd report was released.

Polls commissioned by *Yediot Achronot*, *Ma'ariv* and *Ha'aretz* showed that 56 per cent,

65 per cent and 53 per cent of respondents, respectively, expected Olmert to resign. On the other hand, a *Ma'ariv* poll indicated that 42 per cent wanted him to finish his term, compared to 27 per cent who said that he should step aside immediately and call elections.

For any normal politician, these would be disheartening statistics. But for Olmert, whose popularity rating once sank to an unprecedented three per cent, they represent something of a bounce in the polls.

Olmert, who faces three criminal investigations regarding his conduct as a minister in previous cabinets, has seen worse days.

Last November, the Sderot Conference, an annual gathering of Israeli political experts, judged him to be the most corrupt member of the government for the second year in a row.

Shortly afterward, the Israeli Policy Center for Promoting Parliamentary Democracy and Jewish Values in Israeli Public Life released the results of a survey in which 55 per cent of the respondents urged the Knesset to remove Olmert.

Despite a desire by his enemies to oust him, Olmert – a smart, cunning and resourceful political operator – remains prime minister and may yet serve out his term. He should not be underestimated.

Yet Olmert should not forget that two of his predecessors, Golda Meir and Menachem Begin, resigned under duress after a war tarnished their respective reputations.

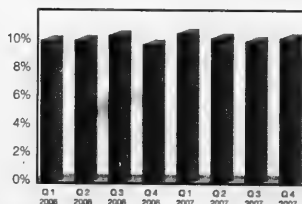


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Greater Toronto Area

Treating bipolar disorder can be tricky, advocate says

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Treating bipolar disorder requires as much art as science, says Karen Liberman, executive director of the Mood Disorders Association of Ontario.

"There are no tests to diagnose bipolar, so doctors really have to understand [the symptoms]. All they have to go on is what they told," Liberman said.

She will be speaking on bipolar and anxiety disorder at a community presentation being held at the Lipa Green Building, fourth floor, on Feb. 21, sponsored by Jewish Family and Child in co-operation with the Mood Disorders Association of Ontario.

Liberman, who recovered from a decade-long battle with severe clinical depression, has been honoured by *Chatelaine* magazine as a health hero, was featured on the CTV documentary *Fighting the Dragon*, and was a 2003 recipient of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health's Courage to Come Back Award.

People diagnosed with bipolar disorder, formerly known as manic depression, are on a "roller-coaster" of wild highs and devastating lows, she said.

"Mania includes racing thoughts, extreme irritability, excessive talking and energy, poor judgement and decreased need for sleep," Liberman said.

"During the inevitable depressions, people are [among other symptoms] in sad moods with feelings of uselessness or hopelessness. [They're] lethargic, suicidal, agitated, and have a loss of interest in work, hobbies and people."

But there are so many forms of bipolar disorder that it's extremely hard to diagnose, she said. "Bipolar II, for example, is characterized by the same depression, but the mania is not quite as high, so physicians often miss it.

"Those with Bipolar II have energy, productivity, and an

[outgoing nature] that is often rewarded. They are in a great state of mind. It is dangerous, though, because eventually they will crash. Physicians often don't pick up on this because patients don't report the hypomanic episodes. They're only treated for the depression, but they need to be on mood stabilizers."

It's a tricky business, she said, because even when physicians do diagnose the illness, they have to find the proper medication, and many medications have powerful side effects.

"The good news is that 80 to 90 per cent of cases can be treated, but they need to be treated early before the disease becomes too complicated."

The challenge, said Liberman, is to educate people to recognize the symptoms of bipolar disorder and get into treatment.

"If we could get people treated at the first signs it could change the course of their illness. How are we letting people get so sick they're forced to go on long-term disability?"

It's "crazy," she said, that people hesitate to get help for a mental illness. "If people have a rash that a cream doesn't cure, they go to the doctor. There is no shame. A mental illness, though, is seen as shameful."

"It always amazes me that people talk about cholesterol and diabetes openly and without shame. Depression, though, is talked about in hushed tones."

People are talking about it a little more than they used to, Liberman said, "but we have such a long way to go. Our constant imperative is to increase people's understanding and make them feel better about disclosing."

"The more you find out, the faster you can get the illness managed so you can get on with the rest of your life. Too many people are living with suffering and pain."

For information or to register for the presentation, call Shawna Sidney of Jewish Family and Child at 416-638-7800, ext. 215.

Ex-engineering students sings with Jewish a cappella group

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

It's not uncommon for students to decide to change their majors in the midst of their studies, but Jeremy Burko knew that if he was going to be happy he'd have to go from one end of the academic spectrum to the other.

"I started off in university as an engineer and did that for three years and then switched to Jewish studies and music as a double major," said 25-year-old Burko.

"Engineering was nice, but the material was getting dry," he said with a laugh.

Burko said that although music had been a part of his life since he was young — he is a pianist, a composer and even conducts — he didn't begin singing until he was in his late teens.

In 2001, during his second year at the University of Toronto, he founded the Varsity Jews, a Jewish a cappella group, and served as the director for five years.

"I found that I was spending more of my time volunteering for music-related stuff than I was spending on my school work, which was also getting to be a ridiculous load."

He said that his parents were a little hesitant to accept his decision to give up on engineering for a career in music.

"But I think they understood quickly that this is what I had to do and no matter what I went into, it had to be music related."



Jeremy Burko

Continued on page 14

OUT OF LINE

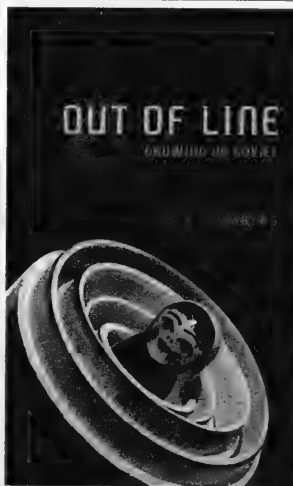
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By Rabbi Tina Grimberg

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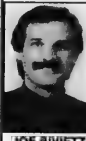
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By RON CSILLAG
Special to The CJN

The Jewish War Veterans of Canada's Toronto post pledges that despite more than two years of inertia, its memorial in Earl Bales Park will be built as originally planned.

Ground for the Flames of Memory project was broken in October 2005 amid much fanfare, and the project was slated for completion within a year to 18 months. A sign is still up in the northern corner of the park asking for donations, but nothing has been built to date.

In December, the veterans shook up their Toronto post. A new nine-member board ousted longtime Toronto post commander Hy Shulman and executive director Lou Van Delman.

"We've had a complete sweep of the prior board," said new board member Ed Bluestein. He added that the new board is scheduled to meet with the memorial's "largest sponsors" on Feb. 21.

"The project is a go," Bluestein said.

Former Toronto municipal politician and police services board chair Norm Gardner was installed as the new Toronto post commander.

Envisioned as a sunken amphitheatre surrounded by a swooping angled wall topped by chanukiyah lights, the \$7-million memorial to Jewish combatants is the design of world-renowned architect Daniel Libeskind.

It is meant to honour Canadian Jewish war veterans going back to before Confederation, those who fought for Allied countries, and resistance fighters during World War II.

It sits on two acres of land donated by the City of Toronto.

"There's some people who have contributed [to the project but] who haven't heard anything," said Toronto councillor Mike Feldman, in whose ward the park is located. "My responsibility is to make sure the city isn't left with any liability."

Feldman told *The CJN* the war veterans "have to come up with money before we can let them go into the ground."

"[They] have to raise all the money and produce letters of credit to make sure we aren't responsible for maintenance. All that money has to be secured for the city. That's the legal contract. So far, they haven't got enough money to build the thing, so I don't know how you can secure the rest of it."

He said he has not heard how much money has been raised to date.

"That sort of gives me concern. I hope that it goes [ahead], but it is sensitive when you're giving away city parklands."

The \$7-million campaign included a \$2-million endowment fund for maintenance and upkeep.

Shulman told *The CJN* the veterans have to date "raised enough money to keep creditors off our back."

Despite his ouster, he still feels the memorial is "very, very important. It's got to be done. If [the new board is] doing a good job, that's wonderful."

Van Delman said the veterans have raised "close to" \$1 million to date, and that Libeskind has been paid \$125,000 so far, with the rest of his fee due only after construction begins.

Van Delman said he has begun legal action against the veterans for unpaid salary.

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Greater Toronto Area



SHARING BOOKS: Grade 6 students at Associated Hebrew School's Danilack Middle School proudly display some of the large number of new books they collected for Lt.-Gov. David Onley's book drive for aboriginal children in northern Ontario. The books were donated by students, as well as purchased with \$150 that the students raised for the drive.

Enjoying second year with Pizmon

Continued from page 12

Today, Burko is in his third year of the cantorial studies program at the Jewish Theological Seminary's (JTS) Miller Cantorial School in New York, and is enjoying his second year with Pizmon, a Jewish cappella group based in New York and made up of students from Bernard College, Columbia University and JTS.

And on Feb. 22 and 23, Burko and the rest of the Pizmon group will perform music that ranges from classical liturgy to modern Israeli pop in three Toronto area shuls.

Pizmon is a not-for-profit co-ed group that was founded in 1986 by four members of the Columbia Jewish community who wanted to bring Jewish music to elderly members of the community.

Today, the 13-member group performs at schools, community centres, shuls, hospitals and retirement homes.

Burko said the group travels often – about every other weekend – to perform for Jewish communities around the world.

"We do a great deal of travelling. Last year, we travelled around the United States, to Los Angeles and New Orleans," he said.

"This year we're going to Israel, and we're

going to tour army bases, hospitals and schools, and we're going to perform for the Ashkelon community as well."

On Feb. 22, Pizmon will be at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue for a Shabbat family dinner, during which they will lead the group in Shabbat songs.

The following day, Pizmon will perform following Shabbat services during kiddush at Adath Israel Congregations, and later that evening, they will perform a concert at Beth Radom Congregation.

"We mostly sing Hebrew, Israeli pop music, a cappella, some more traditional pieces, some comedic pieces – it's a mix," he said, adding that they tend to focus more on Israeli pop songs by musicians, including David Broza.

Burko, who sings bass and is the only Canadian member, is excited about coming back to his hometown to perform with the group.

"I'm particularly excited about the show, because I'm excited to bring Pizmon to my home community. They are a group I'm really proud to be working with."

For more information or to purchase tickets, call Adath Israel at 416-635-5340, Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda at 416-633-3838 or Beth Radom at 416-636-3451.

Premier against black-focused schools

Continued from page 3

"Josh wants [the board] to issue a trespass letter against her... but instead of heavy-handed tactics, I want to sit down with her and make it clear that [her remarks] are unacceptable," Campbell said.

"I don't think she believed or intended to hurt him. She apparently was unaware that her remarks were offensive. I'm taking this seriously and am going to ask for a letter of apology. The irony is that this lady who made the comments is often the first to claim that everybody else is a racist."

Campbell said he wouldn't rule out issuing a trespass notice – which would prevent her from entering TDSB property – if her explanation doesn't satisfy him. He didn't say when

the meeting will take place.

Matlow said that even if the Africentric school idea is defeated later this year, the recent debate and willingness of the board to look at more funding for ethnic education means "that [cultural] programming doesn't look as impossible as it once did, [because it is] opening up people's minds."

Premier Dalton McGuinty has said he doesn't support the idea of a black-focused school, but he told the *National Post* last week that his government won't act to stop it if the TDSB goes ahead with the plan.

"I am hoping that both sides can develop an understanding of where each other is coming from," McGuinty said. "At the end of the day here, we have a conflict between two important, noble, social objectives."

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Biased Israel coverage can be countered: watchdog

By RACHEL BARKSKY
Special to The CJN

Mike Fogelman recently asked a large audience at Toronto's Beth Tzedec Congregation if they believe the Canadian media is biased against Israel.

A unanimous cry of "yes" echoed throughout the room.

Fogelman wasn't surprised by the answer. As executive director of HonestReporting's Canadian branch, he spends six hours a day reading and critiquing dozens of newspapers, watching television and searching online to put a magnifying glass on the media, "as they have been on Israel," he said.

HonestReporting, which has affiliates in the United Kingdom, the United States, Brazil and Italy, was founded in 2000 and is now the world's largest pro-Israel media watchdog.

There are problems with the Canadian

media's coverage of Israel, but Fogelman believes they can be countered and wants people to know what they can do to help ensure fair and accurate reporting of the Jewish homeland.

"With the power of numbers - we have close to 18,000 members - the more changes we can effect," Fogelman told the audience at Beth Tzedec on Jan. 30.

Fogelman, a Carleton journalism graduate, showed part of a "Pallywood" video from seconddraft.org's website ("Pallywood" refers to the staging of scenes by Palestinian journalists in order to present the Palestinians as hapless victims of Israeli aggression). The scene that the Beth Tzedec audience saw was raw footage, the kind that usually doesn't make it into the news.

It depicted the "funeral" of a Palestinian man, with the "pallbearers" carrying the "dead" man wrapped in a sheath, on a

stretcher. What the public wouldn't likely see is that before the funeral, the pallbearers dropped the stretcher and the "corpse" picked himself up and got back on. They then dropped the stretcher again, and the "corpse" climbed on once more.

France 2, the country's largest public television network, aired a news report that showed a Palestinian man firing a gun toward Israelis at a nearby factory. He is apparently shot in his right leg, and the ambulance magically arrives the next moment. Paramedics load the man on his injured leg. Pallywood's extended footage - which didn't air on France 2 - shows that the Palestinian man was actually firing into an empty room. The Israelis weren't in sight, and there was no blood. "It's a staged scene, but it aired as news," Fogelman said.

He does not believe that all news is staged but does believe that there are people "manufacturing" the news. "People should report this, but they take

quotes on surface," Fogelman said. The *Toronto Star*'s Oakland Ross, for instance, quoted a Hamas official on Jan. 22, who said that five Palestinians had died in a Gaza hospital because of the most recent fuel embargo. However, Ross failed to report that both Israeli and Palestinian officials denied this claim, Fogelman said.

Fogelman contacted the newspaper, and it printed a correction two days later. "This is fantastic, but how many people read the follow-up?" he said.

There are 500 news crews posted to Jerusalem, Fogelman said, the third-highest number in any place in the world. Since Israel has a free press, journalists can say anything about the Israeli government "without being murdered. Compare this to the Arab world in the rest of the Middle East," he said.

"We don't hear about the horrible oppres-

sion that Saudi Arabia is, hanging dissidents of the government about once a month."

Fogelman said reporting on the Middle East is one of the most difficult jobs today, and part of the problem is that reporters are parachuted into the region without sufficient knowledge about it and are told: "Tell us the story now." To deal with the language barrier, journalists rely on stringers or guides - people who take them to places they think are important. This does not happen only in the Middle East but also in Russia, and even in Canada.

Of the Canadian news media, Fogelman said he has the most correspondence with the CBC over the network's media coverage of Israel. "It puts out the most content and has the most reporters posted to the region," he said.

Fogelman said he has seen a change in the network's coverage since Peter

Armstrong replaced Neil MacDonald (who many people said had an anti-Israel bias as its TV news correspondent) in Jerusalem.

Still, the CBC's coverage is worrisome at times. For instance, Fogelman said, the CBC continues to use reports made by Al-Jazeera, the controversial Arab satellite news service.

HonestReporting's goal is to help people become ambassadors for fair and accurate media coverage of Israel, Fogelman said.

Canadians can write letters to the editors of publications. He advises people to be quick, polite, concise and specific in their letters, and to become as informed about the issues as possible.

"Just because we aren't formal journalists, doesn't mean we don't have a voice," he said.

For more information, visit honestreporting.ca.

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Jewish Life

Ethicizing rituals, ritualizing ethics

By RABBI Yael SPLANSKY

One of the many ways we try to make sense of the mitzvot is by breaking them down into two categories. Ethical mitzvot are described as being "between one human being and another" and ritual mitzvot are described as being "between one human being and God."

Of course, there are many mitzvot that don't neatly fall into one category or the other. This is a game I like to play with our bar and bat mitzvah students. I ask them to explain why they categorize a particular mitzvah the way they do. Surprisingly, most students instinctively identify the rabbinic mitzvah of lighting Shabbat candles as ethical in nature, as they say it bonds "one human being to another."

Rabbi Arnold Jacob Wolf of Chicago complicates this conversation by challenging us to further blur the lines between the categories by "ethicizing the ritual mitzvot and ritualizing the ethical mitzvot."

What does this mean?

When Jews refrain from eating treif, they fulfil the ritual mitzvah of kashrut. But when some Jews boycotted California table grapes in the 1980s and called them "treif" because they were cultivated by mistreated migrant field workers, they ethicized the ritual of

keeping kosher. They expanded the ritual of carefully inspecting the fitness of food by being just as diligent in inspecting the ethics behind it. Similarly, some Jews consider all veal to be treif, because the animal is treated with cruelty. In addition, the term "eco-kosher" has been coined so that Jews might consider the effect of food production on the environment.

Another example: the ritual of building a sukkah. On the Sunday of chol hamoad Sukkot, Jews in their 20s and 30s volunteered for Habitat for Humanity and helped to build a permanent shelter for the homeless. The ritual of the rickety sukkah became a reminder of what else the festival requires of them ethically.

Yet another example: when synagogue leadership develops a policy requiring that only Israeli wines be served in its building in order to support Israeli exports, the ritual of making Kiddush is ethicized by a love of Zion and her people.

How can the inverse also be realized? When members of my congregation, Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto, turn their synagogue into a homeless shelter each Thursday, they fulfil the ethical mitzvot of "feeding the hungry" and "welcoming the stranger." The volunteers ritualize the ethical by reciting a

blessing before beginning their preparations and by putting on kippot before they serve warm meals to their guests.

Similarly, when a circle of friends supports a woman through her battle with cancer, they fulfil the mitzvah of "caring for the sick." They expand and strengthen that ethical mitzvah when she completes her regimen of chemotherapy and radiation, and they accompany her to the mikvah, which spiritually cleanses the poison from her body. By showering her with prayers of hope for a healthy future, they ritualize the ethical.

Rabbi Wolf's approach expands the scope of mitzvot in practice and in purpose. Sometimes the grace of a simple ritual stands on its own. Its beauty and history can be enough to inspire. And sometimes the additional gloss of the ethical can add the depth and relevance that so many people crave in a life of mitzvot.

Sometimes the human impulse to do good is overwhelming and steers us to walk in God's ways, to fill our days with acts of kindness. And sometimes the addition of a sacred ritual helps to put doing the right thing in religious terms, to frame it as a direct response to the Source of Blessings.

This approach of ethicizing the ritual and ritualizing the ethical suggests that the fullness of each mitzvah is only waiting to be discovered.

Rabbi Splansky is associate rabbi at Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto.

RABBINICAL REFLECTIONS

By RACHAEL TURKIEVICZ

As we read through the upcoming Torah portions, the excitement of the events of Sinai continues to speak to us, and then we encounter the betrayal of the Golden Calf.

The text tells us that Moses is late returning from the top of Sinai, and the Jewish people have suddenly become strict about keeping to a schedule.

Our solution is to build a concrete object upon which we can focus, since we relied on Moses to communicate with God, and clearly he does not seem to be returning. We are motivated by fear, and the text shows us how quickly fear can redefine the character of a people and lead us to destructive places.

The setting of the events of Sinai is depicted in very concrete ways. Moses, the mountain, the thunder and lightning – everything the Torah describes is an assault on our physical senses, and the sudden disappearance of Moses without his scheduled reappearance invokes within us the fear of the unseen. We solve it by building something we can see.

Yet, one group within the Jewish people refuses to participate in creating the Golden Calf. It appears that the women were not willing to contribute any mate-

rials to the building of the idol. According to the midrash in Pirkei deRabbi Eliezer, the women told their men: "You want to construct an idol and mask which is an abomination and has no power of redemption. We will not listen to you."

The midrash continues by saying that God rewards Jewish women by giving them the celebration of the new moon, Rosh Chodesh, more than to the men.

On the one hand, the connection of a woman and the moon is apparent on a physical level, as a woman's body will cycle in a rhythm, just as the moon cycles regularly. Yet, the text of the Golden Calf and the midrash emphasize the fact that the women were beyond needing the concrete and, therefore, rejected the building of the idol. The women did not fear or doubt what they could not see, since their cycles permit them to carry a new life within them, which they know they will not see as it grows.

Once the women show they can be trusted with a clear understanding of the place of the concrete and its limitations, God can safely place the new moon in their hands. Designating the moon as a

Securing the moon

focal point of time and blessing it once a month could easily slip over the line into an inappropriate, idolatrous understanding of the moon. Once the women show they understand the appropriate line between what is concrete and what is not – that is, once they reject the idol because they know the concrete cannot redeem – only then are they trusted with the moon.

The women will never allow the moon to be an object of worship, but will always frame it as the marker of time. Israel panicked when we believed Moses was late in returning – we misunderstood the time marker. As a result, we abandoned the abstraction of time and headed for the safety of the concrete, the idol. The time marker is safely returned to Israel through Jewish women.

According to the Jerusalem Talmud, it is acceptable that women not work on Rosh Chodesh, and the Shulchan Aruch, the Code of Jewish Law, supports this custom.

Within one of the darkest covenantal hours – Israel's betrayal of God through the Golden Calf – is a glimmer of understanding and safety that should be recognized with every Rosh Chodesh: Jewish women. The Talmud recognizes this view when it states: "Women, they are a people unto themselves."



Jewish Life

A training ground for young Israeli archeologists

By ALEX GROPPER

Hazor is the largest archeological site in Israel. It has an extensive history, going back before the dawn of civilization.

As with many sites in Israel, Hazor was initially excavated during the British Mandate by John Garstang. But the best-known excavations of Hazor were those carried out by the famous Israeli archeologist Yigael Yadin, in the 1950s.

Yadin had already made a name for himself in a number of fields. While barely in his 30s, he had commanded the Haganah during the War of Independence in 1948. Shortly thereafter he would get his PhD and obtain an important number of Dead Sea scrolls for Israel. Yadin would go on to win even greater fame after he finished his dig at Hazor when he undertook the excavations of Masada.

But it was Hazor that first established Yadin's reputation as an archeologist. At Hazor, Yadin would put to good use the organizational skills he had developed as commander of the Haganah. The Hazor excavations were also a training ground for a new generation of young Israeli archeologists who were emerging after the founding of Israel. Among those

archeologists who worked at Hazor was Yohanan Aharoni, the founder of the Institute of Archaeology at Tel Aviv University. Ruth Amiran, another Hazor alumnus, would go on to write the classic,

Ancient Pottery of the Holy Land. Trude Dothan and her husband, Moshe, would establish themselves as world authorities on the enigmatic Sea Peoples, among whose number are the Philistines of the Bible. These young archeologists would go on to establish the discipline in the new country.

The Hazor excavations would also make a major contribution to one of the crucial ongoing debates in biblical archaeology – the issue of the Israelite conquest. There were two opposing opinions regarding the conquest of Canaan by the Israelites, one used the Book of Judges as its major source of evidence and espoused a gradual subjugation of the land over a long span of time. The other view took as its model the Book of Joshua, in which the conquest was presented as a quick, blitzkrieg-like event. The evidence found by Yadin appeared to support the latter view. There was a huge destruction layer uncovered by Yadin, which he dated to the second half of the 13th century BCE, the time

most traditional scholars ascribe to the Israelite conquest. The current excavator of Hazor, Amnon Ben Tor, also found the same debris in his excavations, but he prefers to leave both the date and cause open for the time being.

Hazor was important enough to merit mention in the Egyptian excavation texts of the late 12th and early 13th dynasties, which are dated to the early second millennium BCE. The city is also mentioned a number of times in the Mari archives, which can be dated to no later than the 18th century BCE, since Mari was destroyed by the famous Hammurabi of Babylon circa 1750 BCE. The fact that at least 14 of the Mari documents mention Hazor attest to its importance as a major trading centre in the Near East at this time.

What is even more intriguing is that a number of inscribed clay tablets have been found on the site, teasing the excavators with the possibility that somewhere in the tell is a hitherto undiscovered archive. Yadin was so tantalized by this that he decided to go back to Hazor to search for it. He was convinced that he knew where the elusive archive was, but sadly he died before he could prove it. Ben Tor has his ideas as well, but so far Hazor has kept its ancient secret to itself. The question remains – will the Past come Forward to tantalize us again?

Past Forward



By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

One of the organizations that has worked the hardest to raise the profile of – and money for – Jewish summer camps is the Foundation for Jewish Camping. The foundation was started in 1997 by Robert and Elisa Spungen Bildner, a New Jersey couple. In its first nine years, the "\$12-million public foundation provided funding, scholarships, professional development programs and other resources to the 130 Jewish overnight summer camps and their 60,000 campers in North America." [jewishcamping.org]

The National Study of Youth and Religion in the United States found that 43 per cent of American Jewish teenagers have attended an overnight camp run by a religious organization. Surprisingly, that puts Jewish teens in fourth place. Nearly 80 per cent of Mormon teens have attended such a camp, followed by 53 per cent of conservative Protestants and 48 per cent of mainstream Protestants. [tinyurl.com/ypz4g]

For every kid who dreams year-round of being in camp, there's a parent who knows that "Even Utopia Has a Price Tag." Lea Lion wrote an article with that title for JewishJournal.com about the challenges faced by many parents already struggling to pay for Hebrew school and bar mitzvahs – along with summer camp, which can typically run between \$500 to \$1,000 a week. [tinyurl.com/2qlj2d]

But help is available. The Foundation for Jewish Camping has created a central directory of more than 80 scholarships offered for camps across the continent.

For families on a budget, foundation president Jerry Silverman has this advice: "Talk to the camp, talk to your rabbi and talk to your local [Jewish] federation – it is all about asking... If you don't ask, your children will suffer."

[tinyurl.com/2bnxqj] [tinyurl.com/2nnygz]

Despite the price tag – or because of it – there is fierce competition to attract campers to summer camp. That's why Jewish camps have begun to offer programs

that focus on specialties such as music and arts, sports, community service, technology, and even language immersion. [tinyurl.com/26aqjc] As Chanan Tigay puts it in the New Jewish Standard, "Campfire stories and lumpy pottery are making way for Jewish specialty camps. Jewish camps have even offered basketball tips with NBA coach, swimming advice from four-time Olympic gold medalist swimmer Lenny Krayzelburg and filmmaking guidance for budding Spielbergers." [tinyurl.com/24ytzt]

Located in Glen Spey, N.Y., Chai Life-line's Camp Simcha provides an overnight camping experience for Jewish children suffering from cancer or other life-threatening illnesses. Camp Simcha Special is for children with serious chronic illnesses. The site notes that both camps are free of charge. However, there is a nominal registration fee. [tinyurl.com/yqfk3z] You can watch an inspiring video about the camp, its campers, counsellors and families on YouTube. [tinyurl.com/yvp2mq]

Camp Yofei in north Georgia caters to Jewish families with children with

autism. [tinyurl.com/2bnxqj] A number of Ramah camps in Canada and the United States offer programs for campers with special needs. [campamah.org/tikvah.html] And in New York's Catskill Mountains, Camp HASC "provides over 300 mentally and physically handicapped children and adults with the opportunity to enjoy a seven-week sleep-away camp experience, just like many of their siblings and friends." [campahasc.org]

As the summers roll by, true campers know that one day they are destined to become counsellors and perhaps then unit heads. The Foundation for Jewish Camping offers job listings on its site [tinyurl.com/38szvj] as does Jewish Camp Staff. [jewishcampstaff.com]

What what happens when you're too old for those jobs? Become a camp director. But just having a pristine camping pedigree may not be enough. That's why Brandeis University and the Foundation for Jewish Camping are offering a fellowship to train directors of non-profit Jewish camps. As Silverman puts it, "a camp director is now expected to be "an educator, a construction expert, a major fundraiser, a financial genius, a health expert – as well as someone who understands the psychological growth of children, teens and the college-aged counsellors that work for them." In other words, a dream job for a very happy camper. [tinyurl.com/2bfhkf]

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.



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Coast to Coast

Who are the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades?

On Feb. 4, in Dimona, the first suicide bombers to penetrate Israel in more than a year killed one woman and wounded at least 11. Several Palestinian terrorist groups were quick to claim responsibility, including the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades.

Media reports varied widely in their description of the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, making it difficult to understand just how these "militants" (the term almost

always used by the media) are related to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' ruling Fatah faction. The al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades as a group was described as being "allied with 'Fatah,'" "an offshoot of 'Fatah'" and "loosely affiliated with Fatah." While commonly used, such vague descriptions fail to convey either the nature or extent of the relationship between the al-Aqsa Martyrs'

According to Reports

By
PAUL MICHAELS

In a Feb. 4 report for CBC's *The National*, Peter Armstrong called the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades "an offshoot of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah movement."

In the *Toronto Star* ("Bombing shocks Israel," Feb. 5), Oakland Ross noted: "Several different militant Palestinian organizations claimed responsibility for the Dimona attack, including the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade, a militia allied with Abbas' Fatah Palestinian faction, as well as Hamas, which rules the Gaza Strip."

A *Calgary Herald* report from McClatchy Newspapers ("Gaza border breach may have led to blast," Feb. 5) describes the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades as being "loosely affiliated with Abbas' Fatah party."

In the *Globe and Mail* ("Suicide bomber strikes in southern Israel," Feb. 5), Mark MacKinnon wrote: "A spokesman for the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, an offshoot of the mainstream Fatah movement of Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas, said the bombers had travelled from the Gaza Strip to Israel via Sinai after militants blew open Gaza's border with Egypt last month."

In "Fatah linked to bombing," (*National Post*, Feb. 5) *New York Times* reporter Isabel Kershner wrote: "Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, a militia loosely affiliated with the mainstream Fatah movement headed by Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian president, claimed responsibility and said it carried out the attack with another faction, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and another unknown group calling itself the United Popular Brigade."

Other reports said the attack was carried out by a sub-section of the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades.

In a Feb. 4 report for CTV's national news, Janice Mackey Frayer said "an offshoot of the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades loyal to Palestinian [Authority] President Mahmoud Abbas" claimed responsibility.

Similarly, in "Suicide bomber kills one in

Israel," (*Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*, Feb. 5), Reuters reported: "A Gaza-based source in President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah faction said the 'Army of Palestine' wing of Fatah's al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades launched the attack along with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)." This Reuters story directly links the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades to Fatah, while identifying the "Army of Palestine" as a "wing" of the Brigades.

Even Israeli sources can add to the confusion. In another Reuters story ("Bombing in Israel shows challenge facing Abbas," Feb. 5) Adam Entous wrote: "Mark Regev, [Israeli Prime Minister Ehud] Olmert's spokesman, said the [Dimona] bombing underscored the 'primary challenge' facing Abbas to demonstrate that he can exert full control over militant groups."

"This challenge is not only coming from forces outside their political movement," Regev said. "Within the Fatah machine, there are rogue elements."

Regev may have called the Brigades "rogue elements" in an effort to avoid embarrassing Abbas any further at a time when Olmert and Abbas are continuing to talk. But the phrase minimized the number of al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades members, the group's impact and, perhaps most important, its connection to the "mainstream" Fatah party.

It's important that the media once and for all properly identify the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades. We need to know how large the organization is, how much power it yields, and precisely what its relationship is to the Fatah party.

Israel is supposed to negotiate a peace agreement with Fatah. Fatah, in turn, may be undermining that effort by refusing to disband its own "militant" wing, the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade which has been directly involved in terrorism against Israelis.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

Supreme Court asked to hear challenge of get judgment

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The constitutionality of a 1990 amendment to the Divorce Act, intended to alleviate the problem of ex-spouses refusing to give or receive a *get*, is being challenged in a motion to the Supreme Court of Canada to re-hear a case.

The motion has been brought by Anne-France Goldwater, lawyer for Jessel (Jason) Marcovitz, the Montreal man who in December was ordered by the Supreme Court to pay damages for withholding the *get*, a traditional Jewish divorce, from his former wife for 15 years, despite a written commitment to do so without delay.

Goldwater argues that the Divorce Act amendment, section 21.1, breaches the traditional boundaries separating church and state and infringes upon the Canadian

Charter of Rights and Freedoms, specifically, the protection of religious conscience. She also argues that civil law can't be used to sanction someone for failing to perform a religious obligation.

Section 21.1, which does not mention Judaism or any other religion explicitly, obliges divorcing couples to remove "barriers" to the other's religious remarriage before the civil divorce can be finalized.

Goldwater said she didn't enter an argument on the constitutionality of the section when Marcovitz's ex-wife Stephanie Bruker's appeal was heard by the Supreme Court in December 2006, because Marcovitz had agreed in 2001 not to do so before Bruker's lawsuit was heard in Quebec Superior Court. Marcovitz's main argument has been that the case, because of its religious nature, was out of the bounds of Quebec civil law.

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Coast to Coast

Complaint over sermon advocating jihad dismissed

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

A review panel has dismissed a complaint that VisionTV violated an industry code of ethics when it aired a program in which a Pakistani imam with a history of anti-Semitism gave a sermon in favour of jihad "on the battlefield."

The Canadian Broadcast Standards Council (CBSC) ruled in late November that the content of Israr Ahmad's sermon did not contain aggressive, abusive or discriminatory comments levelled at any identifiable group.

The council, established by the Canadian Association of Broadcasters (CAB), a voluntary organization of private broadcasters, also stated that Ahmad's reputation, even if true, would not oblige any broadcaster to forbid him access to the airwaves.

"Even assuming that Israr Ahmad was not a 'benign educator,' did have a 'highly controversial reputation' as a promoter of an unethical and incompatible form of Islam and had made hateful comments about identifiable groups in other fora... no broadcaster has an obligation to forbid access to its airwaves on that account," the panel ruled.

The CBSC decision came in response to a complaint from an unnamed individual about a July 14, 2007, broadcast of the TV program *Dil Dil Pakistan*, which was provided to VisionTV by an independent producer.

In subsequent broadcasts, VisionTV issued an apology, saying Ahmad would not appear in future programs and that the network would ensure that those appearing on *Dil Dil Pakistan* "share our peace-

ful interpretation of the message of the Qur'an."

The complainant, however, asked the CRTC, Canada's broadcasting regulatory agency, to discipline VisionTV or revoke its license for permitting Ahmad to transmit "hate messages." The CRTC referred the complaint to the CBSC.

The complainant alleged that, "VisionTV bypassed its own code of ethics and its social responsibility and has stooped to the propaganda messaging of hate and violence. How ironic that Canada has many young people in our armed forces putting their lives on the line to rid this cancer from the peoples of Afghanistan, only to have hate messaging pumped into millions of homes in our heartland under the aegis of the CRTC."

A follow-up letter from the complainant alleges Ahmad's sermon tells Muslims they have the duty to wage jihad, either financially or on the battlefield.

"This messaging is directional and vaguely threatening," the complaint alleges. "It amounts to one-sided propaganda, which is in violation of the stated codes of conduct."

The CBSC's national specialty services panel, however, rejected that contention.

It stated that "there was barely a mention anywhere in the episode of any other identifiable group that, of course, the Muslim community. Though there is a reference in the broadcast of July 14 to the 'enemies of Allah,' nowhere has the imam directly identified any group. Consequently, there was no aggressive, much less abusive or even discriminatory comments levelled at any identifiable group and no breach of the human rights clause of the Canadian Association of Broadcasters Code of Ethics on this account."

Turning to the question of jihad, the panel noted the term "has no exclusive or limited meaning as a holy war. It is at least as understandable as referring to struggle or strife, with no necessary implication of battle or hostility."

"In the view of the panel, there was no call to arms or indeed any form of incitement of violence. Indeed, the only reference to physical conflict of any kind is found in Israr Ahmad's discussion of the strand of jihad when he said 'either with your financial resources or your bodily strength when you go to fight the enemies of Allah... on the battlefield.' The entire 'lesson' was purely didactic and tonally monochromatic; Ahmad did not even raise his voice to make his point."

Bill Roberts, president and CEO of VisionTV, said he was delighted with the CBSC decision, which affirmed the broadcaster as possessing "the gold standard" in industry ethics.

Referring to Ahmad's statement on jihad, Roberts stated: "Jihad is used by Muslims in this country and around the world and it has come to be a hot-button word for very obvious reasons. That's about as far as I can go."

Roberts continued, "Notwithstanding the CBSC support, I think it still behooves us to do what we think is right and take additional steps to be sure that hate-mongers not get on our airwaves."

He said VisionTV appointed a task force which included Jews, Muslims, Hindus and Christians, to review the station's code of ethics and make recommendations. The task force has submitted its report, but its conclusions won't be revealed until the network's board meets in April, Roberts said.

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THE SIX SESSIONS

1. **February 20, 2008, 7:30pm**

Beth Tikvah Synagogue,
3080 Bayview Avenue Willowdale,
www.bethtikvah.on.ca

A New Future: Building Shalom
between Catholics and Jews. Moderated
by Rabbi Wayne Allen and Reverend
Allan Baker

2. **February 27, 2008, 7:30pm,**

Newtonbrook United Church,
53 Cummer Ave. Willowdale,
www.newtonbrookunitedchurch.ca

Shared Origins, Diverse Roads.
Moderated by Rabbi Wayne Allen and
Rev. Allan Baker

3. **March 4, 2008, 7:30 p.m. Beth**

Tzedec Synagogue, 1700 Bathurst St.
Toronto, www.beth-tzedec.org

Common Texts, Different Scriptures
Moderated by Rabbi Roy Tannenbaum
and Reverend Canon Douglas Graydon

4. **March 12, 2008, 7:30 p.m.**

St. Philips-The-Apostle Anglican
Church, 201 Caribou Rd. Toronto,
www.toronto.anglican.ca

Season of Freedom, Season of Rebirth
moderated by Reverend Canon Douglas
Graydon and Rabbi Roy Tannenbaum

5. **March 26, 2008, 7:30 p.m. Adath**

Israel Synagogue, 37 Southbourne Ave.
Toronto, www.adathisrael.com

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Father Paul

6. **April 2, 2008, 7:30 p.m. at St.**

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And now for something completely different:

HEEBONICS

Making 'em laugh in Halifax

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOFF
Staff Reporter

Evany Rosen is a funny girl. Funny ha ha, not funny strange, that is.

A native of Toronto, she's one of the founding members of emergent Halifax improvisational comedy troupe, Picnicface – an odd title for a sketch comedy group, she admits. Still, it's one that Rosen and her gang have parlayed into an increasingly successful venture since 2005.

"I always loved comedy and laughter. My family's really funny. All my father's favourite films are comedies. So I got to see a lot of Marx Brothers and Woody Allen movies while growing up," Rosen, 20, told *The CJN* over coffee at a midtown Second Cup while she was in visiting family over the New Year's break in late December.

No stranger to the world of yuks, at 14, she began studying improvisational comedy with Toronto's Second City theatre and knew instantly she wanted to keep at it.

"I had a lot of appreciation for what laughter could do. And I wanted to find some way to get into it. But when you're 14 or 15, improv is the only thing you can do. It's a great way to train and learn [comedy skills]," she said.

Rosen took those skills, her wit and keen mind out east – ostensibly to attend university – and used them to connect with Picnicface co-founder, Kyle Dooley, while performing together in a play in Halifax.

The rest is comedic history in the making.

Picnicface has since ramped up to an eight-member ensemble – Rosen said her role is primarily as a writer, though she's been in numerous sketches and is working on improving her standup routine – and has cultivated a rabid following on the East Coast.

Though Picnicface plays regular gigs at a local Halifax tavern, Rosen said the focus of the group has shifted toward a more video-oriented, Internet-based philosophy.

"Andrew Bush, the newest member of the troupe, is responsible for that. He has a lot of video skills and has made a lot of short films. And now that has become what we do. We started as a live sketch troupe, and now that's secondary to the video aspect," she said. And they're getting noticed. Big time.

The troupe was recently commissioned by Sony Entertainment to create a series of Internet-based comedy sketches for the company to showcase on its website.

The Internet is "kind of like the Wild West right now," Rosen said. "By virtue of our presence on YouTube and our website, we've been contacted by Sony and [Hollywood movie giant] the Weinstein Company and others to work for their Internet divisions. As much

as we'd love to perform and build up our audience base in Atlantic Canada, if Sony wants something from us, it's more important than making Moncton laugh. No disrespect to Moncton, it's just the nature of the beast. Plus, Sony's got more money than Moncton."

What's more, Rosen and the Picnicface gang have even been praised by some of Hollywood's biggest comedy stars for their unique comedic stylings.

For instance, ex-*Saturday Night Live* alumnus Will Ferrell flagged the group's videos on his comedy video website, Fun nyordie.com, where they've garnered some of the best ratings.

"He actually picked some of our videos as funniest... twice!" Rosen enthused.

It's all part of Picnicface's master plan, which is to redefine Canadian sketch comedy by moving away from the traditional lampooning of stagnant topics and focusing on the irreverent, she suggests.

"We're trying to do something different. Sketch comedy has been going on in Canada for some time," she said, citing the long-running shows such as *The Royal Canadian Air Farce*, *This Hour Has 22 Minutes* and *Comedy Inc.*

"They all come from that politically based area, which is an important staple of Canadian comedy. But we like to... try for a different brand of comedy, which is lacking at the moment, it seems to me," Rosen said.

That brand is about being cheeky and trying to ruffle some feathers, although to date, the group hasn't managed to spark too much outrage.

Still, they've mocked, ridiculed and satirized a wealth of subjects considered sacrosanct and they're proud of it.

"We haven't had [negative] feedback. Probably because the people who would get up in arms over our sketches aren't surfing the Internet all that much," Rosen said.

"But if you go through some of the comments [on the Picnicface message board] you have writers with screen names like 'Jesus is my homeboy' and they have all kinds of unhappy things to say about how I'm gonna burn in hell for my [comedic] irreverence."

Rosen is referring to one specific video sketch in which, speaking as a Jew, she turns to look at a crucifix, then looks back at the camera after pondering



The comedy troupe Picnicface in a more refined mood



Evany Rosen, second from left, is flanked by her Picnicface peers on stage. From left, Kyle Dooley, Mark Little and Bill Wood.



Comedians Kyle Dooley and Evany Rosen on stage

for a second, before uttering, "You know what? I'd do it again."

"So far no one has come after me. But that's my goal. To have the Catholic Church come after me with torches," she quipped.

When she's not on stage or on a video shoot with Picnicface, Rosen is busy with her education, studying at Dalhousie University and its affiliate institution, the University of King's College, in a combined honours degree in history and early modern studies.

"It's kinda ridiculous," Rosen said, alluding to the usefulness of her degree. "But my family all agreed that whatever course my life may take, this bachelor's degree will be completed before anything else happens."

Rosen's family back in Toronto attend the Beth Hahonim synagogue, where she was bat mitzvah.

"I was raised kind of in a traditional Reform family," she said, then paused before quipping, "I don't know if traditional Reform Judaism even exists, but it does in Toronto, I guess. Yes, Toronto makes room for us."

So what makes her laugh?

"All kinds of things. I really enjoy comedy that redefines something I already know or points something out to me that should have been obvious," she answered. "Finding the absurdity in everyday

things is a wonderful function of comedy. I think there's some salvation to be found in that. And that all sounds very lofty."

Outside of comedy, Rosen said she'd love to continue on in academia or in journalism if her improv career doesn't pan out.

For more information (and if you're a fan of irreverent humour ready to laugh yourself silly), visit www.picnicface.com.

CHECK OUT OUR BLOG @ HEEBONICS.CA

Man's condition improves as court battle continues

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Special to the CJN

WINNIPEG — The family of an 84-year-old Orthodox Jew who is on life support says his condition has improved substantially after hospital doctors unsuccessfully tried to pull the plug on him more than two months ago because they said there was no hope for his recovery.

Family was able to get an ex parte injunction to prevent hospital from removing life support

Miriam Geller said that her father, Sam Golubchuk, who is unwittingly at the centre of a precedent-setting court case, is now "being weaned off life support" and "is awake and holding our hands."

"The nurses have him up in a cardiac chair every day a couple of times a day for two to three hours" and "a physio-therapist comes in regularly to do arm and leg exercises," she added.

Golubchuk is alive today because his family was able to get an *ex parte* injunction (without notice to the hospital) from Justice Perry Schulman of the Manitoba Court of Queen's Bench that prevented doctors at Winnipeg's Grace Hospital from removing his life support, which would have violated the family's wishes and religious beliefs.

At a hearing on Dec. 11, the hospital and doctors maintained that Golubchuk had minimal brain function.

Following that hearing, the family's lawyer, Neil Kravetsky, sought to file affidavits by Dr. Daniel Rosenblatt, a critical care physician in New Jersey, and Dr. Leon Zacharowicz, a neurologist from New York, that disputed the hospital's position.

After a Jan. 11 hearing, Schulman allowed Kravetsky to refile edited versions of these affidavits as evidence.

In his refiled affidavit, Zacharowicz said that even according to entries in Golubchuk's medical chart made before Dec. 11, there "is no evidence whatsoever that he is brain dead, close to brain dead, or dying, from a neurological point of view."

Zacharowicz concludes: "The decision of any medical professional to disconnect this clearly alive patient... whom medical records indicate is returning neurologically to his baseline, pre-admission clinical condition, is incomprehensible to me."

Schulman is allowing lawyers for the hospital to cross-examine Rosenblatt and Zacharowicz on their affidavits and to file additional affidavits in response. The judge has not made a final ruling in the case.

Lawyers for the hospital and doctors maintain that the decision to withdraw a patient from life support ought to be made by treating physicians and should not be put in the hands of the courts.

On Jan. 30, Manitoba's College of Physicians and Surgeons released new guidelines, effective Feb. 1, that say the final decision to pull the plug on a patient lies with his or her physician.

The guidelines say the minimum goal of life-sustaining treatment is for patients to recover to a level where they can be aware of themselves, their environment and their existence.

In the event a physician and a family don't agree as to whether the minimum goal has been met, the guidelines say the decision ultimately rests with the physician, who must consult with one other physician and then communicate the decision to the family.

In the event a patient could achieve the "minimum goal" but his or her physician concludes treatment should be withdrawn, the doctor must give the patient's family written or verbal notice 96 hours before life support is stopped.

Dr. Bill Pope, the college's registrar, said the guidelines

are not a response to the Golubchuk case and added that 100 stakeholders have been working to draft the new guidelines over the past three years.

He would not comment on the Golubchuk case, but he said the college would review its statement if Schulman rules in favour of Golubchuk's family.

Kravetsky called the new guidelines "terrible," adding that it's "extremely suspicious that after taking three years to prepare these guidelines, the college would release them now and direct doctors to follow them immediately when the court is ruling on this very issue."

Medical ethicist Pat Murphy, of St. Boniface General Hospital in Winnipeg, said the college has put patients and their families at a clear disadvantage.

"You and I didn't elect the college," she said. "Discussions around withholding or withdrawing life-sustaining treatment aren't solely medical decisions. In Ontario, for example, where a physician and a family disagree, there is consent legislation providing a remedy to a third party that will hear both sides to the conflict."

Murphy also said she considers the guidelines' 96-hour-notice provision to be unreasonable, because it does not give sufficient time to allow a patient's family to get legal advice and make an application to a court to issue an emergency injunction, as occurred in the Golubchuk case.

In response, Pope said some of the stakeholders consulted in drafting the guidelines felt "that the notice provision could be less than 96 hours."



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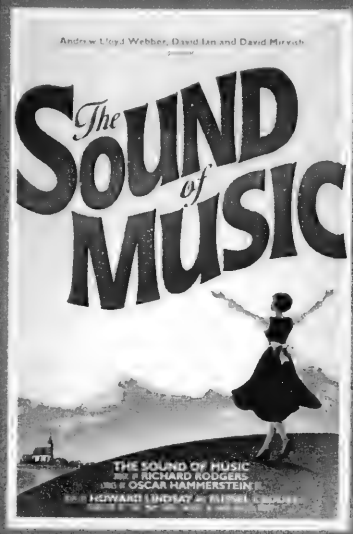
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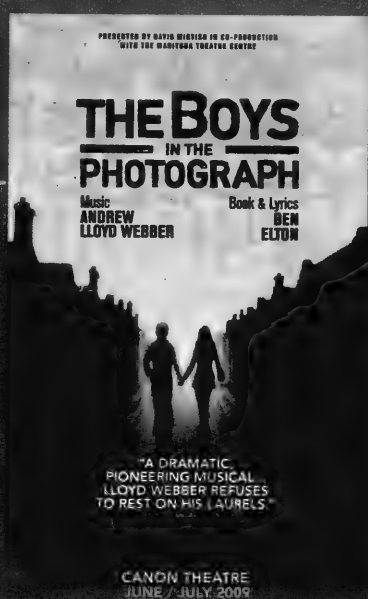
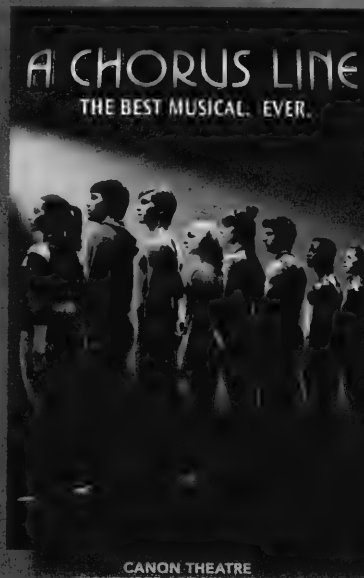
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On Campus

Jewish groups work to counter Israeli Apartheid Week

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Organizers of Israeli Apartheid Week have concluded their fourth year of anti-Israel programming on university campuses worldwide, but members of the Jewish community were intent on ensuring that their side of the story would also be heard.

Last week at the University of Ottawa, during a lecture titled "Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East," Israel's ambassador to Canada, Alan Baker, denounced Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW) as "crude propaganda, pure hypocrisy and cynical manipulation of the student body," the *Ottawa Citizen* reported.

He called the event, organized by groups such as the Arab Students' Collective, Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights and the Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid, a "celebration of ignorance, both of the meaning of apartheid and a complete and utter lack of awareness of the state of Israel and what it means."

In the Feb. 5 issue of the *National Post*, in an open letter written to David Naylor, president of the University of Toronto, where IAW was first launched in 2004, the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies expressed disappointment that the week-long event was allowed to occur on campus.

"Israel is a pluralistic democracy where Christians, Bahai, Jews, Muslims, Druze and others have freedoms and rights that are utterly lacking in neighboring Arab countries," the advertisement said.

"Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination by claiming that the existence of Israel is a racist endeavour is anti-Semitic. Applying a double standard by re-

quiring of Israel behaviour not demanded of any of its neighbours is anti-Semitic."

Two days later, U of T ran an ad in the *Post* in response that defended the president's decision to allow IAW programming to take place at his school.

"Cancelling events because of anticipated controversy rapidly changes the nature of the debate. Instead of public attention focusing on the actual positions of the speaker or sponsoring group (sometimes extreme and therefore lacking broad appeal), the focus shifts to the abrogated free speech rights of the affected groups and can create publicity and even sympathy for an extreme view."

But Betar Canada's executive director Orna Hollander said she's worried about the fact that a full generation of students have been educated by IAW events.

"The rule of marketing is that if you say something between seven and 10 times, even if you don't believe it or accept the philosophy, it is part of their knowledge bank now that Israel is an apartheid state. Even if they have no feelings about it, even if they are not angry about it," she said.

IAW has been spreading to more and more campuses every year, and this year, organizers even managed to take their cause to the airwaves.

On Feb. 6, York University's non-profit campus radio station, CHRY 105.5 FM, produced a full day of IAW programming, called Anti-Apartheid Frequencies, that ran from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Some of the segments in the eight-hour

event included "Israeli Apartheid Week: Students Strike Back," which focused on the role of "student-based resistance movements and the ways in which campuses can fight back," and "Amandla Intifada," which focused on similarities between the Palestinians and black South Africans.

CHRY, which is partly funded by a levy on York students, posted a blurb about the day's program on its website that said the objectives of Anti-Apartheid Frequencies "are to contribute to the chorus of international opposition to Israeli apartheid and to bolster support for the Boycott/Divestment/Sanctions campaign," which calls for an "end to the occupation and colonization of all Arab lands."

A day before the IAW programming aired, the station's website said that staff at CHRY "support these aims and are using this space to explore the importance and role of independent community media in this and other liberation struggles."

Two days later, that statement was removed and replaced by: "CHRY is a community-based campus station. Our mandate is to provide alternative programming."

Speaking with *The C/N* a day before Anti-Apartheid Frequencies aired, Robin Alam, CHRY's program co-ordinator, said the programming committee made sure it would be balanced and fair.

"We've been sure to invite different perspectives to the conversation so it isn't one-sided. Mind you, we are an organization whose mandate does dictate that we can look at things from alternative perspectives or things that aren't covered by the mainstream," Alam said.

Hillel of Greater Toronto's associate director, Tilly Shames, said she was contacted by the CHRY to take part in the programming, but she said she was reluctant, because it was clear that CHRY supports IAW.

"What we wanted to do was ensure that [IAW's] message didn't dominate the entire day and that every hour, there was a positive message about Israel or a message that contradicted the statements that were being made... We asked students to call in at different times."

Hollander and Hasbara Fellowships campus co-ordinator Ben Feferman said they were not approached about being on any of the programming, nor was anyone from their organizations.

"They didn't contact me," Hollander said. "The campus knows exactly who Ben and I are and exactly what our organizations do. They might have given you a song and dance about balance."

David Ashwal, program associate at Hillel at York, did take the opportunity to speak. He faced off against Daniel Freeman-Maloy, who has clashed with York's administration over his part in two noisy protests on campus regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Ashwal said he took part in the station's "Israeli Apartheid Week: Students Strike Back" segment, but when Hillel offered

CHRY the opportunity to interview Benjamin Pogrud, who is on the editorial board of the *Palestine-Israel Journal* and writes about the Middle East and South Africa for *Ha'aretz*, the station refused to include him in the day's programming.

Omme-Salma Rahemtulla, CHRY's spoken word co-ordinator, confirmed that Hillel was the only pro-Israel voice represented during the eight-hour event.

But Shames said she was encouraged by the positive student response to the pro-Israel programming that Hillel provided at York.

About 20 students from York's international relations, political science and peace and conflict studies programs attended a lecture by Yuriv Oppenheimer, general director of Peace Now.

"It was clear that the students from those departments are looking for dialogue and that they're not looking for polarized messages on campus."

Hillel also ran a series of ads, titled "This is Israel," to promote the diversity of Israeli society in *Excalibur*, the *Ryersonian* and the *Varsity*, three campus newspapers at York, Ryerson University and U of T, respectively.

Rebecca Woods Baum, Hillel's Israel affairs director, said that students were thanking her for bringing the Peacemaker video game – which simulates the challenges of solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict – to York, Ryerson and U of T, because it provided students with a positive message.

"A lot of people were put off by the other stuff that was going on, and they were happy to come and see the game and talk about it," Woods Baum said.

She said that some people were confrontational at Ryerson during the Peacemaker tabling session, but she said it gave Hillel an opening to talk about the issues.

"They come in with their biases, but we have a discussion. It never ends up in a yelling match. I think we're able to get our message out there in a calm environment, and I had some really great conversations with people."

Meanwhile, Betar and Hasbara went ahead with Islamic State Apartheid programming at York last week and set up a table to present images and videos that depicted human rights abuses in Islamic states, including stoning, honour killings, and executions of homosexuals.

"Essentially our goal and message was there are major human rights violations taking place in Islamic states... Minority groups in these countries are in a really subordinate position and their rights are not being recognized and reinforced by the judicial systems in those countries," said Anna Neuman, a Hasbara board member and York student.

"There were a few people who were screaming, but overall, the people I was speaking to were pretty open and trying to understand what we were trying to convey."

Hollander said that while some students were upset by the material, they also received a lot of support from others who agreed with their broader message.

"We were even approached by the head of the [York campus group] Iranian Students for Human Rights, in terms of joining us next time. It was really encouraging at times."



2008-2009

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Jack Shindman & Sharna Foundation Scholarship Committee
4600 Bathurst Street, Suite 325
Toronto, Ontario M2R 3V3
(416) 630-6481



Feature

'UN tilted against Israel'

Continued from page 1
suggestions that would help in organizing the event.

Participants and observers at the original Durban conference, known officially as the 2001 World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, were shocked at the extreme anti-Semitic rhetoric and propaganda that circulated at the event.

The followup conference, dubbed Durban II, is being organized by a committee established by the UN Human Rights Council, which itself has been accused of focusing almost exclusively on Israel while ignoring human rights abuses around the world. The UN body has appointed Libya to chair the preparatory committee organizing Durban II, and the committee includes such anti-Israel advocates as Iran and Cuba.

Canada has announced it would not take part in Durban II. Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier, and Jason Kenney, secretary of state for multiculturalism and Canadian identity, issued a statement last month that said: "Canada has a long and proud history of fighting racism, discrimination and intolerance in all its forms. It was for this reason, and its promise of concerted global action against racism, that we participated in [Durban I]. Unfortunately, that conference degenerated into open and divisive expressions of intolerance and anti-Semitism that undermined the principles of the United Nations and the very goals the conference sought to achieve."

"Secretary of State Kenney and I had hoped

that the preparatory process for the 2009 Durban Review Conference would remedy the mistakes of the past," Bernier said. "We have concluded that, despite our efforts, it will not. Canada will, therefore, not participate in the 2009 conference."

Grafstein noted that Liberal leader Stephane Dion has backed the official Canadian position. Grafstein said that the government's refusal to attend "is a major step forward from the last time."

The UN has shown repeatedly that it's tilted against Israel, Grafstein continued.

Louise Arbour, the UN's High Commissioner for Human Rights, at first supported an Arab League human rights charter that equated Zionism with racism. Arbour reversed herself and criticized that aspect of the charter only after she was pressured to moderate her position, he said.

In proposing an alternative conference, Grafstein said he was inspired by the 1936 "People's Olympiad," which was organized as a protest to the official Olympic Games being in Nazi Germany.

That alternative competition, which was to have been held in Barcelona, was cancelled after Spain plunged into civil war.

Grafstein said an alternative to the Durban II conference would permit human rights advocates to meet at a "balanced conference" and take advantage of the media presence and "so we can act as a restraint on UN officials. This time, they won't get a free ride."

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FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian
Jewish news



Mazel tov to Anne Adler on your birthday, from Rosalind, Calvin, Cindy, Michael, Mark, Lora & Steven. We all love you very much.



ITZY NORRIS
Happy 97th Birthday Zaidy We love you very much. Love, Stasha, your children, grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren.



Mazel tov to Edythe Abron (Née Levinter) on your 90th birthday, Feb. 20. Love from your daughter, Sharon, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



Mazel tov to Ida Brilant on her 80th birthday. Lots of love and good wishes from Sharon, Manny, Francine, Ron, Benjamin, Olga and Jason.



Noam Atlas, born Dec. 28, is welcomed by parents Marina & Udi, and the rest of their ecstatic family members, as well as Marina's "extended family" at UJA Federation.



Robert Santana, born July 11 to Michelle & Felipe. Mazel tov from Bubbie Marilyn Mandel, Aunt Cheryl & Uncle Lloyd. Missed is Zaida Robert "Bobby" Mandel.



Happy fifth birthday Sarah, daughter of Rachael & Jordan Schweigman. Proud grandparents Abbe & Eddie Nelson, Lorene and Bill Schweigman.



Mazel Tov to Brian Baum & Mandy Au on their engagement. Proud parents are Shirley & Louis Baum and Rita & Charles Au. Brothers Dave Baum & Jeff Baum.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!
Label the back of all photos and keep wording to 25 words or less.
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or email: cblackman@cjnews.com

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What's New
By REBECCA NADLER



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What's New deadlines: Monday, Feb. 18, is the deadline for the Feb. 28 issue and Monday, Feb. 25, is the deadline for the March 6 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, Feb. 14

NATURE OF MACHLOKET

Rabbi Benjamin Hecht teaches a four-week class on "The Nature of Machloket As It Appears in Contemporary Torah Thought" beginning tonight, 7:30 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. 416-789-3213

Saturday, Feb. 16

B'NAI SHALOM SERVICES

Join B'Nai Shalom, an egalitarian Conservative synagogue in Oakville, for a monthly Shabbat service followed by kiddush and conversation. 10 a.m. For info, visit

www.bnaishalom.ca or call 905-901-9889.

TRIVIA NIGHT

Bnei Akiva Schools hold a Trivia Night. Light dinner served. To register either teams or as individuals, call Elise, 905-709-7499 or gasnerbunch@sympatico.ca.

Beth Emeth Brotherhood present Trivia Night with quiz master Larry Ankiewicz. 8 p.m. \$12, table of 10/\$100. Reserve by Feb. 14 at noon. 416-633-633-3838

HEBREW SING-ALONG

Kinneret Chapter of the Israel Forum of UJA Federation hosts an

evening of Hebrew sing-along with Alona. 8 p.m. at the Jewish Family Resource Centre, Promenade Mall, # 313. \$12. Proceeds support the Renanim School in Kiryat Shmonah. Info, Lillian at 905-326-8767, or Chana at 905-886-4685.

Sunday, Feb. 17

YU KOLLEL YOM RISHON

Rabbi David Shatz, a professor at Yeshiva University and Columbia University, talks about "Valuing Life: Jewish and Secular Approaches to Ethical Dilemmas" at Yeshiva University's Sunday program. 9 a.m. at Bnai Torah. Info, www.kololyomrishon or 416-783-6960.

BREAKFAST AND SONG

Beth David Brotherhood presents Songs From Around the World, performed by Ed Daniells. 9:15 a.m.

\$5. www.bethdavid.com or 416-633-5500

'UP FROM THE PAGE'

Friends of Yiddish host "Up from the Page," a reading of Yiddish short stories in Yiddish and English by Gloria Brumer, Ellie Moidel, Jack Newman, Marvin Schiff and Mitch Smolkin. 2:30 p.m. at 471 Lawrence Ave. W. Guests \$5. RSVP by Feb. 15, 416-736-8073.

BOOK LAUNCH

Darchei Noam Congregation presents the launch of Rabbi Tina Grimmer's autobiography *Out of Line*. 3-5 p.m. Babysitting provided. 416-638-4783 or www.darcheinoam.on.ca

FINANCES EXPLAINED

BAYT Sisterhood presents "Dollars and Sense for Women,"

taking control of all aspects of your financial life. With lawyer Rachel Blumenfeld and investment adviser Theresa Tosh. 7:30 p.m. Free. 905-886-3810

Monday, Feb. 18

SEPHARDIS IN JERUSALEM

Beth Emeth Sisterhood hosts "A Sephardi Family in Jerusalem: The Valeros, 1800-1948," an evening of history with Joseph B. Glass. 8 p.m. Guests \$5. 416-633-3838

Tuesday, Feb. 19

TUESDAYS AT THE MOVIES

Beth Tikvah Synagogue movie series with Larry Ankiewicz, presents *Things About My Folks*. 2 p.m. \$5. 416-221-3434

Continued on page 27

NCSY COMMUNITY ART CONTEST!
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In a 7-2 ruling, the Supreme Court of Canada found that a civil divorce agreement signed by Jessel Marcovitz in which he agreed to grant Stephanie Bruker a get (Jewish divorce) created a valid civil obligation notwithstanding Mr. Marcovitz's claim of freedom of religion. The court rejected the argument that it had no jurisdiction in the matter because it involved a religious obligation.

Bruker v. Marcovitz

PANEL DISCUSSION:
Are Religious Promises Enforceable in Canadian Courts?

Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University presents:

Alan Stein, Stein and Stein (counsel for Ms. Bruker)
Anne-France Goldwater, Goldwater Dube (counsel for Mr. Marcovitz)
Andrew Lokan, Palliere Roland (counsel for Canadian Civil Liberties Association)

Date: Thursday February 21, 2008
Time: 12:30 - 2 PM
Location: Davies Ward Phillips & Vineberg LLP
1 First Canadian Place, 44th Floor

Lunch sponsored by Davies Ward Phillips & Vineberg LLP

Everyone welcome!

RSVP: Jules Gasner; email - jgasner@cfhu.org or phone - 416-485-8000

www.cfhu.org

What's New

Continued from page 26

DR. W. FILDERMAN LODGE

Dr. W. Filderman Bnai Brith Lodge will discuss "The Art of the Short Fiction Movies" with **Tereza Barta**, 5 p.m. at 15 Hove St. For information, call **Felicia Lowy**, 416-631-0634 or **Neti Badulescu**, 416-733-1214.

THE HOLLYWOOD REDS

Join **Stuart Hand** for film clips and discussion about the Hollywood Reds, 7:30 p.m. at Temple Har Zion. Non-members \$5. 905-889-2252

FILM: MY OPPOSITION

Beth Tikvah Sisterhood screens *My Opposition: The Diaries of Friedrich Kellner*, the German chief justice inspector who recorded Nazis' misdeeds, with the film's writer-director **Fern Levitt**, 8 p.m. Non-members \$5. 416-2213434

'PARENTEENS'

Sarah Chana Radcliffe continues "PARENTEENS" – enjoy parenting your teenager. Tonight and Feb. 26, 8 p.m. at the Village Shul. \$60, \$100/couple. 416-785-1107, ext. 204

Wednesday, Feb. 20**MIDRASHA FOR WOMEN**

Mizrachi of Canada presents weekly learning in English with **Rabbi Yoni Berlin**, principal at Ulpanat Orot on "Ramban: Commentator, Philosopher and Leader." Wednesday, 7:30-8:30 p.m. at Congregation Bnai Torah through June 18. 416-630-9266

SUPPORT GROUP

Parent or relative of a lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered (LGBT) person meet and discuss the new directions in their lives. 7:30 p.m. at Beth David Synagogue. Info, **Noreen**, 416-633-5500.

BEREAVEMENT SEMINAR

Temple Har Zion continues its bimonthly bereavement seminar with **Rabbi Cory Weiss** facilitating a discussion on "Prayer and Healing." 7:30 p.m. 905-889-2252

POMEGRANATE GUILD

It's a beading party at the Pomegranate Guild meeting. Learn how to make felt beads, fabric beads, crochet with beads and more. Supplies provided. Guests \$5. 8 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. Info, **info@pomegranateguild.ca**.

Other News**SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE**

Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School host an open house for their middle school, grades 7 & 8

Thursday, Feb. 21, 7:30 p.m. at Miles Nadal JCC. RSVP, 416-928-3537 or **jessica@djds.ca**.

JEWISH MUSIC

Adath Israel, Beth Emeth and Beth Radom synagogues present a weekend of Jewish music featuring Pizmon, an a cappella choir of Jewish students from Columbia, Barnard and the Jewish Theological Seminary, Feb. 22-23. Shabbat family dinner, Feb. 22, 6 p.m. at Beth Emeth. Shabbat services, Feb. 23, 9 a.m. at Adath Israel. Community concert, Feb. 23, 8 p.m. at Beth Radom. Dinner, \$35, \$15 for children 13 and under. Concert \$18, students \$10. Reserved section \$50. Dinner and concert, \$50 or \$72. Reserve at 416-633-3838, 416-635-5340 or 416-636-3451.

VE'AHAVA COFFEE HOUSE

Ve'ahava hosts The Coffee House: Voices from the Street. Includes readings from the winners of a creative writing contest for the homeless. Sunday, Feb. 24, 4:30 p.m. at Congregation Hahonim. Free. 416-964-7698

BAYCREST FUNDRAISER

Baycrest Women's Auxiliary brings South Beach to its annual fundraiser Wednesday, Feb. 27, at 6 Degrees. The evening includes food, fashion and auction in support of Baycrest Centre. Tickets \$180, 416-7852500, ext. 2045, or **www.baycrest.org/VA**.

CHAIM'S LOVE SONG

Teatron Theatre presents the 2007 Grand Award winner for best play, *Chaim's Love Song*, a dramatic comedy by **Marvin Chernoff** at the Leah Posluns Theatre, Feb. 27 to March 9. Tickets, \$16-\$41, 416-616-5350, group discount and promotions, 416-781-5527.

'EMPATHY LABYRINTH'

Enjoy a Shabbat with educator and comedian **Marc Weiner**. He will present his "empathy labyrinth" on Friday night after dinner and speak Shabbat morning after services at Kehillat Shaarei Torah, Feb. 29-March 1. Dinner \$36, \$15 children 12 and under. Reserve by Feb. 25, 416-229-2600, ext. 3.

TRY A MELTON CLASS

Try out the Florence Melton Adult Mini School. Visit a class on Wednesday mornings at Beth Emeth Synagogue or at CHAT on Wednesday evenings. Call **Loretta Tanenbaum**, 416-789-7400.

SHABBAT ACROSS CANADA

Celebrate a Shabbat evening with Jews across the country with services and Shabbat dinner, Friday, March

7. Participating synagogues include Beth Emeth Synagogue (416-633-3838 or **www.bemy.org**) and Am Shalom Synagogue, Barrie (705-792-3949 or **www.amshalom.ca**)

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. Information/registration 416-638-7800 or **www.jfandcs.com**.

Call **Shawna**, ext. 215, for info and registration for the following:

- **Adolescents and Divorce:** A workshop for parents who have adolescents. Tuesday, Feb. 19, 7-9 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

- **When You're About to Separate – What to Tell The Kids:** A workshop for parents about to separate or in the early stages of separation on how to best meet your child's needs. Tuesday, Feb. 26, 6:30-9 p.m. at the Promenade Mall, #313.

- **Understanding Bipolar and Anxiety Disorders:** A lecture about the symptoms and treatment of these disorders, and how and where to get support. Thursday, Feb. 21, 7 to 9 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building. Pre-registration required.

Call ext. 246 for info and registration for the following:

- **Parenting the Child with Challenging Behaviour:** A series for parents who are frequently challenged by the behaviour of their children aged 6-12. Wednesdays, Feb. 20-April 2, 6:30-8 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

- **Parenting Children with ADHD,** a six-week group, Wednesday, Feb. 27-April 9, 6:30-8 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

FOR SENIORS

Chai Shalom Social Club hosts **Adam Timoun**, Sunday, Feb. 17, 1:30 p.m. Refreshments served. Non-members welcome. Info, call **Sandy**

at 416-633-3838.

Beit Rayim's Hazak Over 50 Group visit the McMaster Museum of Art in Hamilton for a guided tour of the photo exhibit of shtetl life by **Roman Vishniac**. Tour leaves mid-morning. Thursday, Feb. 21. Reserve, **admin@beitrayim.org** or 905-770-7639, ext. 31.

55+ Forward for Seniors at the MNJCC presents "Government Assistance For Independent Living and Long Term Care" – information, conversation and tea. Thursday, Feb. 21, 1:30 p.m. Info, 416-944-6211, ext. 155.

The Association of Jewish Seniors, Thursday, Feb. 21, 1 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, "Paperclips" Jewish motorcyclists, a ride to remember the Holocaust. Guests \$2. Info, 416-635-2860, ext. 458.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the **Park**. Meeting for members only, Thursday, Feb. 28, 1 p.m. Info, Tuesday-Thursday 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 416-395-7881.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Israel Update, with **Mordechai Ben-Dat**, *CJN* editor. Tuesday, Feb. 19, 10 a.m. \$2, non members \$4.

Eye Clinic, drop-in, Tuesday, Feb. 19, 12-1 p.m.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or **www.bjcc.ca**.

PD Day Programs at the BJCC. Programs run from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. for nursery to senior kindergarten and Grade 1-3. Includes arts and crafts, sports, creative play, swimming, and more. Before and after care offered most days. Upcoming dates: Feb. 14, nursery-senior kindergarten and Grade 1-3; Feb. 25 and 26. Info, call

Sarah, ext. 390.

Tumbling Toddlers, a new program through the Jewish Discovery Museum, Wednesdays, 2-2:45 p.m. Designed for your toddler to have a safe and stimulated opportunity to explore climbing structures designed especially for them. Ages 1-2 (with adult), \$50; non-members \$60/child. Info, ext. 390.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or **www.mnjcc.org**.

Books and Bagels presents **Nick Maes**, reading from his novel *Dead Man's Float*. Sunday, Feb. 17, 11 a.m.-12:15 p.m. \$6 includes bagels and coffee. Ext. 0.

Toronto Jewish Film Society screens *The Ritchie Boys* with guest speaker **Prof. Guy Stern**. Sunday, Feb. 17, 4 and 7:30 p.m. \$15. Ext. 606 or **esthera@mnjcc.org**.

Jewish meditation, Wednesdays 12-1 p.m. \$125/10-week card, \$15+ for drop-in. Ext. 154.

Parenting with Jewish Values: A Kol workshop on the spirituality. Learn to talk to your kids about God, death, etc. Thursday, Feb. 21, 7:30 p.m. \$10. Info, 416-636-1880, ext. 385, or **www.kolel.org**.

Volunteers Needed**CIRCLE OF CARE HOSPICE**

Circle of Care Hospice and Jewish Hospice Programs offers a free 30-hour training program for volunteers looking for a meaningful and rewarding experience. A few hours a week will add meaning and quality to a person's end-of-life journey. Begins Feb. 21. Training sessions take place on evenings and Sundays. Info, **Heidi**, 416-635-2860, ext. 467. Russian and other languages are an asset.

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SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 19

OBITUARIES and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Ruth Saffer	Jan 27/08	7460 Bathurst St
Lillian Yaffa	Jan 27/08	1 Clark Ave W
Joe Sklar	Jan 26/08	900 Yonge St
Marilyn Weiss	Jan 27/08	1166 Bay St
Lisa Goldstein	Jan 27/08	613 Castlefield Ave
Edward Silver	Jan 28/08	55 Ameer Ave
Helen Goldstein	Jan 28/08	147 Elder St
Percy Weinstein	Jan 27/08	94 Dunvegan Rd
Lillian Rosner	Jan 26/08	1874 Parkview Cr
Bess Gelberg	Jan 31/08	4001 Bayview Ave
Max Gelberg	Jan 26/08	4001 Bayview Ave
Paula Kerschbaum	Jan 28/08	4000 Yonge St
Temmie Greenberg	Jan 29/08	784 Centre St
Boris Berkman	Feb 1/08	1121 Steeles Ave W
Esther Levin	Feb 1/08	6 Revcoe Dr
Bella Kay	Feb 1/08	9 Deerford Rd
Ben Sherkin	Feb 1/08	355 St. Clair Ave W
Esther Peacock	Feb 7/08	20 Evergreen Cr



Steeles Memorial Chapel

Simchovitch, Freda	Feb. 1/08	17 Tillipain Rd
Domb-Karniol	Feb. 1/08	540 Coldstream Ave
Zlot, Idelle Ruth	Feb. 1/08	Private
Walfish, Dorothy	Feb. 2/08	63 Collinson Blvd
Benasuly, Simy	Feb. 3/08	
Feldman, Frederick	Feb. 2/08	128 Shaftesbury St
Feldberg, Lillian	Feb. 3/08	7440 Bathurst St
Honig, Samuel	Feb. 3/08	
Zielanski, Mike	Feb. 4/08	Private
Weinstock, Idelle Harriet	Feb. 4/08	
Einstoss, Jean	Feb. 4/08	198 Brighton Ave
Brown, Jean	Feb. 4/08	
Goykberg, Zina	Feb. 2/08	Private
Goldstein, Saul Siegfried	Feb. 4/08	120 Shelborne Ave

We wish to express our deepest gratitude to our families and friends for your support, heartfelt sympathies and generous donations following the untimely loss of our mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

ROZALIA FRIEDMAN ז"ל

The Tokayer, Smilovits & Friedman families

YIDDISH CORNER

Edited by: ALEK SILVER

ידיש-ווינקל
העראגט פון: אלעק סילווער

דער „שווארצער יאנואר“

(75 יאר פון היטלערס קומען צו דער מאכט)

פון אלעק סילווער

אין דער וואך פון 30סטן יאנואר האט די וועלט אפגעזיכט 75 יאר זינט אדאלף היטלער (ימח שמו) און זיינע מערדערשע הארדעס זיינען געקומען צו דער מאכט אין דייטשלאנד. און דאס נאכפאלגנדיקע, ווי מען זאגט עס אין ענגליש, איז געשיכטע. די דאזיקע גע-שעעניש האט פאראורזאכט די גרעסטע טראגדיע אין דער וועלט-געשיכטע כולל און כפרט דעם אומקום פון א דריטל פון אונדזער יידישן פאלק – איבער 6 מיליאן מענער, פרויען און קינדער. פאר אונדזער פאלק איז דאס אן אומגליק פון וועלכן מיר וועלן מער נישט קע-נען קומען צו זיך.

ווי די וועלט אויכוין ווייסן צו דערציילן איז היט-לערס נאמינאציע צום העכסטן אמט פון „דריטן רייך“ אין דייטשלאנד געקומען מנד דעם דעמאלטדיקן שוואכזיניקן דייטשן פרעזידענט, פעלדמארשאל היט-לער. וועלכער האט אין יענער שעה זיכער נישט פארשטאנען דאס גרויסע אומגליק, וואס ער ברענגט פאר דער וועלט, פארן דייטשן און פארן יידישן פאלק. איינגעלעך איז היטלערס נאצי-פארטיי געקומען צו דער מאכט אויף א דעמאקראטישן אופן, פאראורזאכט דורך דער אינערלעכער צעשפליטערונג און סכסוכים פון די אנדערע פאליטישע פארטייען. דער אמט איז, אז ער פאראממענטארישער מיסטעס אין דייטשלאנד האט אין פאקט שוין אויפגעהערט צו עקזיסטירן נאך אין 1930. די מאכט איז אויפגעהאלטן געווארן דורך א דיק-טאטארישן רעזשים פון אריינגעצוהונגענע געזעצן.

די נאציס האבן קיין מאל נישט פארבארגן זייערע פלענער פאר דער צוקונפט. דער „איי מאמיק“ פון דער דאזיקער פארטיי איז קלאר און דייטלעך ארויסגע-ברענגט געווארן אין זיין אנטשיסעמיטישן בוך „מיין קאמף“, וואס איז געשריבן געווארן נאך איידער ער איז געקומען צו דער מאכט. עס האט אויך אנטפלעקט זיינע פלענער וועגן דעם באהערשונג פון דעם נייעם „דריטן רייך“ איבער דער וועלט. זיינע אמטע כוונות און זיין טריב זיינען שוין דעמאלט געווען וועגן א „גרויס דייטשלאנד“, וואס זאל ארויסצוהינגען דייטשלאנדס הענעפאטיע איבער דעם „סלאווישן“ מזרח, כדי אויס-צוברייטערן דעם „לעבנסרום“ פאר זיינע בירגער. ער האט אויך געמיינט אויף א פאליטישן אופן צו בא-הערשן די וועלט און ארויסצוהינגען זיין רעזשים.

פעלדמארשאל הינדענבורג און זיינע עצה-געבערס האבן געמאכט דעם פאטאלן טעות, ווען זיי האבן גע-מיינט, אז זיי וועלן קענען צווינגן די „וילדע געטטישע“ ווען ער וועט איבערנעמען די מאכט. עס איז אבער א-רויסגעקומען פארקערט. נישט נאר האט די „געטטיש“ זיך נישט געלאזט צווינגען. זי האט אפילו געטריט די, וועלכע זיינען געשטאנען אין איר וועג. און דאס דייטשע פאלק האט זיך אונטערגעגעבן. און זיך געשטעלט אונטער היטלערס הערשאפט. מיט 75 יאר צוריק, דעם 30סטן יאנואר פון 1933, ווען עס איז באקאנט געווארן די איבעראשנידיקע נייעס, אז אדאלף היטלער איז דעם נאכמיטאג נאמינירט געווארן ווי דער קאנצלער. האבן מיליאנען דייטשן געוויילט די דאזיקע געשעעניש. זיי האבן מארשירט אונטערן קלאנג פון מיליטערישער מוזיק, מתורועט נאצי-לעזמענטן מיט ברענגענדיקע פאקלען און זייערע הענט און הויכע אריסענערייען פון „הייל היטלער“.

איצט, מיט 75 יאר שפעטער, קען מען זיך אפגעבן א סך הכל, וואס די דאזיקע געשעעניש האט אפגעקאט מיט קרבות דער אנצער וועלט אין אליגעמין און ספעציעל צו אונדזער יידישן פאלק. און דער סך-הכל איז א יצער, זייער טראגישער און א גרויאמער.

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IDF preparing for possible Gaza offensive

Continued from page 1

"I believe a combination of steps against Hamas in Gaza will bring an end to the Hamas regime in Gaza," Ramon told reporters. "They will not last. It will take a few months, maybe it will take a year."

Ramon said he was recommending to the cabinet that it step up its campaign against Hamas by targeting all group leaders "directly or indirectly" involved in attacks against Israelis.

He also said Israel should respond to cross-border attacks by immediately attacking areas from which rockets are launched, and by tightening restrictions on supplies of electricity and fuel to Gaza.

Ramon's comments came after Defence Minister Ehud Barak said earlier Monday that Israel would intensify its military campaign to curb Palestinian rocket fire from the Gaza Strip and was preparing for a possible broader offensive in the territory.

Hamas dismissed Ramon's comments as "wishful thinking" and said Israel was working with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, who wants to oust Hamas from the Gaza Strip. "Betting on siege and aggression to topple Hamas would prove to be a complete failure," Hamas official Abu Zuhri said.

Also Monday, Infrastructure Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer urged stepping up targeted assassinations of Hamas leaders, as well as of Qassam rocket crews and their commanders.

"They don't know when the missile is going to reach them, and that is the [point of] the focused prevention [assassinations]," he told Army Radio.

"We needn't have mercy – rather to go with all our might," he said. "The IDF is ready to perform if called upon."

During a meeting on security developments

Sunday and at the weekly cabinet meeting, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Barak said Israel needs to continue its preparations for a large-scale military operation in the Gaza Strip, but there is no point in rushing into one.

Olmert was steadfast against pressure from cabinet ministers to change Israel's response to the Qassam attacks from the Gaza Strip.

"There are many operations against the Qassam attacks, but there is no way to put an absolute end to the terrorism in a single blow or a single air attack," Olmert later told reporters on his plane, on the way to a visit to Germany.

"Even after Defensive Shield [the operation against militants in the West Bank in 2002] terrorism continued, it took a long time to curtail it," Olmert added.

During the cabinet meeting, Olmert answered calls for retaliation for the injury of two brothers in Sderot. Rami Twito, 19, and his brother Osher, 8, were seriously injured by Qassam rockets. Both were treated in Barzilai Hospital, where Osher had to have a leg amputated.

Olmert responded by saying that "rage is not a plan."

Many ministers were critical of the situation in Sderot and the other communities bordering the Gaza Strip.

Interior Minister Meir Sheetrit was vociferous in his demands for action. "We are trying to talk in English to a population that only understands Arabic," he said.

"We need to target all those responsible for terrorism without asking who they are. It is not acceptable that we do not respond when we are being attacked. The IDF needs to wipe out a neighbourhood in Gaza – warn the residents and then go into the neighbourhood."

But on the plane, Olmert responded differently to the cabinet's criticism of the Gaza op-

erations. "There has been fighting in the Gaza Strip for many months. We are holding regular talks on the Gaza Strip and we will have more talks. In 2007, we killed 500 militants in Gaza. So saying that we are doing nothing ignores reality."

For its part, the IDF is stepping up its preparations for the possibility of a large-scale ground operation in Gaza.

Chief of Staff Gabi Ashkenazi recently gave orders for such preparations, but army sources insist that they have not received any order to initiate an operation. Military sources said such an operation is not likely to begin for several more weeks.

Barak has reiterated that Israel will not embark on a military operation unless Israel defines its goals, "has a [political] exit plan" and prepares the ground for broad international support for its action.

For now, the IDF has been ordered to continue its current operations, but step up the intensity of activity. This will include more intensive air strikes against Hamas targets, assassinations and limited ground operations

with forces not penetrating beyond the three-kilometre mark from the border fence into the Gaza Strip.

Security sources also said there is solid information that the terrorist organizations in the West Bank are preparing to dispatch suicide bombers inside Israel.

Meanwhile, Hamas and other Palestinian groups in the Gaza Strip did not carry out any Qassam rocket attacks against Israel on Sunday. Israel Radio reported late Sunday night that one rocket landed in an open field near the coast north of the Gaza Strip. No injuries or damage was reported.

Nonetheless, a member of the Popular Front for Liberation of Palestine was killed Sunday afternoon in a firefight between a group of Palestinian gunmen and an IDF patrol, near the border fence in the northern Strip.

Also Sunday, a leading Hamas militant was killed in an air strike on Rafah.

In another air strike on an installation of the military wing of Hamas near Khan Yunis, 10 Palestinians were injured.

Hamas' new policy of deterrence

By AMOS HAREL and AVI ISSACHAROFF

© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

The injuries suffered by brothers Rami and Osher Twito in Saturday night's Qassam rocket strike on Sderot have still not sent the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) into the Gaza Strip on a major ground offensive. Israel's political leadership remains unconvinced that the military plan will necessarily bring about a positive change in the situation along the border with Gaza.

In spite of the political pressure to take action, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Defence Minister Ehud Barak would like to maximize the room they have to manoeuvre before they order a large-scale military operation.

Analysis

However, the direction of developments in recent weeks is clear. They are moving more and more toward a direct confrontation, in the near future, between Hamas and the IDF. One of the main reasons for the escalation stems from the attempt by Hamas to establish a new deterrent against Israel.

Since mid-January, Hamas has operated differently in the Gaza Strip. It no longer uses short-term and irrational responses to IDF ground raids or air attacks. For each Israeli operation, especially if it involves a large number of casualties in the ranks of the organization, Hamas responds with a drawn-out rocket barrage of three to four days. At its completion, Hamas lowers the intensity until the next round of violence.

Continued on page 30



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Authors & Poets

The CJN is pleased to announce its

Annual Passover Literary Supplement

We invite our readers to submit unpublished, original works of fiction or poetry that explore Jewish themes. They should not exceed 2,000 words.

We must receive your submissions no later than Friday, March 14. E-mail submissions are preferred, but works can also be sent by mail or brought to our office. E-mail: info@cjnews.com. Mail: 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4.

Submissions will not be returned. The CJN will not enter into any correspondence with participants.

CJN Purim Art Contest

It's time again for our annual Purim Art Contest.

Who can enter: Children in grades 1 to 6 inclusive are eligible. The children of CJN employees are not eligible.

Prizes: The judges will choose one drawing from two different students in each grade. These "winning" drawings will be published in *The CJN's* 2008 Purim Poster. In addition, each of the 12 children whose drawings have been selected will receive a cheque for \$25.

How to enter: You may submit as many drawings as you want. However, they should not be too small nor too large. Please paint or draw bright, bold, colourful pictures. You may use markers, crayons, paint or pencils. Please send us your name, address, phone number, age and grade along with your drawings.

You may mail or deliver your drawings to: CJN Community Contests, The Canadian Jewish News, 1500 Don Mills Road, Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4. If you want us to return the pictures to you, please provide a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Otherwise, we will be unable to do so.

The contest closes at 3 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 29, 2008. We will undoubtedly receive many wonderful submissions from children all across the country. But only 12 of the drawings will be chosen as the "winners." The judges will base their decisions on a number of factors such as: the use of colour, the imaginative quality of the drawing and the way it tells an aspect of the story of Purim. The judges' decisions will be final. The chances of winning depend upon the number and quality of submissions received.

How the winner will be announced: The children whose pictures are chosen will be notified by telephone before the start of Shabbat on Friday, March 7, 2008.

When the prizes will be awarded: The "winning" pictures will be published in *The CJN* of March 20, 2008. Have fun and good luck.

Any litigation respecting the conduct and awarding of a prize in this contest may be submitted to the Régie des Loteries et courses du Québec.

Israel & the Jewish World



CEMETERY DESECRATED

Two teenage boys, 15 and 16, were arrested by police in the Hungarian town of Kaposvár, 190 kilometres southwest of Budapest, last week after they admitted to defacing some two dozen graves with swastikas and anti-Semitic slogans in the town's Jewish cemetery. It was the fourth time in the past 12 months the cemetery has been vandalized.

[Israelnet photo]

American says he was expelled from Belgian cafe for wearing kippah

© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

ANTWERP — A U.S. professor who was born in Auschwitz just before the concentration camp's liberation in 1945 said he was kicked out of a restaurant in the Belgian city of Bruges two weeks ago because he was a Jew, according to European news reports.

Marcel Kalmann said that a waiter at the Le Panier d'Or, a renowned café-restaurant located on the main city square, saw his skullcap under his hat and shouted at him "We are not serving Jews! Out of here," according to the reports.

Kalmann told the Antwerp Jewish magazine *Joods Actueel* that when he went down to the police station to file a report, the officers did not believe him at first and heckled him throughout the complaint.

An officer told him that the complaint

had to be filed in Flemish, not English, and then told him that the incident would not be considered an anti-Semitic offence, according to a report in the European Jewish Press (EJP).

The owner of the restaurant told *Joods Actueel* that Kalmann was indeed kicked out of the restaurant due to "strange behaviour." He said he was ready to apologize for the incident, according to the report.

Kalmann said he would file a complaint against both the police and the restaurant, according to the magazine.

Kalmann was born in Auschwitz three days before the liberation of the Nazi camp by the Russian army, according to the EJP.

There are about 40,000 Jews living in Belgium today, most of them in Antwerp or Brussels.

Last year saw a substantial rise in the number of anti-Semitic incidents in

Germany, Austria and the Scandinavian countries, according to the Global Forum Against Anti-Semitism.

The Global Forum — a joint effort of the Jewish Agency, the Israeli Foreign Ministry and the Israeli Prime Minister's Office — counted 360 anti-Semitic incidents in France in 2006, compared to 300 in 2005. In the United Kingdom, the report listed a yearly decrease from 321 incidents in 2005 to 312 incidents in 2006.

Russia recorded 300 incidents in 2006, compared to 250 the preceding year, and Austria saw a jump from 50 incidents to 83 last year.

The Scandinavian countries saw 53 incidents in 2006, substantially more than the previous year's 35.

The report cited a 60 per cent rise in incidents in the Berlin area, although it did not include figures for all of Germany.

Hamas worried about possible assassinations

Continued from page 29

The latest example of this occurred last week. On Tuesday, nine members of Hamas were killed in an IDF operation. Two days later, seven more Palestinians were killed, six gunmen and a civilian. Hamas fired, according to its press release, no fewer than 135 Qassam rockets and mortars between Tuesday and Saturday night, and there was shooting from various smaller groups. Yesterday, Hamas stopped shooting.

The message: henceforth, every Israeli operation will result in a similar response. Hamas is hoping that Israel will agree, after repeated bombing of Sderot, to a period of calm in the territories, and even believes it can bring about an end to the arrests that the IDF is making in the West Bank.

Behind the Hamas decision lies the assumption that the Israeli leadership is wary of a large-scale ground operation. This is based on the traumatic experience of the Second Lebanon War and Israeli concern that it may suffer heavy casualties. Senior officials in the Islamic organization believe Prime Minister Ehud Olmert is too concerned with his

political future to risk initiating a broad IDF operation in Gaza.

The heated statements of Israeli ministers during Sunday's cabinet meeting were seen in Gaza as empty threats. Hamas' main concern is that Israel will now choose a campaign of assassinations of senior figures in the military wing of the group, but perhaps also political leaders. This explains the Hamas threats that they will react with attacks of an unprecedented nature if their leaders are targeted.

The IDF's relative failure is evident in its dealing with the main Hamas weapon — the Qassam. Since the disengagement, a great deal of money and effort have been invested in the development of a way to quickly identify the launch of missiles and then strike at the crews launching them from the air and the ground. The results to date have been minimal, even in conditions of good visibility.

The operation by the IDF in the northern Gaza Strip last week offered a glimpse into the reasons for these poor results. Hamas has begun using timers to launch rockets from crude underground silos — a method also used by Hezbollah in Lebanon.

But when Hamas conducts its own internal assessment, it knows that its achievement have also been limited. Indeed, it has managed to terrorize an entire city, but it is not claiming the same kind of casualties that it did during the first three years of the intifadah. And unlike in those years, the threat is not felt in the centre of the country, nor has the Israeli economy suffered any significant consequences.

The main difference between the two sides now is the ability of their societies to absorb punishment and the different way they respond to casualties: the Palestinians are almost resigned to their enormous losses, while in Israel, even wounded children are a strategic problem.

At this stage, while the IDF is completing its preparations for a much more extensive operation, it seems that Israel will not divert significantly from its current approach: ground operations near the border fence, air strikes and assassinations (these will likely increase).

Chief of Staff Gabi Ashkenazi shares Barak's view that there are still parts of the plan that are not complete, and only when they are, will he be ready to give his full support to a broad offensive.

Israel & the Jewish World

Iran helps Syria develop missile to target Israel

By BARAK RAVID

© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

JERUSALEM — Syria has successfully developed a new surface-to-surface missile that would enable it to target Israeli installations such as airports, ports and factories with greater accuracy, according to briefings recently presented to senior ministers.

According to the information, Syria developed the new missile with Iranian support, which is a further indication of the tight strategic bonds between the two countries. Much of these strategic ties revolve around military and intelligence co-operation.

Israeli defence officials said they thought Damascus and Tehran shared technical know-how that has allowed Syria to upgrade the Iranian-made Zelzal surface-to-surface missile. The missile has an operational range of approximately 250 kilometers and is capable of carrying an especially large warhead. It is believed that the missile is more accurate than other similar surface-to-surface weapons in the Syrian arsenal.

This comes at a time when Israeli defense sources have expressed growing concern at the rearmament program of the Syrian armed forces, which is mostly being supplied by arms transfers from Russia.

Among other weapons, Syria has recently acquired the Pantsyr air defence missile system, a self-propelled system that is capable of firing from eight to 12 missiles and can pose a substantial threat to Israeli air force aircraft.

Damascus has also procured modern anti-tank missiles with alleged capabilities of neutralizing the most advanced main battle tank of the IDF, the Merkava Mark IV.

However, Mossad chief Meir Dagen told the Knesset foreign affairs and defence committee that at this stage the Syrian defence acquisitions appear to be defensive and that there are no indications that Damascus has any plans to initiate

a military action against Israel.

Meanwhile, a political source has noted that there is a discernible effort on the part of Syria to improve its missile arsenal — both in terms of range and accuracy.

"The problem is that their missiles are being transformed from less-effective weapons into precision weapons that will enable their use against military bases, airports and military depots, which is a very worrying development," the source said.

There is growing concern in Israel that the missile arsenal of Syria will be transformed from being a "blind" strategic weapon into a precision-strike weapon.

Syria has a significant missile arsenal. During the Second Lebanon War Hezbollah fired many volleys of 220-millimetre rockets of Syrian make against Israel, causing significant casualties in Israel.

According to Israeli estimates, Syria has tens of thousands of rockets of this type, as well as smaller-calibre and shorter-range missiles. In addition, they have Scud-C and Scud-D ballistic missiles with ranges of 500 to 800 kilometers, which can effectively strike every part of Israeli territory.

In related developments, Tehran's ambassador to Russia, Gholamreza Ansari, was quoted on Friday by Itar-Tass news agency as saying Iran has started building a second atomic power plant.

"Now we need to think about the fuel for it," the news agency quoted him as saying.

Iran has been building its first nuclear power plant near the southern city of Bushehr, where Tehran says test operations could start later this year after final deliveries by Russia of nuclear fuel arrived at the plant last month.

Western countries suspect Iran's nuclear activities are aimed at weapon building. Iran, the world's fourth-largest crude oil producer, says it only wants to generate electricity so that it can export more of its oil and gas.

New immigrants meet tragedy in Dimona

By DINA KRAFT

JTA

TEL AVIV — Lyubov Razdolakaya and Eduard Gedalin, world-class theoretical physicists, immigrated to Israel from Georgia seeking a better future.

Any future the husband and wife of nearly 50 years had left together came to a halt on Feb. 4 in the desert town of Dimona.

Razdolakaya, 73, was killed when a suicide bomber exploded near her. Gedalin, 74, was wounded critically and is in grave condition in Soroka Hospital in Be'er Sheva, not far from the lab at the university where they worked together.

Razdolakaya was buried Feb. 5.

When the bomber struck, the couple were on their way to the bank, pausing outside one of the shops in the town's centre to take in the warm sun.

Despite their contributions to the field of particle physics, they were relatively anonymous in their transplanted home.

In the Georgian capital of Tbilisi, Razdolakaya and Gedalin worked in collaboration at the Institute for Theoretical Physics co-authoring important articles.

"He developed the formulas, she coded, entered

the input into the computer and got the output," said Amnon Moalem, a physics professor at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev who hired the couple to work at his lab.

At Ben-Gurion, they studied subatomic particles known as mesons. "Their contribution to research was very significant," Moalem was quoted as saying in Israeli newspapers.

Of Gedalin he said, "Eduard was one of the greatest physicists I had the honour of working with." Moalem said Gedalin "could feel abstract things with his fingers."

The couple came to Israel as part of the major wave of immigration from the former Soviet Union in the 1990s.

After arriving, they joined the Ben-Gurion University program for immigrant scientists, but few knew of the pair's significant achievements in their field.

One son, Michael Gedalin, is a professor of physics at Ben-Gurion University. Another, Konstantin Gedalin, is a physicist who works in high tech.

Moalem wished the couple had found a softer landing in Israel.

"A scientist of Eduard's stature could have been a very prominent researcher," Moalem said, "but he came to a barren place that didn't meet the standards of the research institutions he came from."

More Qassams fired

Palestinians launched at least 22 Qassam rockets at the Negev last Friday, a day after Israel began cutting electricity to the Gaza Strip in an attempt to halt the barrages.

Palestinians in Gaza also fired a mortar into southern Israel.

Four Sderot residents were treated for shock and a warehouse was damaged.

In the early afternoon, five rockets were reported to have landed near the coast south of Ashkelon, one of which struck the grounds of Kibbutz Zikim. Hamas, Islamic Jihad and the Popular Resistance Committees claimed responsibility for the Qassam fire. Palestinians fired a dozen rockets and eight mortar shells the previous day.

Barak: rockets will stop

Israel's counter-measures eventually will succeed in stopping Palestinian rocket attacks from the Gaza Strip, Ehud Barak said. The defence minister voiced confidence in the military and diplomatic pressure being brought to bear on

Hamas-ruled Gaza, as well as efforts to fortify outlying Israeli communities against rocket salvos. "If rocket fire from Gaza continues, we will step up our operations until a solution

to the Qassam fire is achieved," Barak told Army Radio. "This will not end today or tomorrow, but the combination of operations on the one hand and sanctions on the other, as well as fortifications in some communities, will bring an end to Qassam fire."

Sarkozy stands by Israel

France stands by Israel in its fight against Palestinian terrorism, Nicolas Sarkozy said. The French president sent Israel a letter of support after last week's suicide bombing in Dimona. "On my behalf, and on behalf of the French nation, I would like to send you my sincere condolences after the horrible terrorist attack which was once again aimed at the Israeli people," read the letter, a copy of which was released by Israeli President Shimon Peres' office. "My thoughts are with the victim's families and with the

wounded. "I would like to assure you that France remains on your side and will continue to do so in the battle against terror. My country will provide Israel with every support necessary to assist with your efforts to make the peace process succeed," Sarkozy said.

Broken border, broken legs?

The Egyptian foreign ministry warned Palestinians against attempts to breach the Gaza Strip border, saying, "whoever breaks the border line will have his legs broken." The ministry issued this warning two weeks after Palestinian militants blew holes in a section of the barrier wall separating Gaza from Egypt prompting hundreds of thousands of Gazans to pour across the frontier. Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit said Egyptian efforts were continuing with Israel and the European Union to re-open the Rafah border crossing "in a legal way." Aboul Gheit also repeated his warning to Palestinians not to provoke the Egyptian soldiers positioned on the Gaza border.

—from JTA and Ha'aretz



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Books & Authors

Jewish displaced persons era in postwar Germany

Jews, Germans, And Allies: Close Encounters in Occupied Germany by **Atina Grossmann**, Princeton University Press.

By **SHELDON KIRSHNER**
Staff Reporter

Germany, occupied by the Allies after World War II, was home to some 250,000 Jews by 1946. The vast majority were displaced eastern European Jews who had managed to scrape through the Holocaust. The remainder, German Jews, had either gone into hiding or had been protected by Christian spouses.



Atina Grossmann

Nazi regime that had pulled Germany into a disastrous war, and then of Allied bombings, Soviet expulsions and mass rapes and a de-Nazification process.

Both Jews and Germans competed for Allied favour, benefits and victim status in a scramble that often caused mutual friction.

• Atina Grossmann, in *Jews, Germans, And Allies: Close En-*

counters in Occupied Germany, examines these dynamics in a fine social history that focuses on the period from 1945 to 1947.

Ninety thousand Jews in German concentration camps were liberated by Allied armies. Tens of thousands died within weeks of attaining their freedom, leaving 60,000 to 70,000 survivors.

This remnant was augmented by predominantly Polish Jews who poured into the American zone. They had survived death camps and labour camps. They had been partisans. They had passed as Aryans. They had been hidden. The largest segment, however, had found a wartime haven in the Soviet Union.

Grossmann, a professor of history at Cooper Union, describes their lives and the relationships they formed against the backdrop of the Allied occupation.

She sets the stage by painting a graphic picture of Germany in the immediate aftermath of the Nazi defeat. Berlin, the focus of her investigation, was like an "archaeological excavation," having been bombed into a smouldering ruin.

For Germans, the mass rapes perpetrated by Red Army soldiers signalled the end of the war. According to a conservative estimate, 110,000 German women were raped. But others have suggested that the real number may have been 1.5 million. Whatever the case, the sexual violence was a blot on the Allied victory.

German Jewish women who lived through the Nazi interregnum may have been rape victims as well. Six to seven thousand Jews in Berlin survived underground as "illegals" and "submarines."

Still other German Jews, categorized as mixed race *Mischlinge*

or partners in "privileged" mixed marriages, were exempted from deportations.

Such Jews comprised the bulk of Berlin's postwar Jewish community. Of 8,000 registered members, 5,600 had Christian spouses. Vying for better ratios and material conditions, Jews

who had left the community altogether after the Nazi rise to power reapplied for membership, Grossmann notes.

In general, German Jews who had survived the Holocaust in Germany were far more hopeful than non-German Jews about the possibilities of reconciliation and co-operation in building a new, democratic Germany.

The latter, harbouring animosity against Germany and unwilling to return to their respective hometowns, were usually intent on settling elsewhere, particularly Israel and the United States.

Citing the Landsberg camp as an example, Grossmann says that 62 per cent wanted to make aliyah, while 17 per cent looked to the United States as a preferred destination.

To many survivors, Zionism worked as a kind of "therapeutic ideology," offering a sense of a collective identity, hope and future.

Interestingly enough, the Jewish DP birth rate was astronomical, higher than any other population in the world. In 1946, it was 29 per 1,000 versus 7.35 per 1,000 for Germans.

Survivors were so anxious to marry and procreate that many of the newlyweds hardly knew each other. Marriages that would have never occurred before the war took place.

Having dipped into DP camp medical records, Grossmann says that virtually all young Jewish mothers, bereft of a support system traditionally provided by mothers or sisters, were assigned a German baby nurse or maid.

In an intriguing sub-chapter, Grossman discusses romantic liaisons between Jewish men and German women.

Young, inexperienced male survivors gravitated to German women, and by 1950, they had married 1,000 such women. Often, the women were refugees, lonely and eager for a little bit of fun.

On the flip side, embittered survivors picked fights with Germans and sought vengeance by trying to assassinate former SS men.

Abba Kovner, the Vilna partisan and poet, was implicated in an aborted plot to poison the bread supply of SS and Gestapo prisoners, she adds.

Believing that the Allies were favourably disposed toward Jews, Germans sunk into sullen resentment and displayed occasional outbursts of rage, Grossmann writes.

And in certain areas, like Bavaria, Hesse and Wurttemberg, where Jewish DPs were concentrated, Germans complained about their presence, fearing they would be swamped by Jews.

Although their encounters were often mutually useful and relatively harmonious, both groups grated on each other's nerves.

The Jews were infuriated by German self-pity and unwillingness to acknowledge responsibility for Nazi crimes. The Germans increasingly saw Jews not as victims but as privileged foreigners either unwilling to blend in or leave.

Ultimately, the DPs left, and in droves. By 1952, 400,000 to 450,000 DPs, of whom about 100,000 were Jews, had immigrated to the United States.

Of 250,000 Jewish DPs, 100,000 to 120,000 settled in Israel. Sixteen thousand to 20,000 went to Canada; 8,000 to Belgium; 2,000 to France; and 5,000 to a variety of destinations from Australia to South Africa.

As a result, the DP camps, including Feldafing and Landsberg, had all but been emptied by 1951. Föhrenwald, the last DP camp, closed in 1957, as the final batch of German prisoners of war returned from the Soviet Union.

The Jewish "DP era," as Grossmann succinctly says it, faded into history.



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Director, writer, and producer Ari Sandel won the 2007 Academy Award for Best Live Action Short Film "West Bank Story," a musical comedy about Israelis and Palestinians that takes place between two falafel stands in the West Bank. It takes a humorous yet hopeful look at the conflict and as a result has received an overwhelming response from both Arab and Jewish audiences as well as international audiences who have all come to embrace the film. Sandel premiered "West Bank Story" at the Sundance Film Festival in 2005 and has since screened it at over 115 film festivals worldwide — winning 26 awards.

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"People often have the misconception that planning a wedding, bar or bat mitzvah has to be a stressful and tedious experience," states Marla Kay, organizer of "A Celebration of Stars," a trade show which assembles a large variety of party professionals serving the Jewish community.

"As a bridal and party consultant over the past 20 years, I know how wonderful it is to plan a simcha. There are so many details to be looked after. For the past 10 years at each of my shows, I have brought together over 60 professional "stars" of the party industry to display their wonderful products and services."

This year, the Celebration of Stars Wedding, Bar and Bat Mitzvah Show will take place on Wednesday, March 5, 2008 at Meron Banquet Hall. It starts at 6 p.m. and runs until 10:00 p.m.

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"Every Celebration of Stars Bridal, Bar and Bat Mitzvah Show that I have organized has proven to be so successful for both guests and exhibitors that as soon as I finish one, I begin plans for the next one," says Kay. "Organizing a party is what I do best and I think that it is certainly reflected in my shows."

Come and see for yourself that the Celebration of Stars has got it all and is one show that you don't want to miss. Admission and parking is free. For further information ... contact Marla Kay at **905-669-0777**.

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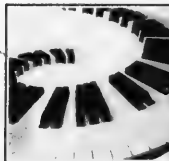
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Arts & Travel

A hip-hoppy trip from the land of milk and honey

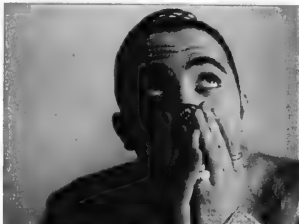
By ADAM MENCELES
Special to The CJN

Squeeze some mustard on your pastrami, clip your kippot on tight and fasten your seatbelts. Kosha Dillz is here to take you on a hip-hoppy trip from the land of milk and honey to the streets of New York City.

Sure his name is a play on words – and that may sound a little hokey to you, but his subject matter is quite serious. Kosha Dillz is the hip-hop persona of Israeli-American Rami Even-Esh.

Now living in Brooklyn, N.Y., Kosha has a plethora of subject matters to pull from. He touches on political situations in the Middle East and the United States as well as the day-to-day life of making music as a hip-hop artist.

He simply wants to speak his mind. Although he may sound like an acquired taste, the media and fellow musical artists alike have really taken a shine to him.



Kosha Dillz

He has appeared on BET's famed *106 & Park* and has recorded with chassidic reggae superstar Matisyahu. The most intriguing notion is that Kosha bends borders and genres; he takes Israeli-Jewish ethics and blends them into songs complete with hip-hop beats and sabra attitude.

He is currently headlining The Spare Change Tour, which will house clothing drives at every venue – all of the proceeds supporting various charities around the United States and Israel. Although the tour doesn't touch down

anywhere on Canadian soil, Kosha will undoubtedly make his way across the border as his popularity skyrockets within the Jewish community as well as the hip-hop community at large.

His new album *Freestyle vs. Written* is a fitting collaboration with hip-hop artist C Rayz Walz. The pair seems to mesh flawlessly on all of the tracks. You'll hear tunes sung in both English and Hebrew, adding to the diverse quality of the record. The title track is expertly produced and flawlessly emceed. This rap-duet hits you with turntable scratches from the left, unique melody samples from the right and superior battle lyrics from every other angle.

Holiday is Kosha's commentary and recitation about our leisure time – listing his past experiences and memories of celebrations from Labour Day to Valentines Day and everything in between.

Rap music may not be your cup of tea or it may be your passion – either way, just listen to Kosha Dillz for more than one minute and you'll hear someone who's got something relevant to say.

His method of delivery may be a tad unorthodox, but his message hits home in the same manner as your rabbi's sermon might.

While touring in and around New York and the rest of the United States, Rami does his rounds at every Jewish institution that'll take him. He rocks the mic at local shuls and fundraisers. He raps awareness and politics at music festivals and university shindigs.

If he happens by your neck of the woods, be sure to catch his show. If you can't manage to see him live, order a copy of his album and imagine yourself easing back into the new wave of conscious Israeli hip hop – become part of the Kosha Dillz posse.

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Arts & Travel



Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

NEW HAROLD GREEN JEWISH THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS MARTIN SHERMAN'S ROSE

The Harold Green Jewish Theatre opens its inaugural season with *Rose*, Martin Sherman's story of an elderly Jewish woman's experiences in the Russian shtetl, the Warsaw Ghetto, the doomed refugee ship Exodus and the fading glitz of postwar Atlantic City.

Directed by **Diana Leblanc** and starring **Lally Cadeau**, *Rose* is a sharply drawn portrait of a feisty octogenarian and a moving reminder of some of the tumultuous events of the 20th century. \$41.50 to \$69. St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, Jane Mallett Theatre, 27 Front St. E. Feb. 29 to March 29. 416-366-7723, www.hgjewishtheatre.com

Names in the News: Toronto actor **Irving Dobbs** recently returned from the Sundance Film Festival, where a short movie in which he appears was honoured. *Rock Garden: A Love Story*, by Toronto writer-director **Gloria Kim**, received the Global Audience Award in the short-film category. Dobbs is currently rehearsing for his lead role in *Chaim's Love Song*, a dramatic comedy that runs at the Leah Posluns Theatre, Feb. 27 to March 9.

New York Choir Sings Here: Pizmon, a 20-year-

old Jewish cappella choir consisting of students from New York's Columbia University, Barnard College and Jewish Theological Seminary, is performing at three local synagogues.

A Shabbat Family Dinner, featuring **Zmirrot** with Pizmon, is scheduled at Beth Emeth Bais Yehudah, 100 Elder St., 416-633-3838. Friday, Feb. 22, 7 p.m. Adults \$35, children 13 and under, \$15.

The choir sings at Shabbat services at Adath Israel, 37 Southbourne Ave., 416-635-5340, on Saturday, Feb. 23, from 9 a.m., and after services during Kiddush.

Pizmon performs a community concert at Beth Radom Congregation, 18 Reiner Rd., 416-636-3451. Saturday, Feb. 23, 8 p.m. Reserved \$50, general admission \$18, students \$10. Combination package available. www.pizmon.org

Chai Tea & Movie: The Toronto Jewish Film Festival presents *The Counterfeiters*, by Austrian director **Stefan Ruzowitzky**. The film recounts a diabolical Nazi plot in which imprisoned Jews were recruited to counterfeit hoards of British pounds and U.S. dollars in a bid to collapse these nations' economies. \$15 in advance or at the door. Sheppard Grande Cinema, Yonge & Sheppard. Sunday, Feb. 24, chai tea 4 p.m., film 5 p.m. 416-324-9121, www.tjff.com

Names in the News II: Toronto poet **Rafi Aaron** has won third prize in the Toronto Fringe Festival's 2008 New Play Contest. The play, *Mandelstam*, is based on Aaron's book of prose poetry,

Surviving the Censor - The Unspoken Words of Osip Mandelstam, which won the poetry award at the Helen and Stan Vine Canadian Jewish Book Awards last year.

While both focus on Stalin's persecution of poet **Osip Mandelstam**, the play takes a new perspective. "It's a completely new piece of art that focuses on Mandelstam's relationship with his wife," he said. Two characters from the book were dropped and Russian poet **Anna Akhmatova** was added to the play.

This is the third artistic life for *Surviving the Censor*, which has been put to music by **Daniel Domb**, one of Canada's finest cellists, and performed at the Leah Posluns Theatre, as the closing event of the 2006 Toronto Jewish Book Fair.

Arts in Brief

• **Books and Bagels** presents Toronto author **Nick Maes**, reading from his hit novel, *Dead Man's Float*. \$6 includes bagels and coffee. Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, Bloor at Spadina. Sunday, Feb. 17, 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 0. www.mnjcc.org

• The Toronto Jewish Film Society presents the award-winning documentary *The Ritchie Boys*. "Their courage and heroism were matched only by their chutzpah." With guest speaker "Ritchie Boy" **Prof. Guy Stern**. Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre. Sunday, Feb. 17, 4 and 7:30 p.m. Rush seats \$15, on sale 15 minutes before screenings. (Ages 18 to 29, admission \$10 for 7:30 screening only)

• Beth Tikvah Sisterhood presents the documentary *My Opposition: The Diaries of Friedrich Kellner*, with **Fern Levitt**, the film's director, writer and co-producer. The film tells the story of the secret diaries kept by a chief justice in

Laubach, Germany, in order to record the misdeeds of the Nazis. Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 3080 Bayview Ave. Tuesday, Feb. 19, 8 p.m. Non-members \$5.

• Pianist and vocalist **Fern Lindzon** plays the magnificent Steinway Grand at the Opal Jazz Lounge, Feb. 19 through 23, with **Don Thompson** on vibes Feb. 22 and **George Koller** on bass every other evening. The engagement coincides with the release of her debut jazz CD *Moments Like These*. \$10 cover. 472 Queen St. W. (at Augusta). 416-646-6725, www.opaljazzlounge.com

• Fallen Rock Productions presents Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*, a timeless story filled with magic, romance and suspense, with all proceeds being donated to the Pediatric Oncology Group of Ontario. \$26, \$40, \$55. Isabel Bader Theatre, 93 Charles St. W. Feb. 20 to 24. 416-978-8849, uoftix.ca or www.fallenrock.ca

At the Galleries

• A Third Register of Space, an exhibition of works on paper by **Yael Brotman**, and *My Space*, an exhibition of works by **Gary Clement**, are on view at Loop Gallery, 1174 Queen St. near Gladstone, until March 2. 416-516-2581, www.loopgallery.ca

• Chinese Design Everyday, an exhibit highlighting design in modern China and its role in everyday life, presents a display of contemporary design objects, many reflecting China's ancient cultural heritage, from the mah-jong table to the laptop computer. A curatorial lecture is scheduled for Feb. 21, 12 noon. At the Design Exchange, 234 Bay St. (the original historic Toronto Stock Exchange building) until April 13. 416-216-2160, www.dx.org

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Arts & Travel

Bewitching new fiction from former Montrealer

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to the CJN

Sarah Mlynowski wants to be a writer when she grows up – oh, wait: she is grown-up. At 31, this nice Jewish girl from Montreal is living and loving the big-city writer's life.

It almost sounds like something out of one of the chick lit novels she writes. After earning her English literature degree from McGill, Mlynowski (it's pronounced Mlin-OV-ski) moved to Toronto to work for Harlequin Enterprises, the romance publishers. There, in 2001, her talent was discovered with *Milkrun*, her first novel, which has now sold over 600,000 copies worldwide.

Since then, she's written or co-written more than 10 books, including the *Magic in Manhattan* series, set in her new home of New York. It's about ordinary teen sisters who just happen to have "Glinda" – their special code word for witching power.

For a hard-working writer, Mlynowski sounds suspiciously like she's having fun. In her first blog post of 2008, she bubbled that her newest *Magic in Manhattan* book, *Parties and Potions*, was finally complete: "Yay! There's magic! Boys! A witch debutante ball!"

A debutante ball closely based on her own group Bat Mitzvah. ("But I obviously changed it to be witch-friendly.") Growing up in Montreal's Jewish community – she attended JPPS-Bialik High School – Judaism

was a big part of her life.

Mlynowski's spiritual roots are still proudly Canadian. "My husband's family is still in Montreal, and my dad lives in Oakville now... I go home for Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Passover." She also has family in Israel, where she's been three times, once with March of the Living.

Mlynowski says her many strong, vocal female characters may stem from Jewish influences. Plus, "there's so much humour in Judaism; more than anything I write hoping to entertain, make people laugh." Finding the lighter side of disaster – perhaps revolving around a roommate situation or love interest – is "definitely a Jewish value," she says.

"Almost all of my books have a Jewish character," says Mlynowski, including *Magic in Manhattan*'s main character, 14-year-old Rachel Weinstein.

Although *Parties and Potions* won't be out



Sarah Mlynowski

for a while, fans can look forward to the upcoming release of the paperback edition of *Spells and Sleeping Bags* (April, Random House). For the grown-ups, there's also *How to be Bad* (May, HarperCollins), written with two other authors. "It's about three girls on a road trip through Florida trying to find themselves."

Each of the three authors (Mlynowski, E. Lockhart and Lauren Myracle) chose a character and took turns writing a chapter in their character's voice. Early collaboration hap-

pened online, but "once we sold the novel, we met in Florida and plotted out the rest of the book." Even editing was "a blast." Once we were finished, then we could dig in and edit each other's work... We just had so much fun."

Naturally, Mlynowski's character is a Jewish girl from Montreal. But that's where most similarity ends. "I never take anything true and put it in a book," she says.

And contrary to what you might think, friends don't hide details of their romantic lives from her: "People love being in books... a friend will call and say, 'I have a crazy dating story for you.'" She laughs. "The only people territorial about anecdotes are other writers."

Still, Mlynowski loves spending time with colleagues. "There's such a fantastic community of writers here" in New York. Her social circle reads like an Amazon.com bestseller list: lunch with *The Nanny Diaries*' Emma McLaughlin, parties and readings with teen

writers Scott Westerfeld and even her one-time idol, former Montrealer Gordon Korman. "When I was at JPPS, he came to our class and talked to us about becoming a writer... it was so inspiring to me."

She's also thrilled to collaborate, as she did on *How to be Bad*, or with editor Farrin Jacobs on *See Jane Write: A Girl's Guide to Writing Chick Lit*. "As a writer, you're isolated, spend all your time by yourself, stuck in your own head."

For someone who reads everything from John Grisham thrillers to literary fiction, she doesn't feel at all constrained by the light romance genre.

"People make assumptions – that the book's about shopping, [or] it's about getting dumped."

Actually, chick lit is "more about being fun and entertaining and uplifting... female characters and their everyday lives." As one Amazon.com review says, Mlynowski's writing "goes beyond your usual, 'I need a boyfriend to make me happy,' genre and into the unlikely friendships between women."

Although the dust jacket of her older books still refers to her as "an irrepressibly optimistic twenty-something," Mlynowski reached a milestone last year: her 30th birthday. She doubts it will affect her writing, though: "Angst is angst no matter what your age."

And if staying current means being where the teens are, Mlynowski has nothing to worry about. She's apparently both busy and popular on the MySpace social-networking website, sharing ideas and insights with 4,662 "friends" and over 12,000 fans and colleagues on the "Teen Lit" authors' and readers' group she started.

Mlynowski may not have a broomstick of her own, but online and in real life she's irrepressibly spreading her own special "Glinda" over the world of contemporary fiction, bewitching readers of all ages along the way.

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An afternoon of music and culture

The Koffler Centre of the Arts presents An Afternoon of Music and Culture at Temple Emanu-El in Toronto on Sunday, March 2, 2008 at 2:00 p.m.

The event includes a performance by the Koffler Chamber Orchestra, directed by renowned violinist Jacques Israelievitch, concertmaster for the TSO. The program will open with a work by W. A. Mozart, followed by music by Canadian composers Srul Irving Glick, Marjan Mozetich, Walter Buczinsky, Gilles Leclerc, and Alexander Levkovich. Walter Buczinsky's *Fantasy on Themes of the Past* will feature Canadian soloist Joseph Macerollo on accordion.

The afternoon kicks off with a pre-concert talk by renowned American culture and literary historian Sander L. Gilman. A distinguished professor at Emory University, Gilman will delve into how and why Jews were believed to be unable to create or perform Western music and what this meant for Jewish composers, performers, and thinkers.

This question was a burning one a

hundred years ago when Jews (and non-Jews) thought about what "Jewish music" really could be. This question shaped early Zionism and the very idea of the future State of Israel. An engaging, illustrated talk that answers the question: "Who were the three best violinists of the 20th century and why were they all Jews? And today?"

The Koffler Chamber Orchestra is comprised of some of Toronto's most well-regarded professional musicians performing with non-professionals pursuing music study and performance. The Koffler Chamber Orchestra performs publicly three times a year and attracts a vibrant audience and the praise of music critics.

The concert and talk are part of the Koffler Centre of the Arts' new initiative for programs at venues throughout the GTA, and are in celebration of Temple Emanu-El's 50th anniversary. (120 Old Colony Rd.)

Tickets are \$20, \$18 seniors/students (free parking). For information call 416-636-1880 ext. 222.

Email isohat@kofflerarts.org

Arts & Travel

Jazzing It Up With 13 year-old Nikki Yanofsky

By RENA GODFREY
Special to The CJN

I couldn't wipe the smile off my face as I listened in awe to Nikki Yanofsky's powerful performance at the Isabel Bader in Toronto on February 5, and I was not alone. This 13-year-old jazz sensation brought the house down for two consecutive solo debut concerts, presented by Luminato and TD Canada Trust Toronto Jazz Festival.

With the maturity of a seasoned jazz vocalist, well beyond her years, Nikki belted out tunes sung by Ella Fitzgerald, such as *I Ain't Got Nothing But The Blues*, to an amazing rendition of Stevie Wonder's *Love's In Need of Love Today* and *Seasons Of Love* from the musical, *Rent*.

Dressed in a midnight blue sequin dress, and backed by a 12-piece band, Nikki grooved to the music, snapping her fingers and moving her hips to the beat. Even the band members were smiling throughout the performance. When Nikki sang, we were all mesmerized by her talent and stage presence, and when she kibitzed with the audience, Nikki was just herself, a witty and charming, adorable teenage girl.

Before the concert, I caught up with Nikki on the telephone, after she had just returned home from St. George's School of Montreal. By the time I had spoken with her, Nikki had already checked her homework, walked her standard poodle, watched some TV and played on the computer.

In addition to her daily routine, Nikki also sings for 1 1/2 hours a day, is trained by two vocal coaches, and studies theory. She even has a music studio in her home.

Despite all the attention that is given

to this young lady, Nikki seems quite grounded. She was a delight to speak with, extremely mature, very polite, and most excited about her recent trip to Jamaica, where she performed at the Air Jamaica Jazz & Blues Festival.

"It was a taste of what my career will hopefully be like for me in the near future. It was pleasurable, even though I was working. I love the feel of all my hard work paying off."

Nikki has performed at many charity events and has helped raise \$6 million for various charities over the past two years. In fact, Nikki got her first big break, at age 11, performing with her father's band at a fundraiser for the Maimonides Geriatric Centre in Montreal. Nikki was then invited to play with another band at the Club Soda, where coincidentally, Andre Menard, co-founder of the Montreal International Jazz Festival, was in the audience. Taken with Nikki, Menard invited her to sing at the Montreal International Jazz Festival.

Nikki claims that since she was 2 years old, her father Richard knew that something was unusual about his little girl. "I had a weird sense of timing and I was able to sing perfectly on tune".

Guided by her parents, and managed by her father's production company A440 Entertainment, Inc., Nikki's career has

really taken off in the last year. She feels grateful for having such a supportive family. "This past year has been like a big burst. I'm so lucky that I don't have pushy parents because they didn't push me into this. I pulled them, they didn't push me."



Nikki Yanofsky

Nikki's voice can be heard on *We all Love Ella, Celebrating the First Lady of Song* alongside internationally acclaimed artists, Michael Buble, K.D. Lang, Diana Krall and Nathalie Cole. Nikki also sings *Gotta Go My Way* in English and French on Disney's *High School Musical 2*, CD.

Without a doubt, Nikki is a force to be reckoned with, loaded with confidence and clear in her personal vision.

"There was never ever a doubt in my mind that I wouldn't be a singer. I love to sing and I just want to focus on my art, and I don't want to be too commercial. I will do this for eternity, for my whole life."

Nikki's inner strength and incredible talent have undoubtedly propelled her into the spotlight within a very short time. Nikki will be performing at Carnegie Hall with the New York Pops on February 8, which coincidentally, also happens to be her 14th birthday, and one that she will never forget.

You can hear and see Nikki online at www.nikkionline.ca.

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Feature

Former Iranian political prisoner shares her story

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

For Marina Nemat, "life was good" as a young teenager growing up in Tehran.

But that was before the 1979 Iranian Revolution, after which she was thrown in jail and tortured for taking part in protests against the new Islamic regime.

Nemat, author of a memoir called *Prisoner of Tehran*, spoke to about 20 staff and volunteers earlier this month at the Toronto offices of the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center (FSWC) about growing up in Iran before the revolution, and she shared painful memories of the torture she suffered as a political prisoner in the infamous Evin prison for two years starting when she was only 16.

She was attending a campaign committee meeting to promote the FSWC's Spirit of Hope Benefit in May.

"It may surprise you, but life in Tehran in 1965 was normal, and by normal, I mean, it was comparable to what you see here in Toronto today... People's religion was never an issue," Nemat began, adding that she was brought up in a Christian Russian Orthodox home in downtown Tehran.

"Life was good. My parents owned a cottage by the Caspian Sea. That was where I spent all my summers. I partied with boys and I listened to music and I was just having fun."

But all of that quickly changed in 1978, when people began to protest against Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.

"Bearded men and women wearing the hijab were walking down the streets, yelling slogans against the United States, against Israel, against this person and that person and against the Shah. I remember looking out my bedroom window and looking out into this crowd... and thinking, 'What is going on?' I couldn't understand... Within three or four months, a very normal life turned into this nightmare of soldiers and tanks and shooting," she said.

When the Shah was sent into exile and the new government took over in 1979, there was anarchy, said Nemat, who was born in Tehran in 1965.

"There is always anarchy after a revolution. Anything goes. All these ideas were just floating around... I started to think, you know, maybe revolution wasn't such a bad idea. But then, things began to change. Being in school, the first thing I noticed was that one by one, very good teachers were being replaced by members of the revolutionary cause."

She said that rather than history, calculus and biology, high school students were being taught about Islam.

Nemat said she grew tired of the propaganda and challenged her teacher to

teach calculus instead of preach about Islam.

"She said, 'If you don't like what I teach, leave.'"

Nemat did leave, but she had no idea that this act of defiance would lead her to the most excruciatingly painful and terrifying episode of her life.

When her classmates followed her out of the classroom, it was the beginning of a three-day strike. When the school principal approached Nemat, she told her that the students didn't want to hear any more propaganda.

After numerous discussions, the principal called Nemat's house and said, "You either go back to class, or I call the

revolutionary guards and they're going to shoot you all." When she said the words, "shoot you all," it suddenly clicked. We realized that this woman was not kidding."

They went back to school, but nothing changed. Throughout the next year or two, she said, she took part in almost every rally she could against the Islamic regime.

"When you are 14 and 15, you think you are immune. You think you're invincible. You see people getting shot, but you get home and you think, 'I'm OK.' Every time you make it home you have a rush of adrenaline."

Then, in 1981, when Nemat was 16, the government began to arrest thousands of young people between the ages 15 and 20. Nemat said she wasn't the first person in her class to be arrested.

"But there was a sense of denial. Somehow, it just didn't click. We all thought, you know, it happened to her, it's not going to happen to us... I have talked to many Holocaust survivors and they all told me the same thing. When it starts happening, you don't get it until they come for you."

Two armed guards came for her in the middle of the night. She said she was blindfolded, taken to the prison, and dragged down hallway after hallway until she lost all concept of time and space.

Her interrogators wanted to know the whereabouts of a girl she had met once before. They tied her to a wooden bed, took off her blindfold and her interrogator showed her a thick black cable that he said he would beat her with if she didn't tell him what he wanted to know. But Nemat didn't have the information he wanted.

"He started lashing the soles of my feet... He was a grown man. He wasn't being kind. He put his full force into it. And he looked happy about it at the time. There was so much pain, I couldn't think."

She said she slept that night in a dirty, cold, smelly room and woke up the next

day to someone kicking her. She was then blindfolded and she and four others were taken to "the middle of nowhere. They took off the blindfolds... They tied us to wooden poles and... then we saw the guard's gun," Nemat said.

"That's when it dawned on us, that they were going to shoot us. There was one girl who panicked and she ran and they shot her. All of this was happening, they were tying us up and none of us reacted."

Nemat said that soon after, a car pulled up with her interrogator inside. He untied her and told her to look away and then she heard gunfire. She had been spared by the man who tortured her.

"All of these years, I have refused to believe that the people who were with me that night are dead."

She was sent back to prison and didn't hear from her interrogators for five months. She was eventually called back to see her interrogator, who told her that if she didn't marry him, he would arrest her parents and her boyfriend.

"I entered this nightmare of being raped over and over under the title of marriage."

She said that after more than two years in prison, she was released after her torturer-husband was assassinated by a rival faction of the government.

Nemat later married her childhood sweetheart, and, after bribing officials to get a passport, she moved to Canada with him and a son in 1991. She said it took her 20 years to break the silence and face the reality of what she went through.

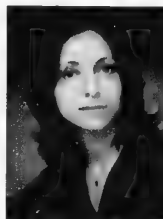
Nemat said that the situation in Iran today isn't much different than it was in 1979.

"Iran is a very well-educated country... But being educated has nothing to do with freedom or democracy, because the government of Iran is a terrible, horrible dictatorship and it has injected a population with sheer fear... When you know that if you speak up against the government, even in the mildest way, you're going to be arrested and tortured, you're not going to do it."

After Nemat's captivating address, Avi Benlolo, president and CEO of the FSWC, announced the speakers for the organization's Spirit of Hope Benefit on May 29.

The annual event, which raises money to fund FSWC projects throughout the year, will be held at the Sony Centre and will feature Glenn Beck, a host on CNN's *Headline News* and author of *An Inconvenient Book - Real Solutions to the World's Biggest Problems*; Richard Gephardt, a former Democratic member of the U.S. Congress and an economic adviser and co-chair with Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign; and Newt Gingrich, the former speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives.

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Winning NFL coach Trestman takes helm of Alouettes

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Marc Trestman, the new head coach of the Montreal Alouettes, was an outstanding high school athlete and scholar growing up in a Minneapolis, Minn. suburb.

In his senior year he won the Mercury Award, presented to the area Jewish student who has excelled in both sports and academics.

He grew up in St. Louis Park, a suburb with a significant Jewish community, which has produced a number of famous sons, among them Trestman's near contemporaries *New York Times* writer Thomas Friedman and the movie-making brothers Joel and Ethan Coen.

Trestman, 52, who had an impressive career coaching in the National Football League for 17 years, shies away from making much of his being Jewish.

"In my 30 years around the game, or even in childhood, my religious background has never been broached by owners, coaches or other players," he said in a telephone interview from his home in Raleigh, N.C.

After high school, he was the quarterback

of the University of Minnesota Golden Gophers football team for three seasons, while earning a degree in political science, and was good enough that he thought of playing professionally.

But when he failed to make the cut in two tryouts with the NFL Minnesota Vikings, he packed up his car and headed south to Florida to pursue a law degree at the University of Miami. After his NFL ambitions didn't pan out, he never thought of coaching, he said until he was asked to be a volunteer quarterbacks coach of the Hurricanes.

In 1983, Miami won the national college championship Orange Bowl.

Trestman passed the Florida bar that year and was clerking in Miami, but his success in college football caught the attention of the NFL, in particular Hall of Fame coach Bud Grant, who hired him.

Between 1985 and 2005, Trestman worked with eight different NFL teams mainly as quarterbacks coach or offensive co-ordinator. He was with the Cleveland Browns when they made it to the AFC championship game; the San Francisco 49ers when they led the league in points scored, pass attempts and passing



Outstanding former NFL coach Marc Trestman is the new head coach of the Montreal Alouettes.

yards; the Arizona Cardinals when they reached the playoffs for the first time in 16 years; and the Oakland Raiders when they were 2002 Super Bowl contenders. That year he was named NFL offensive co-ordinator of the year by *American Football Monthly*.

Overall in those 17 seasons, his teams made 15 playoff appearances. Among the outstanding quarterbacks he's coached are Heisman Trophy winner Vinny Testaverde and finalist Bernie Kosar, with whom he goes back to his University of Miami coaching days, as well as superstar wide receivers like Jerry Rice and Terrell Owens.

Trestman, who has a low-key personality, was regarded as one of the most intelligent coaches in the NFL, with an in-depth knowledge of the game.

To those who are not football fans and see the game as a bunch of brutes piling into one another, Trestman says they are missing a lot. "Football is a very cerebral game. That goes for playing and coaching. Physical skills are not enough without character and intelligence. I've seen many with abilities but were just not smart enough to play well," he said.

"Millions of variables come into play in each game," not the least of which is the weather, which will be more of a factor in Canada's colder climate.

Trestman finds tremendous satisfaction in melding men from diverse economic, cultural and religious backgrounds into a team. "The beauty of the game is seeing people from all walks of life come together as one. If the team does not come before the individual, you will not succeed," he said.

Trestman spent his last season in the NFL with the Miami Dolphins before returning to college football as the North Carolina State

Wolfpack's offensive coordinator in 2005.

He never thought he would work in the Canadian Football League, he said, and, in fact, had never been to Montreal until he came up to guest coach for at the Als' summer camp. He replaces Jim Popp, who remains as the team's general manager and vice-president.

Trestman is remaining in North Carolina until the start of the season, with periodic trips to Montreal. His two daughters are in high school, and he and his wife felt it best that the family stay in Raleigh until they graduate. The girls, he feels, need a little stability at this age, after growing up all over the United States.

Trestman is now getting up to speed on the Canadian game, with its 12 rather than 11 players, larger field, and different rules. "I'm learning from scratch," he admits.

The pressure's on to see the Alouettes, who made it to the semi-finals

last season, through to the Grey Cup. The Grey Cup game is hosted by Montreal this year.

Among those he's consulted is the legendary Marv Levy, who was head coach of the Als in the 1970s when the team won two Grey Cups. At 82, Levy just retired as GM of the NFL Buffalo Bills.

Trestman's philosophy for success is to be "hardworking, humble and disciplined on and off the field, with a common respect for everyone in the program, our opponents, and the game of football."

He is also trying to learn some French, and wants to speak the language as Quebecers do, rather than like a Parisian. During the interview, he tried out his new phrases: "Comment allez-vous?" And its response: "Très bien."

He is taking that initiative with little knowledge that language is a touchy issue in Quebec, and that professional sports is by no means free of the controversy. He appreciated learning that Finnish-born captain Saku Koivu has been taken over the coals by the French media for not speaking French in public.

Trestman is eager to be respectful of francophones, and its cultural diversity is one of the things he likes about Montreal so far.

Last season, the only Jewish player in the CFL was an Alouette. Laval native Shaun Diner, a special-teams member and backup receiver, however, saw little playing time last year.

Trestman was chosen by the Als from about 10 potential candidates. "We believe he will be able to bring great leadership skills and knowledge to our league and take the Alouettes back to the standard to which our fans are accustomed, and to our ultimate objective, which is the Grey Cup," said team chief executive officer Larry Smith.

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Red carpet, red sea

It's 1:15 pm on Tuesday. Our world premiere is in hours. The theatre is selling out. The buzz is growing. The posters are glossy.

And we have no film to show.

Technicolor says it's been shipped. FedEx says it's cleared customs. The filling theatre is without a print, but somehow I'm still not worried.

In my mind, I begin to feel like my father has flown 10 hours to scrutinize the performance, in his pocket a list of mistakes that I repeatedly make. I see my mother there, to pick up the pieces and arrange nourishment for the after-party. A dozen childhood friends arrive, treating the event like a bachelor party. And the press community is shaving their pencils to stab at us with review arrows.

And that's when I realize: this is my bar mitzvah all over again, my professional coming of age.

An odd familiarity comes over me. Without a print to show, I'm still calm. I've been here before. I visualize my parents sitting up front, lip-synching the dialogue they've seen in editing. I imagine people throwing candy at the screen when it's done, or simply dumping popcorn onto the floor. Today I will become a man. (I hope our Dolby 5.1 sound mix is loud enough for the elderly people sitting in the back.)

Of course, I'm still hoping our print shows up. Where is it already?

I'm dressed in a suit. There's a community to impress, and a threshold to cross. This is Minchah-Ma'ariv in glorious Technicolor. (Thank God it's not another bris – but we'll see.)

I think about what's happening, about how lucky I am to be here and the liberties we're afforded. I remember when dad and the rabbi were arrested for sneaking Torah scrolls into Russia. I think about the Dubai film festival and wonder how can they have a film festival in Dubai when they can't invite the Jews who made the films?

By stroke of destiny, the print arrives. The screening is a huge success. I feel like Judah

the Maccabee. We scoured the postal routes for the film, to light up the coliseum theatre, and when it finally arrived, the programmers would only schedule us for two showings. Our entertainment was not expected to last. But then a miracle occurred. After three years of creative battles, financial depletion, and angry criticism, the large crowd was engaged. Entertainment filled their hearts. Additional screenings were quickly added, until six nights of celebration were shared.

It's our festival of projected light.

My reward for this exhilarating endeavor has been a tremendous sinus cold – and I navigate my way across laptop keys, blind, to type this account of the miracle.

There's more to the story: a grand American film festival featured evening gala celebrations for Ryan Gosling, Ryan Reynolds, Ellen Page, Norman Jewison, Jason Reitman and myself, with my film, *Summerhood*.

Six Canadians over eight nights.

There's more to be proud of here than just our ability to entertain. My *Big Fat Greek Wedding* was written by, starred in, and assembled by Canadians for \$5 million, but because Canadians couldn't pay for it, the \$365 million in profits the film generated went to Americans.

It's my ambition that we fortify our domestic temple. We're a lauded nation of artists and entrepreneurs. Borrowing from Jewish historical experience, I don't believe that fleeing the land or scrounging for oil to light our hearts will sustain us in the future. We should establish a holy city around our national entertainment gems and invest in the rewards that we too easily give away, robbing ourselves.

You'll have to Google *Summerhood* to read our reviews and decide if you want to eat the fruit of this particular entertainment kibbutz – and with some luck, help to establish a snowy land of Milk Duds and honey for your artistic children to succeed in, and still live nearby.

ALMOST FAMOUS

By JACOB MEDJUCK



PARSNIP "FRIES" WITH SPICY VINEGAR

Ingredients

- 1-1/2 lb. parsnips
- 3 tbsp. olive oil, divided
- 1/2 c. white vinegar

Directions

Preheat oven to 450°F with rack in middle. Peel parsnips and quarter lengthwise. (If large, cut lengthwise into eighths and cut out cores.) Toss with 1 tablespoon oil in a large shallow baking pan and sprinkle with 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Roast, stirring occasionally until parsnips are tender and caramelized, about 20 minutes.

Serve fries drizzled with spicy vinegar.

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Key advice for designing a workout room

You want to work out at home, and you have to space and the desire to do it. What do you need? Great question.

I always tell my clients that they should keep two things in mind when designing a workout room.

First, decide on a piece of cardio equipment, and make sure it's safe and sturdy. Pick something you are going to enjoy using and, most importantly, is appropriate to your ability. Make sure you check with your doctor as to what type of cardio is best for you.

If you like walking outside and you have no joint issues, a treadmill will keep you walking all year round, no

matter what the weather. If you have multiple joint issues or lower back issues, an elliptical or stationary bike maybe a better choice.

If your knees are the main problem, then a recumbent bike (one with a chair-like seat) is your only option.

Indoor or stationary

bikes are great and can give an amazing cardio workout, strengthening not only the heart but the legs, butt and the lower stomach. You have two choices in indoor bikes: an upright, which looks a lot like an outdoor bike, or a recumbent bike, which you sit back in. Both can give you the same workout, but if you have lower back issues, you may want a

recumbent because of the back support.

A great option for a low-impact, high-intensity cardio workout is an elliptical trainer. They, too, come in all sorts of shapes and sizes. I strongly suggest that you try different kinds of cardio equipment and decide which one is best for you based on ability, use and size.

The second thing to remember is that weight training is very important, not only for fitness but for weight loss as well. This part is a lot easier: all you need are three-to-five-pound weights and an exercise ball. I strongly suggest at any fitness level that you hire a personal trainer to teach you and guide you in how to get fit safely.

E-mail me with questions or ideas at felycesfitness@rogers.com.



FITNESS CORNER

By FELYCE ZOMPARELLI

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

Few of us will ever run a full or half marathon. Not because we are unable to do so with enough training but more so because the idea of putting one foot in front of another for miles seems extraordinary, and appears to be undoable. It is a full-size venture.

My nephew Yechiel Rosenszweig, however, saw past the bigness of a marathon, and on Jan. 27 ran the Miami half marathon (13.1 miles).

It all started a few years ago, when Yechiel would join his eldest brother, Mayer, who jogged in the mornings. But he could only keep up with Mayer on his bike.

Soon enough, the running bug hit Yechiel (otherwise known as "Bud"), and he began training on an elliptical machine. Then he started running through the streets in the Clanton Park area of Toronto. Two miles led to three, and then to four and eventually to 10.

As time passed, Bud's mentor and *chavrutta* (Torah learning partner), Udi, "a friend who

is like family," and a runner, told him about the Miami marathon and challenged him to run it with him. Yechiel accepted. "If not for Udi, I would never have done this," he said.

So on the morning of Jan. 27, Yechiel joined 10,000 other runners at the starting line – the American Airlines Arena, home of the Miami Heat basketball team.

For those few ever-so-long seconds before the gun went off, Yechiel took in the excitement. He was nervous but pumped. "I love it all. The streets were blocked. So many people were cheering me on – I just wanted to run. I had lots of energy," he said.

Bang! The gun went off. Yechiel and Udi took off. They ran through Biscayne Bay, returning to Venetian Causeway, across a series of artificially made islands and then back on the Miami side of the bay. I saw the pictures of Yechiel running. He was smiling. I know him. I bet you he smiled the whole

Yechiel, 14 and running

time.

"I loved it," he said. "The whole thing was amazing."

Yechiel ran to raise money for a non-profit organization called Chai Lifeline (chailife line.org), an organization that helps children suffering from cancer and other illnesses, as well as offering support to the children's families. He raised the \$3,600 required, and more, and was one of the youngest runners in this group.

Yechiel's family is tight. Encouraging and loving. Both bubblies supported him throughout his training and the run. Yechiel told me one of the greatest things about the marathon was working with his brother, Mayer, to get ready for the run and then seeing him and his fiancée, Sarah, on the sidelines.

"Mayer came down on the Thursday night. It was unbelievable. Without him, it wouldn't have been nearly as good. Mayer told me what to eat and to drink a lot. He said not to worry, that everything would be great."

Throughout the 13.1 miles, Yechiel felt strong. Like a young warrior with one singular thought in mind – he knew he would finish the race. After two hours, 14 minutes and 39 seconds, Yechiel and Udi did. Pretty good, eh? A 10-minute mile! The young runner, together with his Torah learning partner, did it!

Mayer and Sarah were at the line to congratulate Bud. Soon enough Chavie, his mom, called and said, "Are you okay?" She was in tears when she told me, "I was just so proud of Yechiel, his determination, commitment and ambition."

"Yechiel is the youngest in the family, and we learn so much from him. I have a lot of admiration for my son," she said.

"I felt accomplished," Yechiel said. My next goal is to run the same marathon but in a better time."

Yechiel Rosenszweig, 14 years old, a successful half marathon runner, and my nephew. What a nachas, eh!

Avrum@veahavta.org or see blog avrum-rosenszweigideas.blogspot.com Sderot/Congo?

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The News in Brief

CANADA

Museum Bill Tabled

TORONTO — Canadian Jewish Congress last week praised Ottawa for tabling a bill to establish the Canadian Museum for Human Rights (CMHR) in Winnipeg. The \$126-million museum will "enhance the public's understanding of human rights... promote respect for others and... encourage reflection and dialogue," the bill says.

The museum, which is being funded by three levels of government and donations, was the brainchild of the late media mogul Izzy Asper and is being spearheaded by the Asper Foundation.

WORLD

Tom Lantos Dies

WASHINGTON — Tom Lantos, the only Holocaust survivor ever elected to the U.S. Congress, died Feb. 11 at

age 80. Lantos, a California Democrat known as a strident defender of human rights, died at Bethesda Naval Hospital in suburban Washington, D.C. He had been diagnosed with cancer of the esophagus.

Le Pen Sentenced

PARIS — A French court gave Jean-Marie Le Pen a three-month suspended sentence for saying the Nazi occupation of France was not inhumane. The Feb. 8 sentence was the latest given to the far-right leader of the National Front for diminishing the significance of the Shoah. He also was fined \$14,500 (US). Le Pen told a far-right magazine in 2005 that "in France, at least, the German occupation was not especially inhumane, even if there were a number of excesses." At least 70,000 Jews were deported to death camps during the war.

Man Assaulted

MELBOURNE — An Orthodox Jewish man was attacked in an apparent anti-Semitic incident in Melbourne, Australia. The B'nai Brith Anti-Defamation Commission said the man was verbally assaulted Feb. 11 by three people who called him a "f---ing Jew" before physically attacking him in East St. Kilda, a popular Jewish area. The man was,

High Court Won't Hear Passport Appeal

OTTAWA — The Supreme Court said last week it won't hear an appeal by a Toronto man who wants Jerusalem, Israel, to be listed as his birthplace on his passport.

Eliyahu Joshua Veffler, who was born in Jerusalem but moved to Canada with his family in 1998, has fought the federal government since 2004 to have his passport reflect his belief that the city belongs to Israel. He has argued that the government's policy that Jerusalem's final status will be determined in peace talks violates his Charter rights, since seeing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel is "an integral part of my religious belief and my personal identity."

Last year, the Federal Court of Appeal upheld an earlier ruling affirming the policy.

Veffler's Winnipeg lawyer, David Matas, said the decision — for which, as per custom, it gave no reason — means Veffler is out of legal options.

In a statement, B'nai Brith Canada said it will "ask for the [passport] policy to be changed by elected officials."

lightly injured. Between 2006 and 2007, the Executive Council of Australian Jewry logged 638 anti-Semitic incidents. That was twice the previous annual average and eight per cent higher than the old record, set five years ago.

incidents reached a record high. There were 547 hate incidents against the Jewish community in 2007, down from 594 in 2006, of which 114 were violent assaults against individuals.

Violence Up In U.K.

LONDON — Violent attacks on Jews in Britain have risen to new heights, a new report says. Attacks on individual Jews in 2007 reached the highest level ever in the 23 years records have been kept, the Community Security Trust, a Jewish defence organization, said. But "anti-Semitic race-hate incidents" against the community as a whole fell eight per cent from 2006, when

Knife Used In Attack

ZURICH — A Jewish man was attacked Feb. 12 in Zurich for what seemed to be anti-Semitic motives. The victim, 60, was lightly wounded in the neck in the daytime attack. The knife-wielding attacker, described as a young man with a foreign accent, fled when the victim fought back. Police say anti-Semitism may be involved, since the man addressed the victim as a Jew.



CONGREGATION B'NAI TORAH

Congregation B'nai Torah extends our deepest sympathies to our Past President, Meyer Weinstock, his daughters Aviva & Faith, and their families on the loss of their beloved wife, mother and grandmother

Idelle Weinstock ז"ל

May the family be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

Howard Langer
President

Rabbi Yechiel Goldreich



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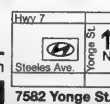
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Rabbis lobby Ottawa on Israel issues

By **ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF**
Staff Reporter

A group of 13 rabbis from across Canada were on Parliament Hill last week to urge the Conservative government and the opposition parties not to forsake the Holy Land.

The Canadian Rabbinic Caucus – a coalition of rabbis representing the interests of the main Jewish religious streams, from Orthodox to Reconstructionist – met with officials and parliamentarians to convey three messages from their communities and congregations.

The first was a proclamation of support for Canada's withdrawal from "Durban II," the 2009 followup to the 2001 UN anti-racism conference in Durban, South Africa, which was widely criticized as a forum for anti-Semitism and Israel-bashing.

The second message was to reassert the Jewish community's firm position that Arab nations must formally recognize Israel as a Jewish state as a precondition to any Mideast peace talks.

Lastly, the caucus raised the issue of the threat that Iran poses to Israel, as well as to the world at large.

The day-long visit, brokered by the Canada-Israel Committee – which also shepherded the rabbis to their meetings around town – saw the rabbis meet with multiple senators, MPs and with Israeli Ambassador Alan Baker, among others.

Caucus co-chair Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz told *The CJN* he considered this year's visit a success.

"One of our most important achievements is having expressed our gratitude on [Canada's] withdrawal from the Durban II conference," he said. "We told [Secretary of State for Multiculturalism and Canadian Identi-

ty Jason] Kenney that it was a principled and courageous stand... and I think that was something appreciated by the government."

Rabbi Steinmetz added that it was "critical" for his caucus to reiterate to federal politicians that despite the recent National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) report in the United States – which said Iran had stopped its drive to develop nuclear weapons in 2003 – the Islamic Republic "is an ongoing threat. It is still an exceptionally troublesome nation... and one of the greatest threats to security in the entire region."

Of particular import to the caucus was a meeting with the Palestinian Authority's official representative to Ottawa, Amin Abou

Hassira.

Rabbi Steinmetz called the meeting with Abou Hassira "historic."

"I don't think the chief authority of the Palestinian government [in Canada] has done this before," he said, adding that the rabbis wanted to make it clear that a "fundamental departure point for peace" with the Palestinians is the recognition of Israel as a Jewish state.

"[Abou Hassira] heard us, but felt it was not his place to address that issue," Rabbi Steinmetz said. "Our conversation was polite. But we did agree to the possibility for future meetings and on the importance of ongoing dialogue."

Rabbi Reuben Poupko, the caucus' other co-chair, was less conciliatory about the meeting.

"It was a painful encounter in many ways," he said. "It's as if there was no recognition of the past, lessons learned or prior peace agreements. [Abou Hassira] dismissed out of hand the idea of recognizing Israel as a Jewish state."

Continued on page 18



Rabbi
Reuven Poupko



Rabbi
Chaim Steinmetz

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Time running out for two-state solution, Peace Now head says

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

If there is ever going to be peace in Israel, and if Israel is going to remain a Jewish democratic state, it must be willing to share Jerusalem with the Palestinians, says Yairiv Oppenheimer, director general of Peace Now.

He believes a peace treaty that's acceptable to both sides will have to compromise on the issue of Jerusalem.

"It is not a zero-sum game... It's not simple, it's compromising. We are going to pay a huge price for it, and the Palestinians as well, but in order to survive as a Jewish democratic state... it's going to be a struggle," Oppenheimer told more than 100 people last week at Temple Sinai.

He was speaking at a panel discussion on the Middle East with Amir Gissin, Israel's consul general in Toronto.

The program was organized by Canadian Friends of Peace Now, a left-wing NGO that calls for the establishment of a Palestinian state on land occupied by Israel in 1967, and National Jewish Campus Life. It was moderated by Myer Siemiatycki, a professor in the politics and public administration department at Ryerson University.

Oppenheimer said the Israeli government must try to reach a two-state solution.

"It's not only the Palestinians who will gain. It is in the Israeli and Zionist interest... Without it, either we are not going to be a democratic state, or we're not going to be Israel."

While much of the discussion focused on the challenges of achieving peace in the Middle East, Gissin said it frustrates him that Israel doesn't speak to the rest of the world in a unified voice.

"There isn't any one major effort... to present Israel to the world, and we pay the price for it every day," he said.

Speaking from his experience as the former head of the Israeli government's hasbarah department, Gissin added that Israel doesn't make its image a priority, as evidenced by its communications budget, which is smaller than those of some major corporations.

He said the challenges Israel must deal with today are new, such as the Iranian nuclear threat and the international community's inability to put effective pressure on Iran, as well as ongoing rocket attacks from Gaza.

"But what is becoming more and more critical is the effort by our opposers and adversaries... to present Israel or brand Israel as the new South Africa... to brand Israel as an apartheid



Israeli Consul General Amir Gissin, left, speaks at a Middle East panel discussion as Ryerson University professor Myer Siemiatycki, and Peace Now director general Yairiv Oppenheimer look on. [Sheri Shefa photo]

state."

He said that anti-Israel groups have shifted the focus from depicting Israel as occupiers of the territories to "an entity called 'Palestine,'" and they call for a one-state solution rather than a two-state solution.

"This is a new phenomenon," he said. Gissin stressed the importance of changing Israel's image on the world stage.

"You all know the visual of the Israeli tanks and the Palestinian boy who is throwing stones at the tank. It is a very frustrating visual. It is very difficult for us to cope with as Israelis. But this visual is very unique, because it encapsulates the conflict and it encapsulates our mistake," he said.

"Our mistake is that for the last 30 years, we were trying to convince the world that the tank is the victim. Don't get me wrong, the tank is the victim — historically, politically, in almost every aspect, the Jews are the victims... [but] what we have to do... is try to develop other ways for people to look at the conflict."

But Oppenheimer said he doesn't think Israel's problems have anything to do with hasbarah. He said that if the conditions on the ground don't change, the world will continue to see the Palestinians as the underdog.

When Israel shut the electricity in Gaza in response to Hamas' rocket attacks, "in one hour, the whole world was against Israel, and no one remembered the Qassam missiles that were coming into Israel," he said.

"The thinking of the Israeli government is that in order to take down the government of Hamas, we need to make life in Gaza so miserable that they will not be in favour of Hamas and say that we cannot handle it. But the exact opposite happened."

He said this tactic only creates a breeding ground for more radical voices, more anger toward Israel, and more

empathy for the extremists.

"Israel's image will get worse, people in Israel will become more extreme — either more right wing or left wing — and the Palestinians will also become more extreme."

He said that Hamas is taking over the agenda in the Middle East by creating a violent and miserable existence for both sides, which takes the focus away from a peace treaty.

"Who cares about a peace treaty — about splitting Jerusalem, about helping to solve other problems concerning settlements — who wants to talk about it when you have Qassams flying from Gaza into Israel?" Oppenheimer asked. "This is what Hamas wants to achieve... They want to make it impossible to reach an agreement."

He said the fact that Hamas is a religious group rather than a political one makes the situation much more complicated.

"It is easy to say, 'Let's talk to Hamas. Let's try to make peace with them.' I don't know if there is a part of Hamas that is ready to talk to Israelis. I doubt it... But I do know that next to Hamas, there is Fatah. They are not part of the Jewish Zionist movement, but they are ready to talk to Israelis."

But Oppenheimer warned that time is not working in favour of those who support a two-state solution.

"It is becoming more of a religious conflict than a political conflict, and I am afraid of the day when in Israeli society, it will be religious conflict, and in the Palestinian society it will be a religious conflict, and then it will be very hard to solve... I do believe that this is the time to do it."

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Religious pluralism key issue for all Israelis: prof

By FRANCES KRAFT

Staff Reporter

Religious pluralism in Israel is an issue that is important not only for Conservative, Reform and secular Jewish Israelis, but also for their Orthodox counterparts, according to a Bar-Ilan University professor who was in Toronto recently.

Gerald Cromer, who teaches criminology, said in a Feb. 4 lecture at Beth Torah Congregation that all four groups are suffering for its lack.

His presentation was co-sponsored by Canadian Friends of Bar-Ilan University and the New Israel Fund of Canada. Cromer is a member of board of directors of the NIF (a social justice organization in Israel), and a founder of a modern Orthodox congregation in Israel. He is also involved in a number

of liberal Orthodox groups.

Drawing on his lay experience rather than his academic expertise, Cromer – a 63-year-old native of London, England who has been teaching at Bar-Ilan since 1972 – said that Orthodox Jews should be against “the doctrine of [religious] coercion,” under which the Orthodox rabbinate in Israel has sole authority over key Jewish religious rites including birth, marriage, divorce and burial.

Such coercion is “more and more moving into the hands of the ultra-Orthodox,” and modern Orthodox Jews are suffering from it in many ways, he said.

As evidence, Cromer cited nascent talks about the need to set up alternative Orthodox rabbinical courts to deal with the issue of Jewish divorce, because of “tremendous difficulties that ultra-Orthodox rabbis are putting in front of people.”



Gerald Cromer

[Jay Brodbar photo]

As well, he said, this year for the first time the haredim have spoken out against a ruling of Israel's first chief rabbi, Rabbi Abraham Isaac HaCohen Kook, regarding the shmittah year (every seventh year, including the current one, during which observant Jews let their land lie fallow). This has resulted in conflict between haredim and modern Orthodox Jews, Cromer said.

Rabbi Kook's ruling, known as *cheter mechirah*, allows Jews to sell their land to non-Jews during the shmittah year so that they can still cultivate it.

The second reason for Orthodox Jews to be against religious coercion, Cromer said, is that it “gives Orthodoxy a very bad name.” It leads to animosity and a feeling of not wanting “anything to do with any of it” among non-Orthodox Jews who find it hard to distinguish between religion and religious coercion, he added.

Pluralism is not the same thing as tolerance, Cromer stressed. Tolerance implies a willingness to put up with the other side, but pluralism suggests that everyone has something to offer, he explained.

The good news, he said, is that “after a long period of time when things Jewish were not attractive to people, there is in Israel in many ways an important, interesting, spiritual search going on.”

In Israel today, there are many organizations and movements trying to create non-Orthodox options for being Jewish, Cromer said. People are searching for meaning, and in many cases are looking for it “in a Jewish spiritual direction,” he added.

In addition to Jewish themes that are beginning to emerge in film, art and pop music, secular Jewish activity – including study of Jewish texts, secular prayer meetings and a secular yeshiva – is growing, he noted.

Also, the Reform and Conservative movements, which used to be regarded as being from outside of Israel, are becoming “more Israeli” in their membership and their leadership. “As they do so, the likelihood of their success and the likelihood of them having an influence on society will grow.”

Although some of his fellow Orthodox Jews may not welcome the trends, Cromer said they have to see them as an opportunity instead of a threat. “What I'm talking about is a basic change in mindset.”

The worst thing that can happen to Judaism in Israel “is not that people are against it, but that people are indifferent to it,” he said.

A spiritual search among non-Orthodox Israelis can help Orthodoxy in two ways, he said.

“Certain people will search and find that Orthodoxy is the right way for them.” Also, he added, other alternatives, aside from having value in their own right, will “give Orthodox Jews the kind of learning from the other that American Jews so excel at.”

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'In finding Israel, we find ourselves'

Continued from page 1

David Bercuson tells the stirring story of how a handful of volunteers from overseas – Jews and non-Jews – helped establish the State of Israel, many, alas, at the cost of their own lives.

And there is much more in the supplement to help us take up the chief rabbi's call to challenge the blatant falsehoods about the Jewish state.

Forty years ago, from the bimah of Holy Blossom Temple during the High Holy Days, Rabbi Gunther Plaut, our former columnist and the venerated sage of the Jews of Canada, uttered a different, but related, challenge to Canadian Jewry: "If you want to be a Jew," he exhorted, "then you must do something about it. Somewhere in your existence, you must become a partner in the enterprise of Jewish history."

For every Jew who witnessed the founding of the State of Israel or who was born in the past 60 years, the "enterprise of Jewish history" must, perforce, include, in some significant way, the only Jewish state on earth.

One need only read or hear the news of this day to know that there are many people and some states committed to harming Israel, and indeed, Jews around the world.

Our contrary commitment – to the permanence and well-being of the Jewish state – must always be stronger than theirs.

"It is time to say clearly to ourselves and to the world," as Rabbi Plaut did, "we want to protect Israel not only because she is attacked and surrounded and isolated. Yes, that, too, of course. We want it above all, as a force for compassion and humanity, as a future seedbed of culture, religion, the arts and music... For the sake of man as well as for the sake of the Jews, Israel is necessary."

In his typically insightful and incisive manner, Rabbi Plaut added: "In finding Israel, we find ourselves and, finding ourselves, we are also serving mankind."

Rabbi Plaut's voice is quiet now, alas. But his words ring as true to us as they did to our parents.

Israel is very young. Its institutions are still evolving. Indeed, it is still only at the early beginnings of its possibilities. Yet, its achievements soar in every sphere of human endeavour with magisterial innovation and excellence. The achievements are ever more marvellous considering the fact that the Jewish state is not known a single day of peace since it was born. It remains the only country at the United Nations that must still defend its very existence.

That is why we must teach Rabbi Plaut's words to our young. Israel is necessary. For our sake and for the sake of the world.

Knowing this, they will also know, as Wiesel has so elegantly noted for us, that Israel is an ever-renewing miracle.

It is not too early to begin the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Noted Israeli Canadian architect Moshe Safdie was chosen to design the new National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa. Among his previous projects were the Habitat apartment complex in Montreal that was built for Expo 67 and the revitalization of the Western Wall precinct after the Six Day War.

Editorials & Letters

POSITIVE THINKING Dry Bones



Editorial Advisory Board: Michael Brown, Sandra Brown, Donald Carr, Adam Hummel, Zac Kaye, Igor Korenzvit, Hagai Kuperman, Keith Landy, Andrea Most, Lou Ronson, Jacques Sayegh, Mike Shriqui, Pamela Medjuck Stein, Rabbi Michael Stroh, Rabbi Reuven Traduburs

Israel performed well in Lebanon war

I don't understand all the talk about how Israel performed badly in the war in Lebanon ("The Second Lebanon War: 'A serious missed opportunity,'" *CJN*, Feb. 7). That is not the case at all. The speed with which the Israeli forces mobilized totally surprised the enemy. The ferocity of Israel's attack stunned the world. With pinpoint artillery, air and naval barrages, they were able to systematically wipe out targets in the middle of Beirut. Ground troops braved uncharted hostile enemy territory and cleared out all of southern Lebanon. Israel took the fight to Hezbollah and had them on the run.

The Israelis may have encountered some surprises that weren't accounted for, but what do you expect? It was a fight. The only reason the job didn't get finished was the international community made the Israelis back off because they were hitting too hard. Things were going Israel's way until then. There is too much Jewish guilt and not enough credit where credit is due. I don't imagine the neighbouring Arab leaders who saw what happened to Lebanon are nearly as dismissive of what Israel is capable of.

Richard Fox
Toronto

Response to Held

I agree with Daniel Held's sentiment that all Jews should find a shul where we feel comfortable ("We need to create our own shuls," *CJN*, Feb. 7). In Toronto, we are fortunate that there are shuls for everyone. These shuls offer early-morning simple services, services for youth and services for women. There are also many branches of Judaism in our Toronto shuls, including humanistic shuls and Orthodox, Conservative and Reform shuls.

However, I object to Held's suggestion that building stronger congregations entails segregation. Held's vision of services held without old people is lacking in humanity. We need everyone who is committed to shul involvement. There are valuable lessons that seniors can impart to youth, so why shun this segment of our population?

Laura Schwartz
Toronto

Response to Mintz

Regarding Jesse Mintz's column "Israel should re-think policy in Gaza" (*CJN*, Feb. 7), Israel fulfilled all its obligations in regards to its disengagement from Gaza. What has it received in return? In the past

two years, more than 2,500 Qassam rockets have landed in Sderot.

An election brought Hamas, an Iranian-backed terror organization, to power in the Gaza Strip. Hamas' charter calls for the destruction of Israel. If the Hamas-backed population put down its weapons today for true peace, there would be peace tomorrow. If Israel put down its weapons today, in the current situation, there would be no Israel tomorrow.

E. Freedman
Toronto

Short-term Israel Bonds

While it may make good economic sense for Israel Bonds to no longer offer bonds with a maturity exceeding five years, there is one sense in which it doesn't ("Israel seeks early bonds redemption," *CJN*, Jan. 31).

When my children were young, my parents bought long-term Israel Bonds in their names. Their intention was to provide funds for a future time when the children were older. It was also a way to help Israel, help their grandchildren and connect their grandchildren to Israel. Physically, the bonds consisted of handsome documentation that could be stored away in a safety deposit box.

Now that we have grandchildren of our own, my wife and I have started to buy them Israel Bonds. In the recent past, we purchased 10-year bonds, the longest maturity period possible. Now, the documentation provided is a simple letter. And now the longest maturity date is being reduced to five years? Too bad.

Jacob Sivak
Waterloo, Ont.

Irving Donsky memorial book

Plans are underway to publish a memorial book in the name of Yitzchak HaCohen (Irving) Donsky, who passed away recently in Toronto. Yitzchak was a brilliant scholar who delighted everyone with his beautiful and unique divrei Torah at Ner Israel Yeshiva College in Toronto in the 1960s and '70s. We would be interested in hearing from those with any material to contribute. This includes Yitzchak's original Torah ideas or anecdotes and reflections on his life.

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Perspectives

Imad Mughniyah:

a symbol of the 'axis of evil'

By AMIR OREN

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The killing of a Hezbollah top-operative, Imad Fayeze Mughniyah, last Tuesday night was a source of concern in several corners of the Middle East, but Damascus, Beirut, Gaza, Tehran and Jerusalem all have different reasons to be alarmed about it.

Syria's president, Bashar Assad, must be wondering what's going on inside his security apparatus, which is headed by his brother-in-law, Assef Shawkat. If they had no knowledge that Mughniyah was under surveillance by foreign elements who had outwitted the Syrian systems of compartmentalization and security and were able to blow him up in the middle of Damascus, then maybe Assad's enemies in Syria might successfully plot against him as well.

As for Israel, its people and officials know that revenge could be taken at any place and at any time, especially after the 40 days of mourning, which will end on

March 23.

However, this scheme of action and reaction would be too simplistic when applied to the man who symbolized the "axis of evil" in its most basic sense. Mughniyah was the embodiment of the link between Iran and Hezbollah, between the fundamentalist ideology of the ayatollah regime and the Shiite terrorist group in Lebanon.

The titles of "head of the security organization" or "operations officer," which have been applied to Mughniyah, pertained to only a small portion of the roles he played. In the cat-and-mouse game of intelligence and terrorism, Mughniyah played the cat—that is, until he became a kill.

Mughniyah was at the very top of the FBI's Most Wanted list, almost as high up as Al Qaeda's founding father, Osama bin Laden. Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, by contrast, is not on the list. Without explicitly saying so, the Americans view Nas-

rallah as the semi-political leader of a terrorist organization. Their attitude toward Mughniyah was less ambivalent: they had put a \$5-million prize on his head.

If the suspicions that the Arab media has tended to spread turn out to be true, that prize should go to Mossad head Meir Dagan and the men and women of his organization.

Of course, they have no intention of collecting. Israel had enough reasons of its own to wish for Mughniyah's death, even without the added American incentive.



Imad Mughniyah

Whoever tracked down Mughniyah in Damascus demonstrated the sort of intelligence capabilities and excellent operational skills that Israel lacked in Lebanon in the summer of 2006.

In its brief chapter on special operations during the Second Lebanon War, the Winograd Committee said that the expectation for such a successful operation affected Israel's hesitant performance along the front.

If Israel's "long arm" is involved, then it can be seen as a warning aimed at Nasrallah and

Hamas leaders in Gaza and Damascus of what will happen if they open a second front against Israel while it tends to Gaza.

Killed under the noses of Iran and Syria

By ZVI BAR'EL

© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

A nasty surprise awaited Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki, who was scheduled to arrive in Damascus last Wednesday to discuss the Lebanese crisis with Syrian President Bashar Assad.

Syria, the Iranian minister found out, is no longer a secure state, its intelligence is penetrable, and Iran's emissaries and friends – whether the leaders of Islamic Jihad or Hamas – are now, with the assassination of Hezbollah's deputy secretary general Imad Mughniyah, in the front line of fire. Mottaki could have surmised that in Damascus, he too could be an easy target.

If Mottaki got a surprise, Assad was hit with the full blow, learning that such a complex operation could have been planned and carried out under his own nose, not in a fragmented Lebanon "full of traitors," as Hezbollah describes it.

But the greatest shake-up will certainly be felt by Hezbollah, whose intelligence structure, security capabilities and assault architecture were built by Mughniyah himself.

This is, therefore, a strategic assassination because of its potential repercussions beyond the removal of Hezbollah's supreme planner and operative.

The important question now is how the Tehran-Damascus-Hezbollah axis will respond in unison, and how each component will respond individually.

The prime target from now on will be Israel itself, Israeli and Jewish institutions around the world, and even Israeli airliners and airports frequented by many Israelis. These are considered security weak points, because Hezbollah has undercover cells worldwide, which Mughniyah himself set up and activated on several occasions.

American targets might also be deemed "suitable" objects for vengeance in an attempt to par-

lay Mughniyah's slaying into political leverage. If American targets or civilians in the Middle East or middle America are harmed as a result of an Israeli assassination, Nasrallah can hope for answering pressure from the American public against Israel, which has officially denied involvement in the killing.

The question is what Israeli target would count as sufficient to meet Hezbollah's need for vengeance and prestige.

The other roiling front was Lebanon itself, where a mass rally was held Feb. 14 to mark the third anniversary of the late prime minister Rafiq Hariri's murder.

Thousands filled Beirut's plazas, and in view of the violent rhetoric heard in Lebanon last week, and Mughniyah's assassination and his burial the same day as the rally, it was feared that the public display could spill over into mass clashes that the Lebanese army would be unable to stop.

Fears of a violent, even armed, outbreak were fed by accusations from Hezbollah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah that the Lebanese government collaborated with Israel during the Second Lebanon War.

Anger at the Lebanese government had grown last Wednesday when it failed to react by the evening to Mughniyah's assassination, and did not join those condemning the killing or express sorrow over it.

If the Mughniyah assassination generates a mass outbreak in Lebanon, it might develop into a new civil war and create a tough front for Israel, since Lebanese chaos would likely spell the end of agreements reached following the Second Lebanon War.

In the most dangerous scenario, Hezbollah will respond to the assassination by deciding to go to war with Israel, and thus place the Lebanese government in an impossible situation.

The hit – not merely revenge

By AMOS HAREL and
AVI ISSACHAROFF

The Israeli establishment had discussed the possibility of killing Hamas leaders in the Gaza Strip, but when the first lethal blow fell, it was in Damascus. The victim of last Tuesday night's assassination was Hezbollah's deputy secretary general, Imad Mughniyah. Despite Hamas' recent successes, Mughniyah is a considerably more deadly and sophisticated terrorist than anyone Hezbollah's Palestinian sister movement has ever produced.

Like numerous assassinations of Lebanon- and Syria-based terrorists, from Islamic Jihad leader Fathi Shikaki (who was killed in Malta) to Hamas and Hezbollah members, Mughniyah's killing will remain, officially at least, a mystery.

This is not the kind of operation for which states tend to take public credit.

What matters more is what Hezbollah believes. The organization accused Israel of being responsible for the assassination, and threatened immediate revenge. The Israeli leadership – prime minister, defence minister and chief of staff – kept mum in front of the cameras.

The foreign reports also gave credit to the Mossad. If that is true, it further corroborates the high regard Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has for Mossad chief Meir Dagan.

In his life, Mughniyah spilled no less American blood than Israeli and Jewish blood. The George W. Bush administration commended the assassination, but as far as the United States was concerned, Mughniyah was more a terror celebrity than a real threat.

For Israel, he was a different story. Such an assassination, it may be assumed, is not merely a matter of revenge but also an attempt to foil future attacks.

Mughniyah, who was involved in a long list of terror attacks, has most certainly been working on other plans. He died on Syrian land, contradicting Syria's denials of being in contact

with him. Syria still has an open account with Israel over the attack on its nuclear facility last September, which it claims Israel carried out.

Mughniyah's assassination – if it was carried out by Israel – strengthens the impression that Olmert is not afraid of making complex defence decisions that involve considerable risks.

The decision to enter the Second Lebanon War turned out to be a mistake that Israel is continuing to pay for. But the decisions that followed it appear balanced and justified. In view of Mughniyah's status and the future risk he posed, the attack on him was absolutely justified. The failure of Israel to strike at Hezbollah leaders had been seen as one of the war's greatest failures.

A previous assassination – of Hezbollah secretary general Abbas Musawi in February 1992 – was labelled in retrospect as a mistake, because it led to Hassan Nasrallah's rise to power. But Mughniyah is better compared to Shikaki, whose assassination paralyzed Islamic Jihad for several years.

The killing should worry Nasrallah himself because Mughniyah helped maintain his personal security. He must be asking himself whether his enemies could reach him, too. But no such success is possible unless the target becomes negligent or complacent or falls into a routine.

The black flags hoisted last week in Beirut's Shiite neighbourhoods and in some southern Lebanon villages also reflect a severe blow to Hezbollah's prestige. One Lebanese commentator described Mughniyah's assassination as the harshest blow in the organization's history.

This is precisely why Hezbollah is expected to seek vengeance as soon as possible. Hezbollah yesterday pledged "an eye for an eye, a man for a man, a leader for a leader." Such operations take time. Until then, Hezbollah may pressure its proteges – Palestinian groups in the territories – to carry out swift suicide bombings in Israel, as a prelude to revenge.

Opinions

Has multiculturalism run its course?

With a reputation for speaking his mind and often ignoring the niceties of political correctness, Britain's chief rabbi, Sir Jonathan Sacks, has waded into yet more choppy waters with his controversial views on multiculturalism.

In the very first paragraph of his recently published book, *The Home We Build Together: Recreating Society* (Continuum Books, 2007), he unhesitatingly sets the stage for what's to come, by stating: "Multiculturalism has run its course, and it is time to move on. It was a fine, even noble idea in its time. It was designed to make ethnic and religious minorities feel more at home in society, more appreciated and respected, better equipped with self-esteem and therefore better able to mesh with the larger society as a whole. It affirmed their culture. It gave dignity to difference. And in many ways it achieved its aims."

He then goes on to write: "But there has been a price to pay, and it grows year by year. Multiculturalism has led not to integration but to segregation. It has allowed groups to live separately, with no incentive to integrate and every incentive not to. It was intended to promote tolerance. Instead the result has been, in countries where it has been tried, societies more abrasive, fractured and intolerant than they once were."

Though at times a bit difficult to follow, Rabbi Sacks' arguments are, for the most part, cogent and thought-provoking. Not surprisingly, many of the reviewers of his book have been noncommittal, carefully avoiding overt endorsements of his position, while at the same time steering clear of actually criticizing him for opening this sort of discourse in the first place.

However, I did come across one rather extreme reaction that, precisely by way of its ugly diatribe, reaffirmed the very essence of what Rabbi Sacks has been concerned about. Writing in a blog called *Jumah Pulse* on Oct. 2, one Husain Al-Qadi called his treatise a "stealth attack on [the] Muslim community."

"It is no secret," he comments, "that when people shout about the failure of multiculturalism today, what they actually mean is the perceived failure of the Muslim community to integrate into wider society."

He ends by warning the Jewish community that "there are thousands of Muslims who are keeping records of every statement of venom and every publication that contributes to the unfolding crime upon crime against the whole Muslim community."

Rabbi Sacks' book is provocative, and so it should be. But regardless of whether one regards him as courageous or reckless for drawing attention to the blemishes of multiculturalism, he demands of us no less than an open and honest reappraisal of a construct that may well be obsolete as we move toward a civil society for the future.



Lawrence Hart
in Hamilton

A quandary with no easy answers

Cpl. Gilad Shalit was captured by Hamas operatives on June 25, 2006, at a military outpost near the Kerem Shalom crossing with Gaza, after the tank he was in was attacked with bombs and rockets.

Aside from Shalit, two other soldiers were killed in the assault, and a fourth, the tank's driver, was seriously wounded.

Since his capture, several signs of life have been received from Shalit, mostly through Egyptian intermediaries: a letter to his parents in September 2006; a request for new glasses at the beginning of 2007; a recording of him speaking, released by Hamas on the first anniversary of his abduction; and another letter received recently.

These signs have brought negotiations for Shalit's release into the public eye. They, in turn, have rekindled an ongoing debate about the price to be paid for our soldiers' freedom, the understanding being that it will be in the form of a major Palestinian prisoner release.

The prospective deal for Shalit's release will reportedly include 450 Palestinian prisoners. Because of Hamas' demands, these will include some with "blood on their hands," terrorists who have killed or injured innocent Israelis. The exact scope of this new flexibility will be discussed by a special inter-ministerial committee appointed to approve the exchange.

The dilemma is Solomonic.

The obligation to free prisoners is grounded on universal moral standards, military ethics and Halachah. The Israel Defence

Forces' code of ethics states that "IDF servicemen... will always go to their [comrades'] assistance when they need their help or depend on them, despite any danger or difficulty, even to the point of risking their lives".

In the past, Israel has released numerous prisoners in return for just a few Israeli captives. For instance, in 1985, Israel freed 1,150 prisoners in exchange for three Israeli soldiers kidnapped in Lebanon, and in 2004, more than 430 prisoners and the bodies of 60 terrorists were exchanged for a disreputable Israeli businessman being held in Lebanon and the bodies of three Israeli soldiers.

Opponents of exchanges – including many from rabbinic or security circles, as well as Almagor, the terror victims' association, which is particularly vocal – claim that after their release, many prisoners return to terrorist activities. The latest example is the suicide bomber who blew himself up in Dimona on Feb. 4, killing a woman and maiming several others. He was released from prison only months earlier.

Prof. David Golinkin, president of the Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies, notes that "the public takes precedence over the individual, even if this endangers the individual. Exchanging hundreds or thousands of terrorists for one Israeli encourages kidnapping of Israelis and frees hundreds or thousands of terrorists who will pick up their weapons and attack Israel. In other words, it endangers the public and should not be done."

A further claim is that releasing serious terrorists will strengthen Hamas and weaken

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas.

While few Israelis want prisoners released, especially those who've committed heinous crimes, supporters of an exchange assert that IDF ethics oblige Israel to bring home all captives. They add that a prisoner release, linked to a broader agreement with Hamas, might end ongoing rocket attacks from Gaza on parts of the Negev. Moreover, there are currently some 10,000 Palestinians in Israeli jails, many of whom do not have "blood on their hands," and some of those who do have become moderate during their years of incarceration. Finally, they believe an exchange will lower tensions between Israel and Palestinians, and that, in turn, will lessen terrorist activities.

There's no textbook answer to the quandary. Both sides have valid arguments. However, if I had to decide, I'd join those calling for concessions to bring Shalit home – not in the vain hope that it would advance understanding between Israel and Hamas, or because Palestinian prisoners have become more restrained while in prison. Rather, I'd argue that a nation who sends its soldiers to fight and defend its borders in dangerous places must provide them and their families with the foreknowledge that anything and everything will be done to return them if they fall into harm's way.

We may eventually pay dearly for such a deal, but the soldier in me can't forget Ben-Gurion's words, literally etched in steel on the walls of the IDF's chief-of-staff's boardroom: "Every Hebrew mother must know she has delivered her sons into the hands of worthy commanders."

Re-occupying Gaza is Israel's only viable option

Gaza has never been a good neighbour – not during the time of the Philistines, and not under the Palestinians.

After the 1948 war, Egypt used the territory as a base for terror attacks, and after the Israeli take-over in the 1967 war, waves of violence continued. Israel pulled out in August 2005. The withdrawal was followed by the Hamas takeover, and the attacks increased. Since then, Gaza has become the launching pad for hundreds of missiles and mortars directed at Sderot, Ashkelon and other Israeli towns. And none of the generals, diplomats and pundits have come up with a successful response.

The military solution is to return to Gaza, reimposing tight Israeli control, including on the border with Egypt, but without the civilian settlements that complicated the situation after 1967. But after having occupied this narrow and highly overpopulated strip for almost 40 years, the Israel Defence Forces is in no hurry to go back in. No one wants to again be responsible for the lives of more than one million poverty-stricken and hostile Palestinians.

When former prime minister Ariel Sharon decided on the Israeli withdrawal a little more than two years ago, the hope was that Egypt would prevent the transfer of weapons, with a symbolic European presence at the Rafah border crossing.

Predictably, the Europeans ran away at the first sign of tension, and Cairo never made a

serious effort, either because the Egyptians didn't have the capability or they didn't want to help prevent attacks on Israel. And when Sharon left the scene, the Olmert government responded with hesitation, still hoping that Hamas could be restrained.

But as rocket attacks expanded, and as residents fled Sderot, the government tried a policy based on pressure and isolation of Gaza, in the hope that ordinary Palestinians would force their leaders to stop. Israel first threatened to stop the supply of fuel and other supplies, and then, when the threats had no impact, the policy was implemented for a few days.

Having been warned well in advance, Hamas leaders were well prepared and orchestrated an artificial "humanitarian crisis" that was quickly accepted as real by the media. In the United Nations, the Human Rights Council issued the expected condemnations of Israel, and organizations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch wheeled out the double standards again to declare Israel guilty of "collective punishment" and other imagined crimes.

With this wave of media and political support, Hamas blew up part of the concrete barrier along the border between Gaza and Egypt, and the Palestinian victims of the "humanitarian crisis" rushed across to buy televisions and other luxury goods. They were also able to bring in many more weapons for use in terror attacks,

and to smuggle terrorists into Egypt. As a result, instead of being forced to rein in the rocket attacks, Hamas gained a propaganda victory while also being able to expand its terrorist infrastructure in Egypt.

In response, some pundits and arm-chair strategists are calling for talks with Hamas, in the hope of discovering a magic diplomatic solution. But talking by itself is just that and nothing more – to be effective, talks must lead to useful action. And since Hamas, like Hezbollah, is fixated on the goal of destroying Israel as part of a wider jihad, the best that negotiations on a temporary truce can do is give Hamas leaders in Gaza time to build up their terror capabilities for a wider assault against Israel.

For the same reason, the talk of placing international forces in Gaza is empty. If such forces (Canadian? European? Asian?) were effective in preventing Hamas from attacking Israel, they would become targets, as has happened in a few cases in Lebanon. If such forces fail to act, they would be caught in the middle of Israeli anti-terror operations, and Israel would be blamed again.

Which leaves a full scale military operation – with all the costs involved, including casualties – as the least bad option for Israel. This will also lead to a different relationship with Egypt, more of the standard "war crimes" propaganda from so-called human rights groups, and other complications. But Israel cannot simply allow the attacks on Sderot to continue, and every other option has failed.



Yair Looftstein
in Tel Aviv



Gerald Steinberg
in Jerusalem

Israel's ties with Iran have been mercurial

For the past few years in particular, Israel and Iran have been on a dangerous collision course, in an ominous replay of Israel's bitter battles with the Arab world from 1948 onward. Yet until the Islamic revolution of Feb. 11, 1979, Israel had reasonably cordial, even close relations with Iran, a country whose rivalry with its Arab neighbours is rooted in a historic scramble for regional dominance.

Even at the height of Israel's honeymoon with Iran, however, Iran treaded carefully, preferring to keep its ties with Israel out of public view, in a calculated policy that gave new meaning to the word realpolitik. Israel's relationship with Iran was sensitive and complicated,



Sheldon Kirshner
in Toronto

a fact that shines through Trita Parsi's finely nuanced *Treacherous Alliance: The Secret Dealings of Israel, Iran, and the U.S.* (Yale University Press). In this fascinating but heavy-going book, Parsi – the president of the National Iranian American Council and an adjunct professor of international relations at Johns Hopkins University – focuses largely on Israel and Iran, placing their marriage of convenience within the wider context of American interests in the Middle East.

What quickly becomes apparent is that all three countries used each other to attain strategic advantage. Israel, surrounded by hostile Arab states, needed to build alliances with non-Arab nations, primarily Iran, Turkey and Ethiopia, on the periphery of the Mideast. As well, Israel sought to encourage aliyah from Iran's sizable Jewish community. Iran, ruled imperiously by Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi until his ouster in 1979, regarded Israel as a balancing force against the Soviet Union and radical Arab states. The United States viewed Iran and Israel as bulwarks blocking Soviet expansionism and Arab extremism.

Being a Muslim state, Iran was one of 13 states that cast a dissenting vote on partitioning Palestine under the 1947 United Nations plan. For the first two years of Israel's existence, Iran declined to recognize Israel either on a de facto or de jure basis. But once Iran was convinced that Israel was in the western camp, it extended de facto recognition.

In the wake of the 1956 Suez war, Iran cooperated with Israel in the building of an oil

pipeline from Eilat to Ashkelon so that Iranian oil exports would bypass Egypt's Suez Canal. By the same token, Tehran shied away from overt relations with Israel, realizing that it would fuel Arab opposition to Iran's policies in the Persian Gulf.

Given these calculations, Parsi observes, the Shah delegated Iran's secret police to handle relations with Israel through the Mossad, Israel's external intelligence service. Usually, the ministry of foreign affairs – which was critical of Iran's ties with Israel – was kept out of the loop. Iranian police, army and air force personnel were secretly trained in Israel, and Israel sold high-tech military equipment to Iran. In this clandestine spirit, he

adds, Iranian diplomats who manned Iran's unobtrusive mission in Tel Aviv in the 1970s were, for the official record, posted to Switzerland. Iranian officials who visited Israel travelled through Turkey and never had their passports stamped. Israeli visits to Iran, including then-prime minister David Ben-Gurion's first trip in 1961, were not publicized.

The Six Day War marked a major shift in the Shah's attitude toward Israel. He now considered Israel as an aggressive rather than as an embattled state, fearing that it might challenge Iran's quest for regional preeminence and its strategic significance in Washington. He also feared that a resurgent Israel would compromise his high wire act of maintaining strong relations with the Jewish state without angering his Arab neighbours.

The Shah, therefore, froze all joint projects with Israel, stepped up criticism of Israel's occupation of the territories and asked the United States to apply pressure on Israel to adopt a more flexible position toward the Arabs. In 1971, in accordance with this tough approach, Iran refused to invite Israel's president to attend celebrations marking 2,500 years of the Persian empire.

During the Yom Kippur War, Iran lent Arab armies medical and logistical assistance, but sold Israel heavy mortars and refrained from joining the Arab oil embargo.

Viewing Iraq as a common enemy and hoping to weaken it, Israel and Iran jointly supported Iraqi Kurds from the mid-1960s

onward. In 1975, the Shah betrayed the Kurds and pulled the rug from under Israel by signing an agreement with Iraq. Iran doubly incensed Israel by voting for a United Nations resolution equating Zionism with racism.

After Menachem Begin became Israeli prime minister, Iran threatened to curtail military co-operation with Israel. Despite Iran's bluster, the Shah signed a \$1 billion oil-for-arms contract, and agreed to develop a long-range missile, with Israel.

In the wake of the Islamic revolution, Iran severed diplomatic relations with, and ended all oil exports to, Israel. In a humiliating

way for Israeli arms sales to Iran during the initial phases of the Iran-Iraq War. From 1980 to 1983, Iran purchased more than \$500-million worth of Israeli weaponry and spare parts. In a reflection of Israeli attitudes, no less a person than former prime minister Yitzhak Rabin declared that Iran was Israel's "natural ally." Under American pressure, Israel grudgingly cut off the flow of weapons in 1984, but contacts between Israel and Iran continued throughout the 1980s.

According to Parsi, Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon enabled Iran to export its theocratic revolution to that nation. Iranian Revolutionary Guards, having established a beachhead in the Bekaa Valley, forged a mutually beneficial relationship with Hezbollah, one of Israel's deadliest foes, then and now.

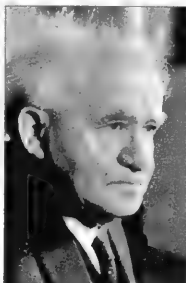
Parsi writes that Iraq's defeat in the first Gulf War, combined with the dissolution of the Soviet Union only months later, significantly changed the way Israel and Iran perceived each other: "The common threats that for decades had prompted the two states to co-operate and find common geostrategic interests – in spite of Iran's transformation into an Islamic anti-Zionist state – would no longer exist."

Shifting course, Israel adopted an anti-Iran policy after the mullahs restarted the Shah's nuclear program. Iran reached out, for the first time, to rejectionist Palestinian groups and took the lead in attacking the Madrid peace process.

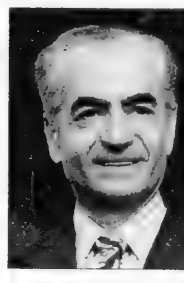
By the early 1990s, Iran was Israel's chief adversary. With the Karine-A arms shipment incident in 2002, the fall of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein in 2003 and the election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as Iranian president in 2005, Iran's status as Israel's most intractable enemy was reinforced.

Parsi, who describes the Iranian regime as radical but rational, believes that the United States can contain Iran through dialogue and engagement. In exchange, Iran would accept a two-state solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and reduce its regional ambitions.

This, clearly, is easier said than done.



David Ben-Gurion



Shah Mohammed
Reza Pahlavi

insult, Israel's mission in Tehran was handed to the PLO. Islamists considered Israel an illegitimate state and an enemy of Islam, while leftists perceived Israel as an outpost of U.S. imperialism.

Nevertheless, Israel continued to regard Iraq as the greatest threat to its security and tried to woo the new Khomeini regime.

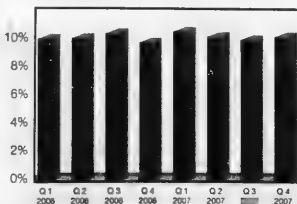
In 1979, Israel returned to Iran tanks that it had upgraded during the Shah's regime. Then, in 1980, much to Washington's annoyance, an Iranian official arrived in Israel to discuss arms sales. Iran reciprocated by permitting large number of Iranian Jews to leave. Iran's duplicity was dizzying. As Parsi puts it, "On the one hand, Iran collaborated secretly with Israel on security matters, and, on the other, [Iran] took its rhetorical excesses against Israel to even higher levels to cover up its Israeli dealings."

Israel's fears of an Iraqi victory paved the

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Jews, Hindus face similar problems, say speakers

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

It took until nearly the end of the program for someone to finally mention "the elephant in the room." But in a question-and-answer period, the two speakers, one a Jew, the other a Hindu, were asked to comment on the dangers both groups faced from radical Islam.

Until then, Ramesh Rao, a spokesman for the Hindu American Foundation (HAF) and Rabbi Roy Tanenbaum of Beth Tzedec Congregation, had largely — though not entirely — skirted the topic, focusing instead on community continuity strategies, discrimination (in particular on university campuses) and media distortions of their communities.

Rabbi Tanenbaum and Rao were the featured speakers at a business lunch lecture at the law offices of Minden Gross. The night before the two addressed another group at the York Woods Library Theatre. They were sponsored by the Speakers Action Group, an organization pledged to promoting tolerance and knowledge of issues that span communities.

Speaking on "Hinduphobia and Anti-Semitism: common issues," Rao said Israel

and India are criticized when they defend themselves from radical Islamic aggression. Hindus ought to support Israel when it defends itself and Jews should support India when it fights back, he said.

Rao, a professor of communication studies at Longwood University in Virginia, referred to India's long-standing "effort to make Muslims and Islam part of its composite culture."

Despite that, he continued, India had fought three wars with Muslim Pakistan, and Pakistan-trained terrorists have attacked India on repeated occasions.

"India is seeking to be a progressive, democratic nation that is struggling to deal with this without demonizing a very large group," he said.

Muslim extremism is a threat not only to India and Israel, but "around the world," he added.

Rabbi Tanenbaum agreed with that latter contention, saying "radical Islam poses threats to the world and to Israel and India in particular."

That goes some way to explaining Israel's and India's recent co-operation in launching an Israeli surveillance satellite atop an Indian rocket to gather intelligence

over Pakistan and China, he said.

Rabbi Tanenbaum said the Jewish and Hindu communities face challenges that can bring them together.

Rao began his presentation by noting similarities in the Jewish and Hindu traditions. Both are spiritual, faith communities that have faced "challenges throughout history."

The Hindu American Foundation was created five years ago and has had to face misconceptions about Hindus in academe, the press and among lawmakers. One U.S. congressman, introduced to a HAF group, asked if they were Sunni or Shia (Muslims), he said.

Hindus have been saddled with three stereotypes: cows, caste and curry. Those have even been found in school texts in California, he said.

In universities, academics treat Hindu traditions and religious beliefs in a way that "pathologizes and anthropologizes Hindus as aberrant faith followers."

Rabbi Tanenbaum began by pointing out that Jews had lived peacefully in India for

millennia and that 1948 was momentous for both as India and Israel achieved independence that year.

He reviewed aspects of modern Jewish history, and noted that Jews as a minority have historically been out of sync with mainstream society. To conform better to the mainstream, Jews have assimilated but as a result, have lost many of the distinctive features of earlier Jewish life. He referred to 18th-century Enlightenment philosopher Moses Mendelssohn's advice that a Jew should be a mensch in the street and a Jew at home, saying that approach helped Jews integrate but it cost them some of their identity.

Hindus had told him their community had experienced much the same thing, Rabbi Tanenbaum added.

During the question period, one member of the audience suggested Mendelssohn's advice was in concert with Jewish law, which required Jews to conform to local laws, and might be applicable to Muslims and other immigrants to better integrate them into host societies.



Rabbi Roy Tanenbaum

Omission

In "Mazon gala funds programs for the hungry" (CJN, Feb. 7), the following caterers should have been on the list of attending caterers for Mazon's Evening of Kosher Delicacies: King Solomon's Table and PR Creative Caterers.

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Tuesday March 11

Passionate Longevity — with Elaine Dembe D.C.

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Tuesday March 18

Identity Theft with Fran Saltzman

Former RCMP officer and one of the first female officers in the force, Fran Saltzman discusses how we can defend ourselves against credit card and Internet fraud.

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Tuesday March 25

Ethiopian Jewry, an Insider's View, with Judie Cron

A Canadian/Israeli journalist, author and translator, Judie Cron was born in Montreal and moved to Israel in 1967, following the Six Day War. Hear about Judie's involvement with the Ethiopian Jews of Israel and her warm and special relationship with them to this day.

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Shabbat Feb. 23

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2 Simonson Blvd.
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Following services 11:00AM
Rabbi Martin Berman
Contact: Marlene Rosen
905-889-4975

The Sephardic Kehila Centre:

7026 Bathurst
5:15 Mincha followed by Seder Shelishil
Rabbi Haim Anram Assayag
Contact: Shlomo Baldeb
905-869-7634 ext. 223

Village Shul 8:30PM Motzei Shabbat

1072 Eglinton Ave. West
Rabbi Ahuva Hoch
Contact: Mordechai Bookbinder
416-785-1107

Sunday Feb. 24

Anshei Minsk 11:00AM
19 St. Andrew St. (Kensington Market)
Rabbi Shmuel Spero
416-595-5723

BAYT (Beth Avraham Yoseph Congregation)

613 Clark Ave. West
Rabbi Baruch Taub
Alon Davidi to speak following Mincha 5:50PM
and to be continued following Mariv

Shaarei Tefillah Congregation 8:00PM

3600 Bathurst
Rabbi Moshe Stern
Contact: Michelle Margnotti
416-787-1631

Tuesday Feb. 26

York University 12:00-2:00
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416-904-5233

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The Canadian Food Inspection Agency
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The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

Rationale: "Kosher style" is considered to create the impression that the food is kosher, and therefore the food must meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

"Jewish style" food may not necessarily create this impression."

The CJN makes no representation as to the kashruth of food products in advertisements.

By RABBI AVROHOM JACKS

Three contractors were touring the White House on the same day.

One was from New York, another from Missouri and the third from Florida. At the end of the tour, a guard asked them what they did for a living. When they each replied that they were contractors, the guard said, "Hey, we need one of the rear fences redone. Why don't you guys take a look at it and give me your bids?"

First, the Florida contractor took out his tape measure and pencils, did some measuring and said, "I figure the job will run about \$900 - \$400 for materials, \$400 for my crew, and \$100 profit for me."

Next was the Missouri contractor. He also took out his tape measure and pencil, did some quick calculations and said, "I can do this job for \$700 - \$300 for materials, \$300 for my crew, and \$100 profit for me."

Finally, the guard asks the New York contractor for his bid. Without batting an eye, the contractor says, "I'd charge \$2,700."

The guard, incredulous, looks at him and says, "You didn't even measure like the other guys! How did you come up with such a high figure?"

"Easy," said the contractor from New York. "One thousand dollars for

me, \$1,000 for you, and we hire the guy from Missouri to do the work."

Jokes aside, there is something to be said about an honest day's work. There is a wonderful feeling we experience when we've accomplished something

by our own hand. This sense of satisfaction can't be duplicated if we're merely handed success on a golden platter.

This idea is represented in a fascinating way in the Torah's narrative of how the two sets of tablets containing the 10 Commandments were produced.

The first set of tablets was fashioned by God Himself. Moses wasn't required to actively participate in their formation. These tablets were destroyed when Moses discovered the Jewish People worshipping the Golden Calf.

God instructed Moses to replace the first tablets that he had shattered.

Moses did not receive this second set of tablets as a completed work. In contrast to the first set of tablets, Moses was required to climb Mount Sinai and hew the second set himself. With his own hands, he had to carve, chisel and shape the hard rock from the top of the mountain.

When Moses was done and he came

down the mountain with the second set of tablets in his hand, the Torah tells us that rays of light emanated from his face. His face shone with the radiance that comes only to those who achieve a lofty goal after great trial and toil.

There was a time when conditions were favourable to Jewish observance - when it was normal and natural to be a believing and pious Jew.

Those times can be compared to the first set of tablets. Without much work, we were handed a great religion.

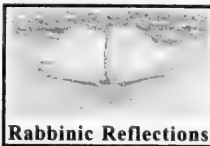
Things have changed since then. Today, the world, its media and its ethics don't favour Jewish piety and observance. In times like these, it takes great effort to stand up for what's right and true.

But the difficulty of incorporating Jewish values into our daily lives shouldn't discourage us from trying to be more observant. Rather, we should realize that it's specifically through overcoming challenges that we find the shining rays of true happiness.

Acting according to God's will may not be the easiest or most popular life choice, but it's through the hard work of developing our character that we will bring forth the great light that lies within each of us.

Rabbi Jacks is spiritual leader of Congregation Zichron Kedoshim in Montreal.

The value of hard work



Rabbinic Reflections

Bad acts must have consequences

By ELLIOTT MALAMET

In light of the war on terror, which for most people is nothing more than whiling away additional time at the airport, perennial questions emerge that education should take an interest in and desire to confront. What kind of price is a society willing to pay to stop people from committing acts of violence? How does one repay murder?

A thought experiment by the German philosopher Immanuel Kant puts the issue into sharp relief.

Kant asks what would happen if we took a convicted murderer and placed him on a presumably unpleasant island that had long since been abandoned, with no chance of escape?

Would we still feel the need to kill him? Kant understood that such a proposition would test out our motives in contemplating execution. If the purpose is to prevent any future harmful acts, then it would seem that execution would be redundant, as the goal of deterrence would already have been achieved. To execute at this point would imply that

we feel a need to redress the past - to punish regardless of any future threat or lack of it.

Kant himself argues that even if everyone was long gone from the island, "the last murderer lying in the prison ought to be executed... This ought to be done that everyone may realize the desert of his deeds."

At the other end of the spectrum is George Orwell, who in his 1931 essay *A Hanging* leaves behind all thoughts of deterrence or punishment and focuses only on the humanity of all, regardless of anyone's moral credentials: "I had never realized what it means to destroy a healthy, conscious man. When I saw the prisoner step aside... I saw the mystery, the unspeakable wrongness, of cutting a life short when it is in full tide."

Both Kant and Orwell stand on principle, though radically different ones: either the imperative to punish, or the hideousness of prematurely ending any life with deliberation.

Punishment is popularly associated with Judaism, as opposed to Christianity, but even Christianity posits some kind of hell.

Indeed, the very suggestion that

compassionate forgiveness is not the only possible solution for Hitler's eternal soul has been a thorn in the side of some of the 20th century's most renowned thinkers.

For Bertrand Russell, this fact was what convinced him that he was not a Christian, nor did he want to be.

"There is one very serious defect to my mind in Christ's moral character, and that is that He believed in hell. I do not believe myself that any person who is really profoundly humane can believe in everlasting punishment," Russell wrote.

And C.S. Lewis - who was, unlike Russell, a deeply committed Christian - writes with reticence and regret about hell in *The Problem of Pain*: "There is no doctrine that I would more willingly remove from Christianity than this, if it lay in my power. But it has the full support of Scripture... and it has the full support of reason."

Clearly, neither man would have been laudatory about the Jewish perspective, for Judaism views consequences for bad actions not as the antithesis of compassion, but as its very essence.

Or, as the Talmud reminds us, "those that are kind to the cruel will end up being cruel to the kind."

Jewish Life

Unlikely Utopia: The Surprising Triumph of Canadian Pluralism by Michael Adams, Viking Canada.

This informative slender volume brings good news about Canadian multiculturalism. It is current, optimistic, sensible and forward-looking. Its author is a well-known Canadian pollster and social analyst.

It is often overlooked that Canada has the highest immigration rate on the planet. However, it was only in the 1960s that Canada abandoned its racist immigration policies and began admitting newcomers according to their skills and qualifications, rather than their nations of origin.

About 100 years ago, J. S. Woodsworth, the first leader of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, argued that it wasn't a good idea to import Chinese labourers to work on the Canadian Pacific Railway. They were unworthy and would not make good citizens. Actually, work on the railway was not only back-breaking, but also deadly. The Chinese labourers who were hired were engaged in perilous work, and nearly one in 10 was killed on the job.

Despite numerous obstacles, some Chinese workers still wished to remain in Canada. But the federal government at the time imposed a cruel head tax, for which Canada has only recently apologized.

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

Beaufort is the seventh Israeli film to be honoured at the Academy Awards for best foreign language film. [tinyurl.com/2kvjnc] Today, a look back as Israel goes to the Oscars.

Sallah Shabbati (Israel's Oscar nominee in 1964): Chaim Topol played Sallah in Ephraim Kishon's satire of Israeli society. Sallah, a North African Jew and his family of eight arrive in the new State of Israel in 1949 and find themselves settled in a

Maabara, a settlement camp full of one-room huts. While watching him confront the bureaucracy for permanent housing, the movie manages to skewer life in the young country. Here's how Jewlicious.com describes Sallah: "[He's] lazy, he's a drunk, he's a gambler who brings his *sheshbesh* [backgammon] board to the synagogue... he on principle refuses to talk to women, and he's perfectly willing to sell off his eldest daughter to the highest bidder. And yet, he may be the most lovable character in Israeli cinematic history." [tinyurl.com/23bhaq] *The New York Times* also had praise for the movie. [tinyurl.com/3d4pr3]

Hashoter Azulai (The Policeman) (1972): Kishon was also behind Israel's next nomination, as writer and director of *Hashoter Azulai*. Shaike Ofir plays Avraham Azulai, the not-too-bright officer of the Jaffa police department. As one reviewer points out, "Azulai's incompetence is not a result of lack of skill, but rather that of a soft heart and kindness." [tinyurl.com/2mmldr] You can watch the opening seven minutes of the movie, and listen to the charming theme

Good news about multiculturalism

The infamous declaration, "None is too many," was made by a senior Canadian official as a response to the subject of Canada accepting Jews who were leaving Europe in the wake of the Holocaust.



Books
Bernard Baskin

Immigration wasn't the only arena in which bigotry was displayed in Canada. In 1933, at the notorious Christie Pits Riot, Toronto residents, displaying swastika banners, tried to ban Jews from the city's beaches. Japanese Canadians were interned during World War II.

Much has been achieved over time. Once it seemed likely that Canada could never aspire to genuine equality for newcomers, let alone achieve it. How things have changed.

It is noteworthy that 80 per cent of recent immigrants after four years in the country say that if they had to do it again they would make the same decision and come to Canada.

What about Muslims as immigrants? Today, they are about 2.5 per cent of the total population, numbering about 850,000. Islam is, surprisingly, the fastest growing religion in the country. The median age of Canadian Muslims is about a decade younger than the median age of the population at large.

Among foreign-born Muslims, about half

have come to Canada in the last 10 years. Thirty per cent have been in Canada from 11 to 19 years, and 17 per cent have been in this country for two decades or longer. About 60 per cent of them live in Ontario, and 20 per cent reside in Quebec.

Despite widespread unfavourable comment and some irresponsible alarm, it is clear, says the author, according to his research, that Muslims tend to share important traits with other newcomers to Canada: optimism, enthusiasm for their adopted country, a desire to improve their lives and the wish to be treated fairly.

In Adams' discussion of the Quebec "Quiet Revolution," readers are reminded that Quebecers not only rejected traditional religious ritual and conviction but also many conventions associated with the Catholic Church, such as marriage and a wife's taking her husband's surname. Quebec has come to have the highest proportion of common-law unions in Canada.

Immigrants to Quebec face a unique experience in this province's distinct society. But like all of us, they live in accord with our country's Charter, its laws, its health care, its passport and its people.

Finally, Adams salutes Canada for its success in showing a restless world how newcomers of diverse backgrounds can live together in relative unity, mutual tolerance and understanding.

Israel goes to the Oscars

song, on YouTube (no subtitles). [tinyurl.com/2ytltp]

Ani Ohev Otach Rosa (I love you, Rosa) (1973): Set in Jerusalem of the 1880s, director Moshe Mizrahi's *Ani Ohev Otach*

Rosa tells the story of a young Sephardi widow who, according to the Halachah of the levirate marriage (yibum), is required to marry her late husband's brother, Nissim. But there's no immediate wedding —

Nissim is only 11. Years later, Nissim returns with marriage in mind. [tinyurl.com/39v5r] "Mr. Mizrahi's polished handling of his cast and subject makes them come alive in a simple, subdued and knowledgeable portrait," said the *New York Times*. [tinyurl.com/2ab9nk]

HaBayit Berechov Chelouche (The House on Chelouche Street) (1974): Director Moshe Mizrahi was back the following year with the story of a family of Egyptian Jews who settle in Tel Aviv in British-mandate Palestine of 1947. Gila Almagor plays the widowed mother of four, including Sami, whom we follow from shy teenager to member of the Haganah during the War of Independence. [tinyurl.com/3a2b3e] All Movie Guide [tinyurl.com/2bp68n]

Mivtsa Yonatan (Operation Thunderbolt) (1978): Within a couple of years of the daring rescue at Entebbe, several dramatized versions appeared, including *Mivtsa Yonatan* featuring Almagor with Yehoram Gaon as Yonatan Netanyahu. [tinyurl.com/mpwd5] Despite the Oscar

nomination, critics weren't kind, calling the screenplay cliché-ridden and lacking nuance. [tinyurl.com/mpwd5] You can get a taste of the movie from several lengthy excerpts on YouTube. [tinyurl.com/yw2fql]

Me Ahorei Hasoragim (Beyond the Walls) (1985): The site Rotten Tomatoes gives this summary of the film: "The jailers of an overcrowded prison conspire to keep Israeli and Arab inmates at odds. When the prisoners come to the realization that their racist attitudes are self-destructive, they unite in a daring escape plan." [tinyurl.com/29kdhe] Although it may sound like a highly charged political drama, the *New York Times* likened it to "melodrama behind bars." [tinyurl.com/2ba4pn] YouTube has the Hebrew-language trailer. [tinyurl.com/yog8ga]

Beaufort (2008): Israel had to wait almost a quarter century for its next foreign language nomination. *Beaufort* tells the story of an Israel Defence Forces unit stationed at a Crusader castle toward the end of Israel's 18-year occupation of southern Lebanon. [tinyurl.com/3d5ojb] *Beaufort* is now available in English. [tinyurl.com/2hysef] The movie has its own bilingual site with trailers and reviews. [www.bufo.co.il]

The *Jerusalem Post* called *Beaufort* "Israel's first great war movie." On Sunday, we'll find out if the members of the academy agree and make it the country's first Oscar winner.

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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Under Canada

Organization for special needs adults gets new home

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Almost two years after its inception, DANI, an organization that serves young adults with special needs, has rented a 3,000-square-foot house as its home base.

DANI's Place, at 12 McAllister Rd. in the Sheppard Avenue and Bathurst Street area, hosts an opening celebration on Sunday, Feb. 24, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Known by its acronym, DANI, "Developing and Nurturing Independence" was co-founded by two mothers of young adults

with special needs, Kathy Laszlo and Susie Sokol.

For children like Laszlo and Sokol's, who are no longer in school, it is important to continue learning and practising life skills and religious studies, Laszlo said.

Among the planned activities at the new house, which DANI is leasing from Magen David Sephardic Congregation, is a cooking and baking program that will involve seniors who live nearby.

DANI has received a New Horizons for Seniors grant from the federal government for the program. "Whatever we do is very

community oriented," Laszlo said.

A related goal, further down the road, is the establishment of a kosher café.

More imminently, the organization is planning to bring in work for some of the clients, either light assembly or piecework, as well as vocational training.

"We want to change the environment so they can do as much as possible independently," Laszlo said. "I really believe everybody can have a place."

Last year, in addition to regular Jewish holiday programs, DANI ran its second annual one-week summer camp. But even in a recreational program, organizers built in life skills education for participants, who had to buy their own TTC tickets for outings and had a bank tour to complement their training in how to use money.

New this year is a basketball program being run out of Yeshivat Or Chaim by Daniel Moshe Johnson, a former professional basketball player who was contacted by DANI after he was featured in a *CJN* article last year. He is the director of sports mentoring for the International Charity Association Network (ICAN). Or Chaim students

help in the DANI basketball program as volunteers.

"Everybody's having so much fun, and [the participants] are so accepted for who they are," Laszlo said. "You would not necessarily know which ones have special needs."

DANI has a mailing list of 65 families and is assessing needs to determine future programming directions.

Its activities have been funded in part with the proceeds from last year's fundraising dinner attended by 750 people, which raised more than \$60,000.

This year's gala fundraiser will be held March 27 at the Toronto Centre for the Arts. The event, Broadway North, will be hosted by Diane Dupuy of Famous People Players. It will honour Batya Feigenbaum, a physically handicapped teacher at Tiferes Bais Yaakov High School who serves on DANI's board, and Esther Wachsmann of Shalva, the Association for Mentally and Physically Challenged Children, based in Jerusalem.

For further information about DANI or its upcoming events, call 905-731-6606 or e-mail dani.toronto@yahoo.com.

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HELPING FAMILIES: Gail Baker, head of school at the Toronto Heschel School, presents a ceremonial cheque for more than \$7,800 to Sherri Mandell, the mother of Koby Mandell, who was killed by Palestinians in the West Bank in 2001. Heschel parents, students and staff recently took part in a fundraiser in memory of former Heschel student Evan Erlick. The money raised was matched by the Erlick family and the total went to Koby Mandell Foundation in Israel, which provides emotional, physical, and spiritual healing for families in grief.

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YAMAHA

Greater Toronto Area

Gala evening will benefit Chezi's Corner

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Regesh Family & Child Services' gala, Sparkle, Sizzle and Song, a musical tribute to Rabbi Yitzchak Witty, is being held March 1 at Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue.

Proceeds from the social service agency's annual fundraiser — which is one of the organization's main sources of revenue, and which this year includes an auction and "savory delights" — will benefit the young people of Chezi's Corner, a residential safe house for up to four Jewish boys. It's named in memory of Yechezkel Scotty Goldberg, a Toronto native and therapist for at-risk Israeli youth who was killed in a bus bombing in Israel in January 2004.

The strictly kosher house, for youths between the ages of 15 and 24, gives residents the opportunity to live in a safe, caring, learning environment when living at home is not an option for them.

Edwin Schild, Regesh's executive director, said the boys live in the house because of mental health or family problems, or because they need to acquire independent living skills.

The original mandate was for them to stay for six months, he said, but some have stayed as little as three months, while others have lived there for up to two years.

House parents Shlomo and Sharon Surkis, shlichim who teach at the Anne & Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto (CHAT) and who have four children of their own, said the boys — there are now three living in the house — are treated like adults, and must be in school, at a job, or doing volunteer work.

"We all get up in the morning and leave for the day. No one stays home and sleeps," Sharon Surkis said.

The boys can visit friends after school, she said, but they must be home for dinner three nights a week and must have Shabbat dinner with the family.

"The boys come from all backgrounds, and some know little about Judaism. They must

respect our Shabbat, but after dinner, they can go out or go to their rooms and do what they want. Our only strong rule is that the house is kept strictly kosher."

She said that some of the boys have lived without rules for many years. "We want them to live in a loving, caring family where everyone respects each other."

One 15-year-old boy who has lived in the house for one year, said he used to take drugs, get to school late and skip curfew. "[The Surkis] have helped me a lot. I care about myself now. I take the bus to school on time, and have worked hard enough in school to get out of the alternative education classes and into the regular stream. I feel proud of myself. I feel like I have a family here."

Sharon Surkis said she and her husband spend a lot of time doing informal counselling. "If someone does something wrong, we try to teach them better behaviour. We don't punish."

Schild said that Regesh relies on money from the fundraiser to run the house — the agency provides everything for the boys from clothing to transportation — because it receives no government funding.

He said that Regesh did receive \$150,000 in funding from the federal Department of Justice's youth justice fund to implement a community-based program called Reconnection Youth.

As a pilot, Regesh will work with its local community partners, including the Toronto District School Board, to implement a peer group approach to work with at-risk youth.

Schild said that currently the agency is working with 12 youths on such issues as anger management, conflict resolution, self-esteem enhancement and decision making.

"As kids begin to feel better about themselves, they get in less trouble. We have found a reduction in drug usage, and an increase in their grades," said Schild.

For information about Chezi's Corner, to apply to be house parents — the Surkis are returning to Israel in June — or for tickets to the March 1 fundraiser, call 416-495-8832.



NETIVOT'S 18TH ANNUAL JUMP ROPE FOR HEART: Grade 4 students at Netivot HaTorah participated in raising money for the Heart and Stroke Foundation, in a program that included grades 1-6. [Rebecca Ansel photo]

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CJC praises call for more inclusive prayer

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Canadian Jewish Congress praised Premier Dalton McGuinty's call last week for an all-party review of the daily practice of reciting the Lord's Prayer in the provincial legislature.



Premier Dalton McGuinty

"The CJC has had a longstanding position that the exclusive use of the Lord's Prayer reflects back to a time when Ontario society was much more homoge-

nous," said Len Rudner, Congress' Ontario regional director. "We always felt that other options were available.

"I think it's very positive that the premier is embracing the rich multicultural diversity of Ontario. We hope that the legislative committee... will consult with the Jewish community for our input," Rudner added. "We're proud to be a part of Ontario."

McGuinty announced his plan to review the prayer in a surprise letter to provincial opposition leaders.

"I believe it is time for Ontario's Legislature to better reflect Ontario's reality and celebrate our diversity," McGuinty wrote. "The members of the Ontario Legislature reflect the diversity of Ontario – be it Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Muslim, Sikh or agnostic. It is time for our practices to do the same. That is the Ontario way."

McGuinty said he will seek input from the

province's various ethnic communities on alternatives or additions to the Christian prayer, which has been used to open legislative sessions at Queen's Park for generations and was last updated in 1969.

The premier said that most other provincial legislatures, as well as the federal Senate and House of Commons, have modernized their procedures to reflect changing times.

In response to McGuinty's letter, provincial Conservative leader John Tory – who ran his unsuccessful 2007 election campaign on

a platform of incorporating faith-based schools into the public school system – said the Tories would take part in the all-party committee, but not if the plan is to scrap the prayer.

"Part of respecting the tradition of the Legislature is keeping the Lord's Prayer. That doesn't mean we wouldn't be open to other prayers being added, but a starting assumption that we would eliminate the Lord's Prayer would not be acceptable to us," Tory wrote back to McGuinty.

Message heard on Parliament Hill

Continued from page 3

Rabbi Poupko continued: "The only reason for [the caucus] to better reflect Ontario's reality and celebrate our diversity... is to make clear that Jews are skeptical of [the Palestinians'] ability to make peace and... that the continued provocation [against Israel] in the Palestinian media doesn't augur well for the future."

The Rabbinic Caucus' message seemed to be heard on Parliament Hill.

James Lunney, the Conservative MP for Nanaimo, B.C., welcomed the rabbis as guests in the House of Commons last Tuesday. It was the caucus' second such visit since it was formed in 2006.

"Noting that terrorism is rampant in the world, the rabbis will repeat their call to the

leaders of all faith groups to denounce the killing of innocents in the name of God or of religion," Lunney told the House. "[They carry] the message once more to all Canadians that overseas conflicts and the resultant passionately held views should not be allowed to degenerate into uncivil discourse and antagonisms here at home."

Anita Neville, Liberal MP for Winnipeg South Centre, also acknowledged the rabbis' visit to Ottawa and called on the Conservatives to "take the lead" in the international community by using Canada's Special Economic Measures Act to impose sanctions on Iran for its ongoing nuclear enrichment program.

The act, as described on the Departments

of Foreign Affairs' website, allows the government to "impose sanctions measures in relation to a foreign state" if it believes that "a grave breach of international peace and security has occurred that has resulted, or is likely to result in, a serious international crisis."

The act also gives Ottawa powers to seize the Canadian property of the offending state or the Canadian property of that state's citizens, as well as to stop the trade of goods and prevent travel to and from that country.

"Iran poses [a threat] to Israel, to Middle East stability and to world security," Neville said. "The Liberal Party believes that the international community has an obligation to exhaust all appropriate means of solving the Iranian nuclear crisis."

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Greater Toronto Area

Free trip to Israel being offered to academics

By **SHELDON KIRSHNER**

Staff Reporter

Media Watch, a U.S. based organization that challenges abusive portrayals of Israel in the media, is offering North American academics a free informational trip to Israel.

Full-time teachers at universities and colleges are eligible to take part in the Faculty Fellowship Summer Institute.

The guided trip takes place from June 16 to 27. Air, room and board are provided.

Candidates must file applications by March 1.

Participants will be able to explore all facets of Israeli society, and will be hosted by Israeli academics.

They will visit Jerusalem in order to appreciate its importance to Israel and the Jewish people.

They will visit Yad Vashem, the Holocaust museum in the foothills of Jerusalem.

They will tour two of Tel Aviv's historic neighbourhoods, Florentine and Neve Tzedek.

Participants will also meet Russian immigrants, Israeli Arabs and religious Jews, and tour historic sites in the Galilee.

To better understand Israel's economy, they will be given a tour of the Tefen Industrial Park, which is renowned for its high quality high-tech products.

They will also meet with leaders of renewable energy companies.

The politics of the Middle East will figure heavily in the program.

Participants will be taken to settlements that have been bombed by Palestinian Qassam rockets for the past seven

years.

They will meet some of Israel's leading Arab affairs writers and visit an air force base, the security barrier and northern Israel.

They will learn about Israeli culture by talking to filmmakers, visiting the Suzanne Dalal Center in Tel Aviv and spending an evening listening to Israeli music with Middle Eastern roots.

To gain an insight into Israel's advancements in science and its commitment to democracy, they will meet scientists, engineers, technologists, government officials, parliamentarians, political activists and commentators representing different points of view.

Academics who wish to apply for the trip should click on www.FF2Israel.org.



LOCKS OF LOVE: Veronica Mercedes Grad, a Grade 3 student at Associated Hebrew Schools, grew her hair for about two years in order to donate 12 inches of it to Angel Hair for Kids, which makes wigs for financially disadvantaged kids who have lost their hair due to illness or other medical reasons.

Program helps girls become modern Jewish women

By **CAROLYN BLACKMAN**

Staff Reporter

Tom Girls, a new program for Jewish girls who are coming of age, addresses "the day after the bat mitzvah," not the event itself, says Rachael Turkienicz, director of the Learning Centre.

The mother-daughter program – "Tom" stands for "Torah of our Mothers" – is set to begin Feb. 24 for eight weeks.

Rather than focus on the actual bat mitzvah day, it will look at what it means to be a Jewish woman, Turkienicz said.

The Sunday-morning program covers a range of Jewish texts, guest speakers and trips downtown that bring out ques-

tions of being a Jewish woman in today's world, she said.

"The program includes top-notch guest speakers such as chefs, designers and musicians, as well as field trips which include a partnered program with the Toronto Humane Society," Turkienicz said. "A formal ceremony with family and guests takes place on the last day at Baycrest, in which residents take part."

Areas to be covered by the program include body image and holiness, Jewish ethics and values, and self-knowledge, interpersonal skills, Jewish activism and tikkun olam.

For information, call the Learning Centre at 416-630-6488, or e-mail learningcentre@rogers.com

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Greater Toronto Area

Group marks 20 years of promoting 'kosher speech'

By DAVE GORDON
Special to The CJN

Gossip and character assassination are not recent phenomena — human tongues have always been loose and hard to control.

As the Talmud says, "Most people are slightly guilty of dishonesty, few of vice, but all of lashon hara."

In Toronto, the Shmiras Haloshon Organization tries to make more people aware of the laws of "kosher speech" — and the damage that "unkosher speech" can cause.

The group celebrated its 20th anniversary this year with a special lecture in memory of its founder earlier this month and with the release of a new book of her writings.

Lashon hara, say the Jewish sages, is defined as any language that could be hurtful to someone, causing either embarrassment, fear, offence, discomfort, abuse or insult. Even if a statement is true, or purposeless, it still falls into the category of forbidden speech.

Motzi shem ra (literally "spreading a bad name") is speech about someone that is true, but is filtered so that it's interpreted differently than it should be, according to Devorah Shmulevitz, whose late mother, Rebbeztin Phyllis Weinberg, created the Shmiras Haloshon organization.

Inappropriate speech has the potential to cause physical, financial and emotional pain, Shmulevitz said. The intricacies of the laws of lashon hara are many and nuanced, and they need to be studied in detail, as they're not always intuitive, she added.

"It's hard to understand for some people in a society that adores free

speech. Yet, the Torah says that lashon hara cannot be said even if someone were to say, 'I'd say it to their face anyway.' Imagine the destructive power when people decide to smear someone's character," Shmulevitz said. "Hurtful speech can ruin relationships."

It also has the potential to ruin reputations, as Shmulevitz's mother found out.

Just prior to founding Shmiras Haloshon, Weinberg ran unsuccessfully for school trustee in Ward 6 of the old City of North York.

In the weeks leading up to the vote, Shmulevitz said, there was "much gossiping" from those who opposed her, and she learned about its negative power.

"She then set out to bring the positive out of the negative. People coming together to do good has tremendous power."

Weinberg, who died in 2001 at age 73, held a PhD in psychology, ran counselling services and helped families work through difficult issues. She received a Canada 125 medal from the governor general for her community service.

She called gossip one of the deadliest weapons in modern society.

She once wrote that she dealt with many young adults who were "traumatized by deceitful, hurting, deliberately destructive and embarrassing words."

She also spoke and wrote often of the healing aspects of positive speech.

In commemoration of Weinberg's seventh *yaahrzeit*, Toronto's Bais Yaakov High School hosted a lecture on Feb. 11 by Rabbi Yechiel Spero, best-selling author of the "Touched By a Story"

series.

Additionally, *Reaching Beyond Yourself*, a compilation of Weinberg's writings on lashon hara, will be published posthumously.

The organization has registered many accomplishments since its founding, such as "NLH" (short for "No Lashon Hara") clubs in schools, as well as home study programs for adults.

More than 150 volunteers contribute their time and resources to the organization, Shmulevitz said, and branches have also opened in Hamilton, Ottawa and Edmonton.

Eight years ago, the organization created the "Place Card Project," which offers wedding table place cards containing an inspirational poem that reminds guests to refrain from speaking ill of another person.

By popular demand, the program has spread to many parts of the United States and overseas.

Still others take part in learning groups guided by the writings of Rabbi Yisroel Meir Kagan (1838-1933), author of the definitive compendium on the topic of lashon hara. He eventually became known as the Chofetz Chaim, the name of his book.

He said the consequences of transgressing the laws of lashon hara are equivalent to the consequences for idolatry, murder and adultery combined.

The sages say that the Jewish people have been exiled for 2,000 years because of the sin of lashon hara.

"Imagine the power when people choose to speak about others," Shmulevitz said. "And then imagine the power when people work together to focus on more positive speech."



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On Campus

Volunteering in an Israeli African refugee centre

By TILLY SHAMES

Special to The CJN

"It is not incumbent upon you to finish the task. Yet, you are not free to desist from it." – Rabbi Tarfon, *Ethics of the Fathers*.

These were the parting words of encouragement from Michelle Lackie, Tzedek Hillel director, as 130 Hillel students from around the world (South America, North America, Russia and Moldova) dispersed throughout Israel to embark upon a very "alternative" experience.

Hillel's Alternative Break in Israel, funded by the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, furthers Tzedek Hillel's goals to pursue justice and transform communities.

Little did we know just how often Rabbi Tarfon's words would comfort us as our group of 21 Hillel students began to transform ourselves as we volunteered with African refugees and children of migrant workers in southern Tel Aviv.

Nothing could have prepared us for walking into one of the shelters facilitated by the African Refugee Development Center, where we would spend the three days meeting and working alongside dozens of African refugees trying to get their bearings in Israel.

We expected poor conditions, but could not have imagined the scene we found. More than 150 men slept on mattresses on the floor in a room where stench seeped from two toilets. There was one sink for all these men, and plastic bags filled with their meagre belongings hung from the ceiling.

We expected to meet refugees from Darfur because their

entry into Israel had made international headlines, but we didn't think that the majority of refugees would have fled from conflicts in the Ivory Coast and Eritrea.

We expected to communicate in broken Hebrew, yet our limited French served us better. Some had arrived just days before, while others still struggled to find out about their working status after several months. Many were happy to be in Israel, some praising their new home that welcomed them after a long journey of oppression and rejection, yet all were uncertain about their future.

We immediately began to paint the dreary shelter, once known as the Bulldog Nightclub. It was illuminated by only one light bulb and a beam of light coming through the doorway.

Working alongside our new African friends, we heard stories about their journeys to Israel, discussed our favourite soccer teams and life back home.

Within minutes, no one noticed the dark or the smell. We painted with the refugees who had just arrived, but also with those who had established themselves in Israel. They worked in kitchens overnight and joined us to volunteer during the day.

For the African volunteers, it wasn't about painting the site for themselves; it was about making the shelter a better place for more refugees who would sadly follow. Within three days, the entire shelter would be covered in bright yellow paint, bringing a little light into these difficult times for the refugees.

What made our work truly meaningful was the opportunity to reflect on our experience together as a group. Today, students can volunteer anywhere with anyone, but as a Hillel trip, it was crucial that we provided a Jewish

foundation to our work by focusing on the values of tzedek and the role Israel plays in our lives.

Several students openly shared their feelings of guilt and privilege as North Americans, as well as their sense of obligation and commitment to social justice as Jews. However, the Argentine participants reminded us of their struggles and the importance of supporting your community at home, a message that the students from New Orleans understood only too well. We soon realized that we had as much to learn from one another in our own microcosm of Jewish peoplehood as we did from the African refugees.

Throughout the trip, our students questioned everything around them, but most of all, they questioned how much of an impact they could have.

After all, we were not professional painters and the needs of the refugees far exceed what a coat of paint can provide. But we quickly saw the difference that our group could make. We offered an ear to hear the stories the refugees wanted to tell.

We offered a bit of humanity in conditions that were sub-human. Ultimately, we knew that we could only offer our portion, and that there was more work to be done, but at least we would be a part of the change, both in Israel and on our campuses back home.

Tilly Shames is the associate director of Hillel of Greater Toronto.

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Sderot: a city under siege

By DANIEL HOROWITZ
UJA FEDERATION



A distraught mother in Sderot mourns the death of a son caused by a Qassam rocket.

For more than seven years, the 190,000 men, women and children of Sderot and the Western Negev have been living under the constant threat of Qassam rocket attacks. Since 2001, the western Negev region has endured over 6,000 terrorist rocket attacks launched by Hamas from Gaza, half of which detonated in Sderot.

Imagine trying to live your life normally when, at any moment, that life could be shattered with just two words: "Code Red," words which Sderot residents know means they have 15 seconds to find cover before the next rocket hits.

For most of us, we only hear about these attacks once tragedy occurs, but for residents of this region, these attacks are part of their daily lives.

Many Sderot residents, so deeply

affected by post-traumatic distress syndrome, and treated for hysteria and shock, are forced to take sedatives to get through the day and sleeping pills to endure the nights.

The psychological damage and the damage to homes, businesses and families from the constant threat are ruining lives. Many families - struggling to get by on reduced salaries - find themselves divided over whether to stay or leave Sderot. Often families have been forced to take out several loans and dip into the family savings to keep afloat.

Sderot's economy began freefalling with the first rocket attack. Between 20 to 30 percent of businesses in Sderot and surrounding areas have been forced to shut down.

Ironically, the Qassam attacks intensified after Israel withdrew from Gaza in the summer of 2005.

The history of the Qassam

The Qassam rockets are named after the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, the armed branch of Hamas.

Preferred by Hamas for its portability which allows terrorists to fire the rocket while on the run, the Qassam is filled with a number of explosives, produced by Hamas.

Although they are sometimes referred to as missiles, Qassams, that have been targeting Israeli civilians for seven years, are actually free-flight, artillery rockets lacking any guidance system. It is that indiscriminate feature of the Qassam that makes them considered as much a psychological threat as a physical threat, creating considerable psychological damage to many children in Sderot. Sderot residents receive only 15 seconds warning before a Qassam strikes the city.

Voices from Sderot

The following are actual blogs posted by citizens of Sderot, all of whom live every day with the threat of terror hanging over their heads.

"CODE RED, CODE RED, I turned round and looked at my watch to see what time it was. It's 5:30 in the morning, they're early today,' I thought, and a second later I found myself in the corridor. That's the safest place in our house. BOOM! 'That was pretty close,' I said to myself, 'oh well, I guess I can go back to sleep for another hour'. And without further ado, I went back to bed, almost oblivious to the crazy situation here in Sderot."

Posted by L, a student in Sderot.

"Last May-June, the situation in Sderot was very difficult. Every day, dozens of Kassam's fell all over the city, people suffered deep emotional

scars, there was considerable damage to property and many of the residents left. As program coordinator, I was faced with serious dilemmas. What do we do now? Is it safe to go to work? What about the students, for whom I'm responsible, can I force them to stay in Sderot to help? And how can we possibly organize activities for those who stayed? The beautiful side of Israel is still there, thriving. I would like to invite anyone who tries to paint a negative picture of the youth of today should to come to Sderot and see the sincere work that is being done there - out of pure Zionist values.

Posted by Ido Zholti, a community worker in Sderot.

Rally For Sderot

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Tel Aviv is Israel's culinary capital

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Special to The CJN

WINNIPEG — Tel Aviv has become a "culinary superpower," a city where a unique culinary culture has blossomed, says master chef of the city's Dan Panorama Hotel, Miki Nir.

Nir and chef Roman Elazarov were here on Jan. 29 to prepare a special \$150-a-plate, five-course kosher Tu b'Shvat meal for a Jewish National Fund (JNF) dinner held at the Fairmont Hotel.

The event was attended by about 75 people, including Ovide Mercredi, chief of Grand Rapids First Nation and former national chief of the Assembly of first Nations. Mercredi was seated next to Mel Lazarek, the new president of JNF Winnipeg.

In an interview following the event, Nir said that between the falafel stands and gourmet restaurants, as well as the large spectrum of French, North African, Italian, Persian, Chinese and east European eateries, Tel Aviv has become a top gastronomic destination.

Nir, who has been working at the Dan Panorama for 17 years, noted that the menus at the hotel have changed over time. "We used to serve a lot of Jewish food, with eastern European flavours. But now there is less of that and more Middle Eastern dishes, with distinctly Israeli touches," he said. "We are taking the recipes that our mothers made at home and are adapting them to new gourmet standards."

According to Nir, Tel Aviv's food industry has had to adapt to the increased number of international tourists this year. "Tourism has been exploding in the last year in Tel Aviv and elsewhere in the country. The Dan Panorama is completely full all the time, and the situation is the same for all the other hotels along the beach strip. You can no longer just book a room for a night — a seven-day minimum is



Chefs Miki Nir and Roman Elazarov

required," he said.

"We anticipate that it will be the same throughout the spring and summer. We've noticed a real increase in the numbers of business travellers. When it comes to food, the business traveller wants a high level of professionalism and service."

Nir said he likes to go to Tel Aviv's upscale gourmet restaurants to sample the offerings of other well-known chefs. "There has been a real development in the genre of gourmet food in Tel Aviv in the last few years," he noted.

Top restaurants use fresh, locally grown vegetables, and chefs create superb seasonal dishes with the highest quality

ingredients.

"The chefs are using French techniques with local Israeli, Middle Eastern or Arab touches," Nir said. "Prices at these gourmet restaurants range from expensive to very expensive to very, very expensive."

Nir said popular Tel Aviv restaurants include the one at Dan Panorama as well as Cordelia under chef Nir Zook; Rafael's under chef Rafi Cohen; Moul Hayam; Roshfeld, a new cuisine bistro; and Katit, which serves dishes featuring "a combination of tastes."

Gourmet restaurants in Tel Aviv are known for their innovative and exacting chefs and also for their professional service, Nir said.

Elazarov, who was trained by Nir and also works at the Dan Panorama, said that "in Tel Aviv, the food is best in the summer, when there is so much fresh fruit and vegetables available."

Elazarov, who has a young family, prefers the "steakiyyot" restaurants of Tel Aviv, which focus on grilled meats, hummus and fresh vegetable salads.

"I like Middle Eastern restaurants which are authentic and affordable for a family. There are some restaurants such as Yitzhak HaGadol, where people stand in line to wait for the food, and it's expensive, but they are willing to pay," he said.

Elazarov is looking forward to the upcoming spring and summer.

"Everyone in the food industry is excited about the prospects for the upcoming months. Already this year has been one of the most successful years ever for tourism," he said.

"We are preparing for a big wave of tourists who will come to celebrate Israel's 60th birthday in the spring and expect there to be lots of tourists this summer."

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Coast to Coast

Use of Yiddish declining in Canada

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — For the first time in Canadian history, Hebrew has eclipsed Yiddish as a mother tongue for Jews in Canada, as elderly speakers of the European language die off and as the flow of Israeli immigrants continues.

According to a new analysis by the Montreal-based Association for Canadian Studies (ACS) of data from the 2006 census, there were 18,550 people in Canada whose first language was Hebrew, compared to 17,255 for Yiddish.

In 2001, the census numbers were 12,435 for Hebrew as a mother tongue and 19,295 for Yiddish.

That represents a 49 per cent increase in people with Hebrew as their mother tongue — including 40 per cent increases each in Montreal and Toronto — between 2001 and 2006, and a 10 per cent drop in people whose first language is Yiddish.

Going back even further, there has been a 20 per cent decline in native Yiddish speakers between 1996 and 2006, said Jack Jedwab, executive director of the ACS.

The obvious reason for Hebrew overtaking Yiddish is the accelerated attrition rate among elderly Yiddish-speaking Jews, Jedwab said, combined with rising immigration from Israel.

"Clearly, as these trends continue, Yiddish will be more part of Jewish folklore" than a meaningful currency in Jewish life, a regrettable if inevitable part of the Jewish future, he said.

"Yiddish will not be an important part of Jewish identity except at some sort of folkloric level, except maybe in chassidic communities," Jedwab added. "The critical mass is declining."

He noted that "Yiddish was once the third-most common language in Montreal. Now, in terms of the Jewish community in Canada, we see its inevitable decline, and it's a deep, deep decline. It's happening very fast."

The ACS-crunched numbers reveal that while Montreal in 2006 had about twice as many native Yiddish speakers as Hebrew speakers — 8,545 versus 4,320 — it's the exception to the rule.

Toronto, by comparison, had 10,245 people with Hebrew as their mother tongue, versus 6,520 for Yiddish.

"Montreal might be the only city in the world like that," Jedwab said, "except maybe Brooklyn. I haven't checked."

The most dramatic, even "shocking," figure for Jedwab was an almost 10,000 drop in the total number of Yiddish speakers — which encompasses "mother tongue" and "second-language"

speakers — over the five years.

For all age cohorts, that figure plummeted from 37,010 to 27,605, or 25 per cent, while Hebrew speakers rose from 63,675 to 67,390. Yiddish speakers in Canada in the 65-and-over age group alone declined precipitously from 19,135 to 13,275 over the cited five-year period.

Jedwab praised educational institutions such as Montreal's Jewish People's and Peretz Schools (JPPS) and its affiliate, Bialik High School — one of two mainstream Jewish schools in Canada, along with Bialik Hebrew Day School in Toronto — for incorporating Yiddish into their core curricula.

He also rued the fact that once the current Yiddish-speaking generations die off, many Jews might never be exposed to the great works of Yiddish literature and culture.

No reason to change Quebec charter: CJC

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Appeasing fears over the practices of religious minorities is the wrong reason to change the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, Canadian Jewish Congress, Quebec region (CJC), told the parliamentary commission holding consultations on a proposed law to amend the charter.

CJC says there is no need for the new legislation, Bill 63, which aims to reinforce women's rights, because gender equality is already adequately protected under the Quebec and Canadian charters.

CJC officials Adam Atlas and Michelle Serrano warned the government against tinkering with the province's supreme law in reaction to "fears" expressed by some Quebecers about religious expression in the public sphere.

CJC contends that amending the Quebec charter to include a clause expressly stating that the rights it contains are guaranteed equally for women and men will do little to improve the situation of women. Moreover, it may even have "negative consequences" for the primacy of the charter, it says. CJC is of the opinion that modifying the charter, especially in the face of a "political tempest," will have the effect of eroding its value as "a pillar of the Quebec identity."



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NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF MEMBERS

NOTICE is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of Members will be held at 750 Spadina Avenue in Room 318, on the 24th day of March, 2008 at 8:00 o'clock in the evening to:

- Accept as Members of the Corporation those Members listed in good standing tabled and delivered by the Secretary of the Corporation;
- Elect its Directors;
- Approve the Financial Statements for the Corporation for the year ended August 31, 2007;
- Appoint auditors and authorize the Directors to fix their remuneration;
- Ratify and approve all the acts, proceedings, transactions, commitments, contracts entered into, and undertakings given by or on behalf of the Corporation by the Board of Directors from the date of the last Annual General Meeting to the date hereof;
- Transact such further and other business as may be properly brought before the meeting or any adjournments thereof.

Members of the Corporation may be nominated by written petition signed by not less than twenty-five (25) persons, who are members and eligible to vote at the Annual Meeting. The petitions must be accompanied by the written consent of the nominee and must be received by the Chairman of the Nominations Committee at least fifteen (15) days prior to the Annual Meeting, after which time no further nominations shall be accepted.

Proxy forms for those unable to attend the meeting may be obtained from the Business Office of the Corporation during business hours.

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Hospital must keep man on life support, judge rules

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Special to the CJN

WINNIPEG — The family of an 84-year-old Orthodox Jew who is on life support has won the first round of a legal battle against doctors who tried to pull the plug on him some 2½ months ago.

In a Feb. 13 decision, Justice Perry Schulman of the Court of Queen's Bench granted an interim injunction that prevents doctors at Winnipeg's Grace Hospital from removing Samuel Golubchuk's life support, a move that would have hastened his

death and thus violated his family's wishes and religious beliefs.

The injunction will remain in place until there is a full trial in the case. The family's lawyer, Neil Kravetsky, said that "Golubchuk's condition improved some weeks ago and since then, it is much the same. He is awake and is slowly being weaned off life support."

In November, the hospital took the position that Golubchuk had minimal brain function and that the decision to remove him from life support ought to be made solely by treating physicians, not the courts.

However, Schulman ruled that, on the contrary, in a situation

where doctors make a decision to remove a patient's life support without the family's consent, there is a role for the courts to play in adjudicating the factual and legal issues in dispute.

Schulman ruled that since doctors are not infallible and can on occasion make mistakes, a patient's family has the right to seek redress through the court system. He said this is particularly appropriate when the family has not had the opportunity to get independent, third-party mediation. Schulman concluded that in this case, "there was no evidence" to suggest that medication was available or offered to the Golubchuk family.

A trial will involve the testimony of two medical experts, Dr. Daniel Rosenblatt, a critical care physician from New Jersey, and Dr. Leon Zacharowicz, a neurologist from New York. The two disputed the position of physicians from the hospital who said Golubchuk has minimal brain function.

In the meantime, until a full trial takes place, Schulman ruled that the hospital must provide Golubchuk with antibiotics, blood transfusions and CPR in the event that such a need arises.

"He [Golubchuk] is entitled to have full medical care as required until trial," Schulman said.

Schulman also ruled that a copy of his court order be attached to Golubchuk's medical chart to ensure that every doctor, nurse and health care worker properly abide by it.

Responding to the ruling, Golubchuk's son, Percy Golubchuk, told reporters, "This decision isn't just for my dad, but for every elderly or handicapped person. It's not just a decision for a Jewish person, but for everyone."

He added: "Doctors don't always know everything. God is the top doctor. Doctors are just his assistants."

A teary-eyed Miriam Geller, Golubchuk's daughter, said, "Our dad would be very proud of us."

The Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA), the agency that oversees the hospital, said in a statement that it's reviewing the case.

"We do want to say that decisions to withhold or withdraw life-sustaining treatments are never easy and not made lightly by medical experts," the WRHA said.

Golubchuk fell in June 2003 and suffered a brain injury, but he could still understand speech and communicate. Since then, he was being cared for in a nursing home, but he went to Grace Hospital emergency ward last October suffering from pulmonary hypertension and pneumonia.

In his ruling, Schulman said that if Golubchuk's death were to be hastened before a full trial, "no relief at trial could adequately compensate him or his family for the loss."

He added: "If the injunction is continued, the plaintiff may, during his lifetime, be afforded an opportunity to be heard fully on his legal, religious and charter positions."

Schulman said he wants to see the matter come to trial as quickly as possible.

Kravetsky said it's very possible the case won't go to trial quickly, because the hospital may decide to appeal Schulman's ruling to grant the interim injunction.

The appeal would be heard by the Manitoba Court of Appeal, and then ultimately the Supreme Court of Canada.

"In fact, it is possible that this case could get to the Supreme Court of Canada, before a full trial is ever held. This is a precedent-setting case," he said.

Kravetsky added that the case would go on even if Golubchuk were to die before a trial was held, "because we have filed a civil lawsuit for damages" based on the hospital's behaviour.

In his decision, Schulman said a patient has the right to be free from medical treatment to which he or she doesn't consent. He said that the removal of Golubchuk's life support would involve "an interaction" with his body, and would necessitate giving him narcotics when being taken off his ventilator.

Schulman said that the removal of a patient's life support without his consent violates the patient's right to have control over his bodily integrity.

However, Schulman said that Golubchuk's right to control his bodily integrity can be reasonably limited in a free and democratic society. An issue before the court at trial will be whether it's reasonable in this case for the hospital to limit Golubchuk's right to control his bodily integrity by removing his life support.

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Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish News

Only paid Family Moments announcements can be guaranteed to appear in a specific issue, when received by deadline, 10 days prior to publication date. All other items will appear on a first come - first served basis as space allows.

Mazel tov announcements featured on onlismschas.com will appear once a month.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos and enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Please keep all announcements to 25 words, maximum. Send your photos to:

The CJN, Family Moments,
1500 Don Mills Rd., #205
North York, ON. M3B 3K4

or email to:
cblackman@cjnews.com



Mazel tov Cheryl Gertner on your 60th birthday! To many more years of love, laughter, and nachas. We love you Bubbie! Love, your family.



A hearty mazel tov to Dr. Irving & Elaine Petroff on your 50th wedding anniversary. From all your loving and thoughtful children and grandchildren.



Garry & Linda Wolk announce the engagement of son Brian to Mellissa, daughter of Rose & Matt Hart. Grandparents Ralph & Florrie Kay and Fay Wolk.



Congratulations to Ralph & Florrie Kay on their 66th wedding anniversary in January. Best wishes from your family and friends.



You sure don't look 70! Mazel tov and happy birthday, Marilyn Bisgould. To 120! From your very loving family.



Jennifer Weinberger & Jason Rootenberg are engaged. Wedding is planned for August 2008. Congratulations and love from both families.



Presenting Naomi Megan, born Dec. 7 in Cincinnati, Ohio, to Deborah & Rob Moses. Thrilled grandparents are Sarah & Dan Zietlow, Faigy & Arthur Moses.



Mazel tov Leslie & Ryan Kimel on the birth of Sloan, a sister for Logan. Happy grandparents Ron Kimel, Barbro Kimel, Lou & Arlene Chelin.



Ilene & Alex Bronsteter and Michelle & Lawrie Apple are thrilled to announce the engagement of their children Jennifer & Greg.



Sheri & Robert Taylor, Ilene & Louis Charland announce the engagement of Jessica & David. Delighted grandparents are Bettie & Sol Raibmon and Rodolphe Charland.

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**What's
New**

By REBECCA NADLER



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What's New deadlines: Monday, Feb. 25, is the deadline for the March 6 issue and Monday, March 3, is the deadline for the March 13 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Saturday, Feb. 23

PARSHAH DISCUSSION

David Schaeffer talks about the weekly portion, *Ki Tisa*, 9:30 a.m. at Beth Tikvah Synagogue. 416-221-3433

LEARN AND LUNCH

Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism's Shabbat Learn and Pot-luck Lunch features Prof. Paul Kushner, department of physics, U of T, on "Understanding Global Warming and Its Impact." Non-members \$15+lunch dish or \$20. 18 Wynford Dr. RSVP, 416-385-3910 or roby@oraynu.com.

Sunday, Feb. 24

YU KOLLEL YOM RISHON

Rabbi Yonah Reiss, incoming dean of Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary at Yeshiva and former editor of the *Yale University Law Journal*, lectures on the topic, "Should a Good Jewish Boy/Girl Be a Lawyer?" 9 a.m. at Bnai Torah Congregation. Info, www.kolleyomrison.com or 416-783-6960.

JEWS IN INDIA

Diana Mingail speaks about "The History, Customs and Traditions of the Jews in India" to the

Beth Tikvah Friendship Group. 2-4 p.m. \$2, non-members \$3. Info, Ettie, 416-631-9079 or Harry, 416-512-2897.

HEALING CIRCLE

Shaarei Shomayim Congregation sponsors a service of reflection, prayer, psalms and song for those challenged by illness and medical treatment. For info or transportation assistance, call 416-789-3213.

VE'AHAVTA COFFEE HOUSE

Ve'ahavta hosts The Coffee House: Voices from the Street. Includes readings by winners of a creative writing contest for the homeless. 4:30 p.m. at Congregation Habonim. Free. 416-964-7698

SACRED SPACES

Les Klein, the architect who designed Darchei Noam's new syn-

agogue speaks about the process of working in conjunction with a highly participatory congregation. 7 p.m. 864 Sheppard Ave. W. 416-638-4783, www.darcheinoam.on.ca

SINGLES GAME NIGHT

Join singles for an evening of board games and bingo. 7:30 p.m. at Beth Torah Synagogue. \$8. Call Mollie for info, 416-733-3634 or mollie_rothman@yahoo.ca.

WOMEN TO WOMEN

Aish Toronto presents a panel discussion exploring "Women to Women: Confronting the Controversial," including covering the hair, modest clothing and ritual baths with Hadassah Hoffer, Paula Rand, Meira Kirzner and Evelyn Keslassy. 8 p.m. at 949 Clark Ave. W. \$5. 905-764-1818

Monday, Feb. 25

BAYCREST FILM

Baycrest Wellness Library shows the film *Memory for Max*, Claire, Ida and Company by Allan King, about eight seniors living at Baycrest's long-term-care facility in varying stages of cognitive decline. 1:30- 3:30 p.m. 1st floor. Free. Register, 416-785-2500, ext. 3374, or e-mail lkamenitz@baycrest.org.

2 B MARRIED

The Jewish Family Institute presents a six-week course for engaged Jewish couples with relationship experts. Begins tonight, 8:30 p.m. at the Village Shul. \$300/couple. 416-785-1107, ext. 204

Continued on page 29

NCSY PURIM e-CARDS

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What's New

Continued from page 28

Tuesday, Feb. 26

TUESDAYS AT THE MOVIES

Beth Tikvah Synagogue movie series, with **Larry Ankiewicz**, presents *Keeping Up With the Steins*, a comedy about ostentatious bar mitzvahs in Hollywood and how family love overcomes all obstacles. 2 p.m. \$5. 416-221-3434

Wednesday, Feb. 27

BAYCREST FUNDRAISER

Baycrest Women's Auxiliary brings South Beach to their annual fundraiser tonight at 6° Degrees. The evening includes food, fashion and auction in support of Baycrest Centre. Tickets \$180. 416-7852500, ext. 2045, or www.baycrest.org/WA

SAR-EL INFO MEETING

Find out about the Sar-El program, civilian volunteers working on Israeli army supply/maintenance bases. 7:30 p.m. 788 Marlee Ave. 416-781-6089 or www.sarelcanada.org

GRATEFULNESS

Rabbi Henry Glazer lectures on the topic, "I Thank, Therefore I Am." Gratefulness is the central spiritual concept of religious life, he says. 7:30 p.m. at Beth Tzedec Congregation. 416-781-3511

GENEALOGICAL MEETING

Lawyer **David Malamed** talks about "Privacy, Confidentiality and Ethics in Genealogy" at the Jewish Genealogical Society meeting. 8 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. Non-members \$5. www.jgstoronto.ca

Other News

A CAPPELLA CHOIR

Adath Israel, Beth Emeth and Beth Radom synagogues present a weekend of Jewish music featuring Pizmon, an a cappella choir of Jewish students from Columbia, Barnard and the Jewish Theological Seminary, Feb. 22-23. Shabbat family dinner, Feb. 22, 6 p.m. at Beth Emeth. Shabbat Services, Feb. 23, 9 a.m. at Adath Israel. Community concert, Feb. 23, 8 p.m. at Beth Radom. Dinner, \$35, \$15 for children 13 and under. Concert \$18, students \$10, reserved section \$50. Dinner and concert, \$50 or \$72. Reserve at 416-633-8838, 416-635-5340 or 416-636-3451.

CHAIM'S LOVE SONG

Teatron Theatre presents the 2007 Grand Award winner for best play, *Chaim's Love Song*, a dramatic comedy by **Marvin Cherno** at

Leah Posluns Theatre, Feb. 27 to March 9. Tickets, \$16-\$41, 416-616-5350, group discount and promotions, 416-781-5527.

TOT SHABBAT

Temple Har Zion invites parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles to bring children ages 2-4 and siblings for a child-friendly Shabbat celebration. Friday, Feb. 29, 6 p.m. Adult service 8:30 p.m. 905-889-2252

BETTER RELATIONSHIPS

Enjoy a Shabbat with educator and comedian **Marc Weiner** as he challenges participants to understand themselves and connect more easily and more deeply with others at Kehillat Shaarei Torah, Feb. 29-March 1. Dinner \$36, \$15 children 12 and under. Reserve by Feb. 25. Saturday night join a wine and coffee bar and performance by Weiner. \$25. RSVP, 416-229-2600, ext. 3.

GREASE

CHAT parents and alumni present an amateur production of *Grease* raising funds for Parents Association efforts at CHAT campuses. March 4 and 5, 7:30 p.m. at the Leah Posluns Theatre. Tickets, 416-636-5984, ext. 504 or www.chatpresentsgrease.nicetopic.com.

SHABBAT ACROSS CANADA

Celebrate a Shabbat evening with Jews across the country with services and Shabbat dinner, Friday, March 7. Participating synagogues include Beth Emeth Synagogue (416-633-8838 or www.beb.org) and Am Shalom Synagogue, Barrie (705-792-3949 or www.amshalom.ca).

BIKUR CHOLIM LUNCH

Bikur Cholim of Toronto's annual spring luncheon honours **Dr. Bradley Strauss** with the Rofeh of the Year award and **Esther Basser** with the Ahavas Chesed award Tuesday, March 11, noon at the Sephardic Kehilla Centre. Reserve, 416-783-7983 or bikurcholim@rogers.com.

SPRING LECTURE SERIES

Join Temple Emanu-El Spring lecture series on Mondays 2-4 p.m. April 14, "Produced and Abandoned: The Best Films You've Never Seen," with **Kevin Courrier**, film critic; April 28, "How Can I Know If It's Good," with **Ken Carpenter**, art history professor, York University; May 5, "Music With a Message," with **Rick Phillips**, host of CBC Radio's *Sound Advice*; May 12, "The Future of Road Congestion: A Desire Named Streetcar," with **Richard Soberman**, professor emeritus of civil engineering, U of

T. Advance registration, \$30/series, \$10/lecture, 416-449-3880.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Circle of Care needs people to become volunteer visitors with seniors in North Toronto. They especially need people who speak Yiddish, Hebrew, Russian or Hungarian. Contact **Selena**, 416-635-2900, ext. 462, or slynch@circleofcare.com.

Bernard Betel Centre is looking for volunteers to visit seniors at home. For information, contact **Bev**, 416-225-2112, ext. 134.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. Information/registration, 416-638-7800, or www.jfandcs.com.

Call **Shawna**, ext. 215, for info and registration for the following:
• **High-Conflict Divorce:** A workshop for parents who want to develop strategies to deal with a high-conflict situation and lessen the impact of that conflict on their children. Requires active participation and is not for individuals in abusive situations. Tuesday, March 4, 6:30-9 p.m. at the Promenade Mall, #313.

Call ext. 246 for info and registration for the following:

• **Parenting Children with ADHD,** a six-week group, Wednesday, Feb. 27-April 9, 6:30-8 p.m. at the Lila Green Building.

FOR SENIORS

The Association of Jewish Seniors meets Thursday, Feb. 21, 1 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation for "Paperclips," a Jewish motorcyclists' ride to remember the Holocaust. Guests \$2. Info, 416-635-2860, ext. 458.

55+ Forward at the MNJCC presents a film presentation about the history of Spadina Avenue, the Jewish community and the garment industry. Includes tea and conversation. Thursday, Feb. 28, 1:30 p.m. Info, 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

Hazak Group Beit Rayim's 55+ goes to McMaster Museum of Art in Hamilton to view the Shetl Life photography exhibit by **Roman Vishniac**. Thursday, Feb. 21. No entrance or guide fees. Contact **Janice Cohen**, 905-237-0943.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park: Meeting for members only. Thursday, Feb. 28, 1 p.m. Info, Tuesday-Thursday 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 416-395-7881

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Sunset on the Volga: A slide presentation by **Corey Keeble**, curator at the Royal Ontario Museum, Tuesday, Feb. 26, 10 a.m. \$2, non-members \$4.

WAGMAN CENTRE

55 Amer Ave. 416-785-2500. Wellness Lecture "Laugh Your Blues Away" with **Roselyn Haupt**. Jokes are welcome. Wednesday, Feb. 27, 1:30-2:30 p.m. Register at the service desk, ext. 2267. \$5.

Chocolate Pampering Party, Tuesday, March 4, 1:30 p.m. Register at the service desk, ext. 2267. \$5, non-members \$7. Info, ext. 2273.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

PD Day Programs at the BJCC. Programs run from 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

for nursery to senior kindergarten and grades 1 to 3, and include arts and crafts, sports, creative play, swimming and more. Before and aftercare offered most days. Upcoming dates, Feb. 25 and 26. Info, call **Sarah**, ext. 390.

The Family Resource Centre drop-in fun for children five and under with parents/caregivers, includes music circle, crafts, kosher snacks and weekly Shabbat celebration. Register for Boogie Babies & Jammin' Tots with singer **Deborah Maes**, drumming fun and Artsy Crafts, crafts, games and stories for preschool-aged children. Promenade Mall #313. For info, call 905-882-8509 or visit www.thefamilyresourcecentre.ca.

The JCC Maccabi Games 2008 take place Aug. 17-22 in Detroit. The Toronto basketball tryouts for boys ages 13-16, Feb. 21 and 28, 6:30 p.m. Feb. 24, 8 p.m. Info, **Grant Smith**, ext. 257, or e-mail gsmith@bjcc.ca.

Chronic disease self-management workshop begins Wednesday, March 5. Register, ext. 259.

School and day-care registration open for the 2008-09. Info, ext. 248.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www.mnjcc.org.

Great Jewish Composers music lecture, "The Death of Tin Pan Alley - The Rise of Hollywood" with **Jordan Klapman**. Sunday, Feb. 24, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. \$9, includes bagels and coffee. Ext. 0

Jacobs Lounge Visual Arts Space presents "Neighbours Who Disappeared," a project of the Jewish Museum in Prague supported by the Forgotten Ones Civic Association. Feb. 28-March 28.

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SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 21

OBITUARIES and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Alexis Brommet	Feb 2/08	25 Kalmars Cres
Pearl Weinman	Feb 2/08	51 Cardiff Rd
Anne Housefather (Lazar)	Feb 4/08	6635 Mackie Rd
Edie Mark	Feb 5/08	4191 Sunflower Dr
Dora Solomon	Feb 6/08	3560 Bathurst St
Laura Shugar	Feb 5/08	2900 Bathurst Ave
Rudy Phillip	Feb 6/08	54 Hillsdale Ave E
Harry Keystone	Feb 5/08	45 Brunswick Ave
Helene Kaufman	Feb 6/08	3560 Bathurst St
Lillian Jacobson	Feb 6/08	526 Douglas Ave
Gudie Urowitz	Feb 6/08	966 Sheppard Ave W
Mamie Geist Silverman	Feb 7/08	135 Antibes Dr
Frank Goldstein	Feb 7/08	645 Castlefield Ave
Hannah Grossman	Feb 8/08	223 Beecroft Rd
Barry Zysman	Feb 8/08	64 Innisbrook Cres
Sylvia Starr	Feb 8/08	327 Richview Ave
Hanna Hertz	Feb 9/08	6 Baytree Cres
Beverly Minuk	Feb 8/08	8 Doncrest Dr
Philip Bloom	Feb 9/08	65 Springarden Ave
David Goldberg	Feb 10/08	19 Lower Village Gate

HEDEW BASIC

Sophie Sherman	Feb 8/08	28 Northwood Ave
Michael Solomon	Feb 7/08	60 Frazerwood Ave
Shelva Nachman	Feb 6/08	8 Park Rd

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Judy
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will be successful at it. I don't think Mrs. Fields set out to have a multimillion-dollar company. She just loved making cookies and that's where it all began.

As a life coach, my greatest joy is to help other people find their bliss and watch people transform and be at their best, knowing they are living their dreams and goals, and ultimately fulfilling their purpose on this planet.

Our lives are often more blessed than we realize. Many of us sometimes feel as if we're on a treadmill, racing from one appointment to another. Our days are hectic and full of overflowing schedules – cooking, carpools, careers and demands on our time and energy, not to mention the joy and "busyness" of our families and the importance of nurturing our marriages. But there are often so many "to dos" on our list that the question of fulfilment and bliss gets lost in the shuffle.

And the question becomes, "Who has time for bliss, what is bliss anyway, and why is this so important?"

Bliss is a state of complete happiness, spiritual joy, deep fulfillment, and a sense of peace, enlightenment and even ecstasy. It is what we feel when we have learned the secrets of daily joy and fulfillment, and it is often the place we arrive at when we have found our purpose.

Each of us is born with a unique life purpose. We are all here for a reason, and we are all here to serve each other in some way. A life of purpose is not only a true expression of who we really are, it is our gift to the world.

When you are living your life "on purpose," you find greater satisfaction and joy. As author and motivational speaker Napoleon Hill says, "There is one quality that one must possess to win, and that is definiteness of purpose, the knowledge of what one wants and a burning desire to possess it."

I have a funny story to tell that illustrates this point. I tried for almost a year and a half to get my column, Life Coach Corner into *The Canadian Jewish News*. I was so passionate about writing about the secrets to a happier life, the power of kindness, how to get unstuck, how to tame your inner critic, how to find your passion and your purpose, that I was bursting to impart this information. I pitched the column to the editor of this paper. And from Jewish holiday to Jewish holiday, we would talk. He would say, "Let's talk again after Rosh Hashanah," or "It's looking good, let's talk after Pesach." And a year of holidays went by.

But my focus was so clear and my belief in what I wanted to do was so strong that I kept trying. Once I sent more than 75 story ideas and a sample column and finally he agreed to meet with me. After our meeting, which was a good one, it still wasn't finalized, but one day, I called him and said, "I have so many ideas and I think this is so important. We need good news and positive thinking in light of what's going on in the world. Please let me write one column and we'll take it from there."

He finally gave me the chance I had been waiting for. Truthfully, I think he finally said yes just so I would stop calling. But the point is, when you're passionate about doing something and you back it up with hard work, tenacity and joyfulness, you can't help but make things happen.

Thank you for helping me find my bliss.

Judy Siblin-Librach is an Adler-trained coach. Website: www.findingyourbliss.com, e-mail: judyelle@iccan.net

ענין חברים

גיד קורן וחברים



מה יהיה

ההחשמה הבולטת ביותר שיצאה מועדון הנוער היא שהצבא, במקום לפעול למחיר את הסדר של חיובאלה, העלה בראש השיקולים את מחיר חי אנוש, את הקרבת שיעורים לחינם לצדל, ועל כך העדיף להפעיל את חלל האויר ולא להכנס בתקופות וחדו משמעותית לגב הסדר. לא כך צריך לפעול צבא, אומרים כלם. ואי, די על חלב, בחרחר שני שלוש, דווקא מחא חן בענין שמקדמים חושבים את מחיר האבדות, בעיקר בקרב נגד טרור שלא יסתמים בלא חכי.

ונגד, הטענה הנקבת ביותר נגד אחד ארמאמטי וחתה החורלה שלו לכאורה לסכן חי אדם בימים האחרונים של המלחמה; כשהיה ברור שהוא עומד להסתים. טענה זאת הופרכה על ידי ועדת הנוער, שכלדעת חבירה היה זה לניסיון למצוא ולשפר עמודים.

מעניין לבדוק את הדעות והגישות האלה לאור הסדר שמקצת מועד על שדרות הנעב הסערי. אם ועדת הנוער צודקת על צדל להכנס עכשיו בתקופות לצהל ולעשות בה סדר למרות המחד האנושי הגבוה שייגרם לאזרחים חפים מפשע למעשה ההבלגה העכשוית היא חורח מדייקת על ההזנחה בזמן מלחמת לבנון. אז איך משיגים את התנאים האלה לא משיגים. ישראל היא ארץ של הפוך על הפוך, ואין אחד לא ממש עקבי, אומרים מה שמצמצל טוב, תחור אומרים והפוך אם זה מצמצל טוב. אבל שישאר בינוי.

יוי לה פראנס!

שני סרטים צרפתיים מושלמים דמו לי לפצח בשארת אחדה לצרפת.

(The Diving Bell and the-)

Butterfly) חא סיפור אמיתי על עקנטא אופנה פריזא שלקה בגיל ארבעים בשטן דם במוח ששיקת אותו לחלוטין, והדבר היחיד שהוא יכול לחיו הוא עפעץ חתין. עוד חא טאב על חתין, חא מכנית בעפעץ עינו ספר פואטי מודח על יכולתו הפנימית של האדם. חשע בסולם קורן.

Persepolis חוא סרט מצויי בשחור לבן למבוגרים שמספר את סיפורת העצב של נערה איראנית שמתגברת בסורן של סורס המתכבה האיסלאמית, ודך המתכבה של חומית, ועד לתקופתו הנחלת הסרט חוה ייכר לדעתי כיצרה שתגדרה מחדש את הסרט המצויי, ומעבדה דרכו חורק רגשות שהוא טקסט מדובר לא יוכל להצניע לשם. עשר בסולם קורן.

שדרות בתל אביב

אנשי שדרות הפגוע בתל אביב וסורו לימן קצר את מציב אילון. חם מרגשים עובדים. חם ידיעים שאם פצצות קאסם חיו נפולת על חל אביב, חוה צדל חוך קדוה מפרק כל בית בעזת סיפור עצוב משמעות חדשה למחנה אפליה עדותיו. אם ילדו רשת השדרון חו צריכים להתחבא מתחת לשולחנות בית הספר חמש דקות-לא חיתה אבן אחת נשארת על מנה בעזת. אבל שישאר בינוי.

And now for something completely different:

HEEBONICS

From intern to associate producer: moving up at CBC

By KYLE GORDON
Special to The CJN

Growing up in a household of CBC Radio enthusiasts, it comes as no surprise that Natalie Ruskin landed her first job out of Ryerson's School of Journalism alongside Canada's finest journalists and producers at the CBC.

"The idea of walking into the CBC building was unreal. I was so in awe, and I still am. It was a big deal for me to be here," said the 28-year-old.

In 1998, Natalie left her home in Toronto and moved to Montreal to attend McGill University, where she majored in cultural studies and minored in Jewish studies.

"I was really immersed in literary criticism and academic writing," she said.

But her academic interests quickly changed after spending her third year of university abroad at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

"My orientation shifted, and I became really captivated by the news, the nuances of the relationship between Israelis and Muslims, Sephardics and Ashkenazis and all the segregation within that society and how they relate to one another," she said.

Ruskin returned to McGill to complete her fourth year with a newfound desire to comment and report on the world around her.

"I just thought, why am I writing about 18th-century novels and 19th-century mythology?"

Driven by this emerging interest, Ruskin put her skills to the test, enrolling in a small creative writing class. There she wrote *Talmud and Tehina*, a story about a girl who befriends an Arab spice seller during her daily visits to a Jerusalem market.

Ruskin's talent was recognized as she received the Chester Macnaghten Prize for the best creative writing by an undergraduate and the Lionel Shapiro Award for creative writing.

Upon completing her undergraduate degree, Ruskin returned home to live with her parents, Ronald and Marilyn, while studying journalism at Ryerson.

"I went to Ryerson thinking I was going to do print, and I became really interested in TV and images. There is a whole other level of creativity when you have video involved," she said.

From there Ruskin interned and later worked part-time at CBC Radio One's *Metro Morning* show, hosted by Andy Barrie.

"It was always daunting when I would meet a radio host I had listened to forever. They were like celebrities to me."

But it was her enterprising skills that left an impression on Barrie.

"If you don't ask, you don't get, and she got. She took the initiative to get out there."

She has great ideas and is very enthusiastic," Barrie said.

Benefiting from professional relationships and a little serendipity, Ruskin was presented with an exciting career opportunity. The executive producer of the national current affairs show, *The Hour*, with George Stroumboulopoulos, was looking for an editorial assistant. Ruskin joined the show in April 2005, straight out of school, and grew with it for three seasons.

"It was the best thing for my career," she said.

With *The Hour* under her belt, Ruskin was in search of a new challenge that would allow her to gain more practical experience. Again, CBC offered her an irresistible opportunity. She was hired as the associate producer for *Fortune Hunters*, a television program that premiered on Jan. 12.

"When you are working on a small show like this, you have the opportunity to do everything. I get to go into the field with a camera person and grab footage, screen and edit the tape and find guests to profile," she said.

Fortune Hunters, which airs Saturdays at 6:30 p.m., explores the latest money-making trends and introduces viewers to those who are cashing in on them. Hosted by Dianne Buckner, who also hosts the CBC television shows *Dragons' Den* and *Venture*, *Fortune Hunters* introduces viewers to a trend for the week, which business experts analyze and assess for its visibility.

The final segment, "My First Million," profiles celebrities of the business world, focusing on their secrets to success. The episode's guests include Herschel Segal of Le Chateau, a clothing company.

"It's so important to have the right team when you're starting up a brand-new show," Buckner said.

"We knew ahead of time that we were going to have a very small production team, and that we would be counting on every single member of the team to come through in a big way. And Natalie has really done that. She is naturally creative, and because of her experience at *The Hour*, she was able to step right in and contribute so much."

Ruskin is particularly proud that she encouraged Wallace McCain, a co-founder of McCain Foods Ltd., to guest star on the "Easy Eating" episode.



Lindsey Neely, Natalie Ruskin, Dianne Buckner and James Dunne make up the *Fortune Hunters* team.

Fortune Hunters associate producer Natalie Ruskin (Gina Catenazzo photo)

"He is very media shy, but I convinced him to do it, and he was fantastic. He was a delight," she said.

In addition to appreciating her professional skills, the team at *Fortune Hunters* enjoys Ruskin's sense of humour, which, she said, she gets from her mother.

"My mother's sense of humour had a big influence on me being outgoing and drawn towards this drama aspect of television," she said, also crediting her father's ingenuity for helping her and her two sisters, Joelle and Danielle, to develop their creative sides.

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Despite differences over Iran, Germany and Israel plan closer ties

BY TOBY AXELROD
JTA

BERLIN — Germany and Israel may agree that Iran's development of nuclear weapons would be dangerous, but meetings last week in Berlin highlighted the significant differences between the leaders of the two countries on how to stop the Islamic Republic from getting there.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel supports sanctions and diplomacy, while Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert says all options — including the use of force — are open.

"It is very important to use diplomatic means," Olmert said, but Israel would consider using other options if diplomacy fails.

Iran is likely to be a central issue at an unprecedented bilateral cabinet meeting between ministers of the two countries scheduled for March 17 in Jerusalem.

Despite the differences over Iran, the joint cabinet meeting underscores the strong links between Germany and Israel. Merkel said she wants to make the meeting an annual tradition.

Among the German officials who will accompany Merkel on next month's trip to Israel is Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, a vociferous opponent of the use of force against Iran.

Aside from Iran, Middle East peacemaking and German-Israeli ties, all of which Olmert and Merkel discussed last week in Berlin, the March meeting will address youth

exchange programs and scientific co-operation.

Gerd Weisskirchen, the foreign policy speaker of the Social Democratic Party parliamentary faction and one of several legislators who met with Olmert during his three-day visit to Berlin, said the March meeting will be more than just a superficial display marking Israel's 60th birthday.

The joint meeting is "the beginning of a real new development, making the German-Israeli relationship much deeper than before," he said.

Deidre Berger, the managing director of the American Jewish Committee's Berlin office, said the decision to hold a joint cabinet meeting is "extremely positive."

"It helps make more public the unique relationship that Israel and Germany have," Berger told JTA. It "shows the importance to which Germany, one of the leading countries in the European Union, accords this relationship."

"It will help strengthen Israel's position with other EU countries. And I think it can help close the gap between the good relations at an official level and the

sometimes strained perceptions in the general public about that relationship."

Weisskirchen said Germans, even if they don't endorse force, must understand Israel's position on its use against Iran, whose president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, has threatened to destroy the Jewish state.

"This is the state that would be wiped out

by Ahmadinejad," he said.

A 2007 survey by the Bertelsmann Foundation found that 80 per cent of Israelis believe there are situations in which the use of force is necessary, while 58 per cent of Germans disagreed. The survey found that 62 per cent of Germans polled believe Iran poses an existential threat to Israel.

Stephan Vopel, a senior expert on German-Israeli relations for the Bertelsmann Foundation, said the Israel-Germany relationship no longer is informed only by a sense of guilt and responsibility about the Holocaust.



German Chancellor
Angela Merkel

The past "shapes our political outlook in both countries," said Vopel, who coordinates the foundation's German-Israeli young leadership exchanges and annual German-Jewish dialogue, but "one has to be free of the past in a certain way."

"On the Israeli side, you have to look at the positive aspects of the past" and not only at victimhood, Vopel said. "On the German side, you have to see that pacifism is not the major lesson of the past. You can see through history that sometimes you do have to use military force to combat a bigger evil."

**Unprecedented
bilateral
cabinet meeting
scheduled
for March 17
in Jerusalem**



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and Israel were inspirational to his family
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NOTICE

Re:
2008 Annual Meeting

The 2008 Annual Meeting of
The Jewish National Fund of Canada
will be held at the **Can'an Spa Hotel**,
in **Safed, Israel** on
May 9th, 2008 at 2:00 P.M.

Authors & Poets

The *CJN* is pleased to announce its

Annual Passover Literary Supplement

We invite our readers to submit unpublished, original works of fiction or poetry that explore Jewish themes. They should not exceed 2,000 words.

We must receive your submissions no later than Friday, March 14. E-mail submissions are preferred, but works can also be sent by mail or brought to our office.

E-mail: info@cjnews.com. Mail: 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4.

Submissions will *not* be returned. The *CJN* will not enter into any correspondence with participants.

CJN Purim Art Contest

It's time again for our annual **Purim Art Contest**.

Who can enter: Children in grades 1 to 6 inclusive are eligible. The children of *CJN* employees are not eligible.

Prizes: The judges will choose one drawing from two different students in each grade. These "winning" drawings will be published in *The CJN's* 2008 Purim Poster. In addition, each of the 12 children whose drawings have been selected will receive a cheque for \$25.

How to enter: You may submit as many drawings as you want. However, they should not be too small nor too large. Please paint or draw bright, bold, colourful pictures. You may use markers, crayons, paint or pencils. Please send us your name, address, phone number, age and grade along with your drawings.

You may mail or deliver your drawings to: *CJN* Community Contests, The Canadian Jewish News, 1500 Don Mills Road, Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4. If you want us to return the pictures to you, please provide a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Otherwise, we will be unable to do so.

The contest closes at 3 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 29, 2008. We will undoubtedly receive many wonderful submissions from children all across the country. But only 12 of the drawings will be chosen as the "winners." The judges will base their decisions on a number of factors such as: the use of colour, the imaginative quality of the drawing and the way it tells an aspect of the story of Purim. The judges' decisions will be final. The chances of winning depend upon the number and quality of submissions received.

How the winner will be announced: The children whose pictures are chosen will be notified by telephone before the start of Shabbat on Friday, March 7, 2008.

When the prizes will be awarded: The "winning" pictures will be published in *The CJN* of March 20, 2008. Have fun and good luck.

Any litigation respecting the conduct and awarding of a prize in this contest may be submitted to the Régie des Loteries et courses du Québec.

Israel & the Jewish World

Israel can handle Hezbollah threat, Livni says

© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

WASHINGTON — As Israel went on high alert and warned its citizens of kidnap threats abroad, Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni said last Thursday that Israel is capable of handling the threat posed by Hezbollah following the assassination of its deputy leader on Feb. 12.

"Israel has been under threat since the day it was established, and we know how to handle these threats and will do so now as well," Livni said during a brief visit to Washington.

"Israel's response to terrorism is clear. Israel is a strong country, the Jewish people are a strong people, and statements by one terrorist or another won't change that or send us into panic," she said.

"Hezbollah is a terrorist organization, it has committed terrorism in the past, and it is trying to carry out terrorist attacks all the time," Livni concluded.

Israel's Counter-Terrorism Bureau issued a travel advisory to all Israeli citizens travelling abroad over grave concerns that Hezbollah will attempt to launch terror attacks or abductions, as Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah vowed to retaliate against Israeli targets for the Feb. 12 assassination of Imad Mughniyah. No one has claimed responsibility for the killing, but Hezbollah and its allies Iran and Syria were quick to blame Israel.

Mughniyah was killed when a car exploded in an upscale Damascus neighbourhood in an incident that was not only a blow to Hezbollah, but also to Syria's much-vaunted internal security services.

Israel also ordered its military and embassies to go on alert last week, and advised Jewish institutions worldwide to follow suit. The United States has also raised its level of alert regarding Jewish institutions.

The slain Hezbollah deputy secretary general was wanted by Israel and the United States for terrorism against Americans, Israelis and Jews, among others, throughout the 1980s and 1990s.

Israel Defence Forces Chief of Staff Gabi Ashkenazi instructed forces to take the necessary precautions by air, land and sea in order to protect the northern border and other Israeli interests, the army said.

The military sent more troops to the already heavily patrolled northern border with Lebanon, defence officials said, without elaborating. Soldiers were ordered to be on guard for attacks on both the border with Lebanon and in the Palestinian territories.

"Hezbollah is accusing Israel again and again in the death of Mughniyah. Therefore, the danger of Hezbollah carrying out terror attacks against Israeli targets abroad is escalating," said a state-

ment from the Prime Minister's Office.

The Counter-Terrorism Bureau also issued travel warnings against travelling in places abroad where there are high concentrations of Israelis, especially at tourist attractions.

The bureau advised Israelis travelling abroad to be especially alert and pay attention to any abnormal occurrences. It also advised Israelis to avoid travelling to any Arab or Muslim nation for which a travel advisory has already been issued. Finally, the bureau stressed that Israelis should resist any seemingly tempting op-



**Hezbollah leader
Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah**
(File photo)

portunity originating from an unknown source abroad, and refuse any unexpected gifts.

Also last week, the FBI put its domestic terror squads on the alert for any threats against synagogues and other potential Jewish targets in the United States in the wake of Mughniyah's killing.

Unlike many Middle Eastern leaders whose speeches are riddled with idle threats, Nasrallah is known for delivering on his promises. In 2006, he promised to take action to free Lebanese prisoners in Israel, and in July that year, Hezbollah guerrillas staged a cross-border raid in which it snatched two IDF soldiers and left three others dead.

The incident triggered a 34-day war between Israel and Hezbollah, devastating south Lebanon. It ended with the Israeli soldiers still captive, and no deal for a prisoner swap has yet been reached.

In related developments, Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki met in Damascus last Friday with the leaders of two radical Palestinian groups, members of the Iranian delegation said.

Mottaki held separate meetings at the

Iranian Embassy with Damascus-based Hamas political leader Khaled Meshal and Islamic Jihad chief Ramadan Abdullah Shallah, the Iranian officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to talk to the media.

Later in the day, Mottaki held a one-hour meeting with Syrian Vice-President Farouk al-Sharaa to discuss Mughniyah's assassination.

"We discussed the terrorist crime that led to the martyrdom of one of the most senior commanders in the Lebanese Islamic Resistance (Hezbollah), martyr Imad Mughniyah," Mottaki told reporters after his meeting with al-Sharaa.

Mottaki also discussed Mughniyah's death with Syrian President Bashar Assad on Thursday.

Mottaki flew to Damascus on Thursday from Lebanon, where he attended Mughniyah's funeral and offered condolences to the man's family and associates. Underlining Iran's close ties to Shiite Hezbollah, Mottaki sat between Mughniyah's father and a senior Hezbollah official.

Meanwhile, the Iranian defence ministry said Feb. 15 that a team of investigators from Iran and Syria will investigate Mughniyah's killing.

Iran's deputy foreign minister, Ali Raza Sheikh Attar, speaking during Friday prayers, said the team would investigate the circumstances surrounding the car bombing in Damascus, in order to "discover the identities of those who carried out this filthy crime."

A Lebanese security source on Friday said the investigation into the assassination showed that Mughniyah was killed by a car bomb parked close to his car. It was detonated remotely as he walked past after leaving a building he had been visiting. Early reports said the bomb had been placed inside his car.

The suspects arrested in connection with the killing have been mostly Palestinians residing in Syria, the Lebanese source said.

Also Friday, the Hezbollah-affiliated Lebanese newspaper *Al-Akhar* reported that investigators from the organization would also launch a probe into the incident. According to the report, there has been progress in the investigation.

"Syrian security forces are continuing investigations into this terrorist crime and we hope you will hear results soon," Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Moallem said at a press conference with Mottaki on Feb. 14. "We as a state will show with full proof the party involved in this crime and who stands behind them."

Moallem described Mughniyah's killing as a blow to peace. He said his killers "assassinated any attempt to revive the peace process," hinting for the first time that Israel might be involved.

Israel & the Jewish World

France quits European Jewish Congress

By DINAH SPRITZER
JTA

PARIS — As participants at this week's European Jewish Congress General Assembly talked about the need to collectively combat increasing anti-Semitism in Europe and the threat of a nuclear-armed Iran, French Jewish leaders led a three-country rebellion against the 42-member group.

Richard Prasquier, the president of the CRIF umbrella organization of French Jewry, announced on Feb. 10 that CRIF was suspending its membership in the congress after delegates voted 51-34 to approve the extension of European Jewish Congress (EJC) executive board terms to four years from two.

That gives the EJC president, Russian-born mogul Moshe Kantor, two years beyond the term to which he was elected.

Denouncing the vote Prasquier, along with leaders of the Austria and Portugal Jewish communities, said he could not be part of an "unethical" organization that "retroactively" enabled Kantor and the board to serve until 2011 when they were elected last June to terms that end in 2009.

The moves by France, Portugal and Austria are part of a long-simmering battle over control of the EJC between some of the western European nations involved in founding the congress and the Russian president who now controls it.

The three delegations have been at odds



Richard Prasquier



Moshe Kantor

with Kantor since he defeated French incumbent Pierre Besnainou to become the first eastern European president of the EJC, a subsidiary of the World Jewish Congress.

Florence Kaufmann, an EJC board member from Britain, said some western European Jewish leaders simply "have a problem with the EJC being run from the east."

She added, "Britain is not one of them."

Kantor told JTA the French delegates could not stand not being in charge of an organization they long had dominated. The French were founding members of the EJC 20 years ago and frequently have been at its helm.

"This suspension was planned," Kantor said. "It comes as no surprise and it was intended to send disunity in the organization. This is really a bad idea when we need to be focusing on fighting anti-Semitism and Iran's efforts to develop nuclear weapons."

Supporters of the term extension said the move will enable EJC officials to devote

more time to core congress projects, including lobbying European governments on Israel's behalf and improving Jewish and Holocaust education programs.

Joel Rubinfeld, the president of the Belgian Jewish umbrella group CCOJB, said the French walkout was disappointing.

"I did not support the extension of term limits, but you don't just leave an organization because you do not like the vote results," he said. "That means you don't accept democracy, and we have some important work ahead of us — we should be unified."

CRIF member Albert Cohen said he approved of France's withdrawal from the EJC.

"Why should French Jewish interests be represented by Russia?" he asked.

Kantor said he would try to bring the Jewish leaders of the three countries back to the EJC in the coming weeks.

With some 600,000 Jews, France has western Europe's largest Jewish population and a strong influence on European politicians when it comes to matters of Jewish concern.

A Jewish leader from one of the three countries that suspended its EJC membership confirmed rumours that the three departing countries would try to set up a parallel Jewish organization that would exclude Russia and include only the 27 members of the European Union.

Doctors head to Tanzania

A six-person medical team of Israeli and Palestinian doctors and nurses on Friday went on a week-long mission to Zanzibar and

Tanzania to screen hundreds of children in need of life-saving heart surgery. The team, part of the Israeli aid group Save a Child's Heart, will hold a cardiology clinic in Zanzibar from Feb. 16 to 18, where close to 200 children will be checked.

Israel Briefs

Heard the story from his father, later confirmed it with Teddy Kollek, the late Jerusalem mayor. According to the account, which Greenspun said he was making public for the first time, Kollek — who, in 1948 was Israel's point man heading the arms smuggling effort in New York — got to know the singer.

Kollek needed to pay the captain of a ship a cash bribe to smuggle the weapons out of New York harbour, but knew he was being watched by the FBI, because the United States was party to an arms embargo of all parties to the conflict. Kollek left the hotel on the appointed day carrying a satchel, and was followed by the agents. Sinatra left through another entrance with a paper bag containing the money and paid the captain. Sinatra and Kollek remained friends and the singer contributed to a number of Jerusalem building projects at the mayor's behest.

Small quake hits Israel

An earthquake measuring 5.3 on the Richter scale shook Israel early last Friday afternoon. It was felt mostly on the coastal plain. No damage or injuries were reported.

Fleeing Sudan for Israel

Some 123 Sudanese refugees entered Israel early last Friday morning through the border with Egypt, near the Gaza Strip. An Israeli Defence Forces spokesperson told *Ha'aretz*: the refugees entered Israel in small groups at different locations along the frontier. Over the last four months, some 2,800 asylum seekers have entered Israel.

Poverty rises in Israel

According to the National Insurance Institute's semi-annual poverty report released last week, 1,674,800 Israelis were living under the poverty line in 2007 — 24.7 per cent of the population, an increase of some 20,000 people over 2006. In mid-2006, the number was 24.4 per cent and rose to 24.5 per cent at the end of 2006. The number of children living in poverty reached 804,000; or 35.9 per cent of all Israeli children. A year ago, the figure was 35.2 per cent, and 35.8 per cent six months ago.

Sinatra helped run guns

Singer Frank Sinatra reportedly played a role in smuggling guns to Israel in 1948. Brian Greenspun, a son of Hank Greenspun, the Las Vegas media and real estate magnate who helped lead the gun smuggling effort, related the account last week to a Washington fundraising dinner for Israel's Rabin Center, which promotes democracy and pluralism. Greenspun, who

Ha'aretz replaces editor

David Landau is being replaced as editor-in-chief of Israel's daily *Ha'aretz*. Landau, who has been editor for the last four years, is being replaced by Dov Alfon, a former senior editor. Alfon will assume the post on April 15, while Landau will stay on as a member of the paper's editorial board. *Ha'aretz* publisher Amos Schocken said Landau became editor during an uneasy period for the newspaper and its editorial staff, and succeeded in expressing *Ha'aretz*'s commitment to the values of practical Zionism, the newspaper said. The move came after recent revelations that Landau told U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza at a private dinner last fall that Israel is a "failed state" and that it "wants to be raped" by the United States in order to force it into a peace deal. Alfon, 46, joined *Ha'aretz* in 1989 and started the paper's cultural "Gallery" section, edited its weekend magazine, served as Paris correspondent and was the senior editor of *Ha'aretz*'s business publication, *The Marker*, before leaving the paper in 2004 to become editor-in-chief of the publishing house Kinneret. Zmura-Beitan Dvir. — JTA and *Ha'aretz*

Peace deal 'absolutely possible', Sarkozy says

Continued from page 1

from certain states and numerous NGOs that turned the conference into a forum against Israel, and no one has forgotten," Sarkozy said.

"France will not allow a repetition of the excesses and abuses of 2001. Our European partners share France's concerns. France will chair the EU in the final months preceding the review conference. I say to you: if ever our legitimate demands are not taken into account, we will disengage from the process."

In his remarks, made to a crowd of more than 1,000 leading French Jews, as well as politicians from the political right and left, Sarkozy spoke of the indispensable place of French Jewry in French society; said 2008 would be a crucial year for French-Israeli reconciliation and promised to play a leading role in helping Palestinians and Israelis reach a peace deal, which he called "absolutely possible."

"I think it's going to be a landmark year," Israel's ambassador to France, Daniel Shek, said after the speech. "We used to be very close to France until 1967, so this is a real renovation, which is very exciting to experience."

The president's appearance came as his approval rating among the French has dropped some 20 points since September, to 39 per cent — due in large part to France's sluggish economy and revelations about Sarkozy's personal life, including his recent marriage to model Carla Bruni.

But Sarkozy found a warm reception at the CRIF dinner. French Jews overwhelmingly supported Sarkozy's candidacy for president, and many say he is a true friend of Jews and Israel.

"It's the first time that a president of the

republic has come here in person, and it shows how important it is to him," said Claude Hampel, editor of *Cahiers Bernard Lazare*, a Jewish periodical. "It shows that the Jewish community is an integral part of the French nation."

Sarkozy described the evening as significant to him as well, and the start of a busy year in French-Israeli relations.

Israeli President Shimon Peres is scheduled to visit Paris on an official state visit March 10-14, and Sarkozy is expected to go to Jerusalem in May to celebrate Israel's 60th anniversary. In July, France will take over the EU presidency, which Sarkozy said could have major implications for Israel's future.

The president also spoke of the need to maintain dialogue and trade ties with Arab states, saying he sees "absolutely no contradiction" between this policy and a steadfast friendship with Israel, arguing that this gives France broader influence in the Middle East to push for peace.

Yet Sarkozy drew a line when it came to Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. "I will not meet with or shake hands with people who refuse to recognize Israel's right to exist," he said.

Sarkozy also talked about anti-Semitism in France, pledging to combat it through original educational measures, including a proposal to have every 10- or 11-year-old in the country "entrusted" with the profile of a French Jewish child killed during the Holocaust. Sarkozy's maternal grandfather was a Greek Jew.

"I'm very touched and interested," Ariel Goldmann, CRIF's vice-president, said of the elementary school memorial initiative. "I think it's a magnificent idea, and that it

will last."

While the crowd mostly had praise for Sarkozy's remarks, his comments about the compatibility of religious and secular values struck some as striking the wrong chord, while others said they found them comforting.

In another one of his attempts to open up the delicate debate in France over introducing aspects of religion into French culture, Sarkozy said, "The drama of the 20th century, the millions of beings thrown into war, famine, separation, deportation and death, were not born from an excess of the idea of God, but of its fearsome absence."

Sometimes sounding more pastor than politician, Sarkozy said of the Bible: "Never again, after the Torah, never again has man been able to speak about God the way he was able to in the past."

Alain Bellassen, president of the southeastern section of the CRIF, said he was thrilled to hear a politician talk about spirituality, and to listen to Sarkozy's heartfelt contemplations about Judaism.

This is the kind of discussion France's 600,000 Jews need more of, in order to heal the wounds caused by nearly a decade of renewed anti-Semitism here, Bellassen said.

Jean-Michel Quillardet, head of the Grand Orient of France, an organization that stridently defends French secularism, said Sarkozy's remarks were at odds with French culture.

"This is the first time that a French president talks this much about God. That's his affair, if you will, his personal conviction, but it's a little like the U.S. in the end, and we are not in the U.S., we are in France, with the great tradition of French enlightenment," he said. "So I'm very dubious and a little worried."

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Food, Scrumptious Food

Kosher cooking contest winners to compete in finals

By JUDY
BART KANCIGOR
Special to The CJN

"While the other kids were playing house, I was playing restaurant," Evan Levy of Danville, Calif., recalled. He was one of the semifinalists in the Second Annual Simply Manischewitz Cook-Off western regional competition held Dec. 20 at the Hilton Hotel in San Francisco.

Lucky me – I was one of the judges! "I started very young – I went to Mom's cooking school," Levy said. "My mother went back to work when I was in the 10th grade. I made myself in charge of dinner. I have two sisters and a brother, but I was the one with the fewest activities, so I did the cooking."

Even today Levy mans the kitchen. "My wife is a wonderful cook," he said, "but she says she's better off doing the dishes!"

Three semifinal events were held in Chicago, Philadelphia and San Francisco. Ten contestants in each area, selected from thousands of entrants, had one hour to prepare and serve their original recipes, each using at least one Manischewitz product and containing no more than eight ingredients.

Levy's Southwestern Potato Kugel was one of two winning entries, garnering him a free trip to New York for the finals to be held on Feb. 27. After that date, go to www.manischewitz.com to see the grand prize winner, who will take home a \$25,000 prize package, including a GE Profile kitchen, cash and more.

Black beans, green chilies, corn, cheese, chili powder – all mixed with Manischewitz Potato Kugel Mix. This is a kugel with pizzazz! Though more of a pilaf than a kugel, it makes a unique and tasty side dish.

I asked Levy what inspired him to create the dish. "Potato kugel has always been a comfort food for my family," he said. "I wanted to update it, make a new and improved version."

Over 200 onlookers attended the event, free to the public, which included a kosher lunch and a first-hand look at the contestants as they donned their aprons and used their allotted hour to produce their dishes and wow the judges.

"I thought it was really fun," Levy said, "especially the reactions from these elderly ladies surrounding me. They couldn't believe black beans could be in a kugel!"

The other winning semifinalist was Julie Hession of Las Vegas, for her Rib Eye Steak with Marsala Mushroom Sauce.

"This is the first cooking contest I ever entered," she said. "I cook all the time – it's my passion! If my friends need help with a recipe, they come to me."

Early in the competition, Hession was thrown a curve, but handled it with finesse. "The original recipe called for tenderloin steaks, but the kosher butcher sent these huge rib eyes," she recalled. "No problem. The recipe is so simple and versatile, you can interchange any cut of steak. You can



Julie Hession, semifinalist winner, with her Rib Eye Steak with Marsala Mushroom Sauce.

even use it for chicken or fish."

The rib eyes worked well, she said. "I've cooked with rib eyes before. They've got a little bit more marbling. I knew they were going to have to sit for the judging, so it worked to my benefit. I looked at it as a very real world experience. You have to roll with the punches when you don't get what you need. Sometimes the best results come from improvising."

There was a real sense of camaraderie among the contestants, Hession noted. "Everyone wanted to win, but we were all very supportive of each other. I had so much fun. It was definitely an adrenaline rush competing doing something you love to do."

Brian Malarky, one of this season's finalists on Bravo TV's Top Chef series, served as MC. This chef-owner of Oceanaire Seafood Room in the Gaslamp district of San Diego worked the room, questioning the chefs and the judges, who were served the entries according to the kosher laws: dairy dishes first, then pareve and finally meat, all on paper plates with new plastic utensils provided for each dish.

"This is the largest kosher competition in the country," said David Rossi, vice-president of marketing for Manischewitz and the RAB Food Group. "We have the highest level of kashrut happening here."

All ingredients, utensils and equipment were provided to the contestants under strict rabbinical supervision, including kashered GE ranges.

Besides the two winning entries, other dishes included San Francisco Salmon Cakes, Easy Matzo Ball Dumplings Stuffed with Portobello Mushrooms, Crusted White Fish, Dapper Red Snapper Parchment Paper Packets, Raspberry Glazed Tilapia, Poblano Stuffed Chicken, Lamb Chops with Twist of Rosemary, and Grilled Lamb Kebabs with Apricot-Hoisin Glaze.

Judy Bart Kancigor is the author of *Cooking Jewish: 532 Great Recipes from the Rabinowitz Family (Workman Publishing)* and can be found on the web at www.cookingjewish.com.

For some great tasting recipes, go to www.cjnews.com and click on Food.

Books & Authors

Sword-and-sorcery tale steeped in Jewish lore

Gentlemen of the Road by Michael Chabon, Bond Street Books.

By SHLOMO SCHWARTZBERG
Special to The CJN

In the afterword to his latest novel, *Gentlemen of the Road*, Michael Chabon reveals that he had originally wanted to title the book *Jews with Swords*, if only to dispel the Woody Allen nebbish stereotype that so many readers, Jewish or non-Jewish, might hold in regard to the book's subject matter.

His main point is that, whether perceived as Jews with swords or not, the Jewish experience throughout the ages — from exile and displacement through persecution and destruction to a return to Zion with the creation of the modern State of Israel — is a long adventure on par with any complex sword-and-sorcery epic you can imagine.

In that light, Chabon, who is clearly carving out a career on refracting Jewish themes and characters through unlikely and unconventional lights, is the right man to pen a kosher sword-and-sorcery tale that, though influenced by many others, shines in its own unique way.

Beautifully illustrated, *Gentlemen of the Road* tells the story of two unlikely buddies, circa 950 CE, a Frankish (German) Jewish physician named Zelikman and Amram, an Abyssinian (Ethiopian) Jewish ex-soldier, who survive by working as con artists and, sometimes, as hired thieves and muscle. Their latest con, which pits them in a supposed battle to the death over a perceived insult, with the innkeeper collecting bets that he later splits with the duo, takes a different turn when Zelikman and Amram cross paths with a spoiled young man, who turns out to be a Khazar prince, whose family has been wiped

out by a pretender to the kingdom's throne.

Reluctantly, our intrepid pair gets caught up in the historical pageant of the time, whose results have a life-changing effect, particularly on Zelikman, whose mysterious past is slowly, intriguingly, unveiled.

Gentlemen of the Road is a nod to fantasy writer Michael Moorcock, to whom the book is dedicated, and also to the late Fritz Leiber, whose gritty Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser books are a clear template for this adventure tale. The novel succeeds mostly because of its use of the compelling and legendary Khazar backdrop.

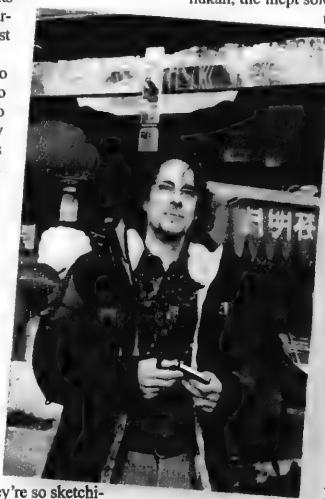
The Khazars, a semi-nomadic Turkic people who converted to Judaism about 1,200 years ago, likely to avoid having to choose sides between the Christian and Muslim powers who were pressuring them, remain one of the more intriguing side stories in Jewish history. It's an inspired move for Chabon to base a novel on their true-life actions.

He's less satisfying with his portraits of Zelikman and Amram, not because you don't believe their relationship — you do — but because they're so sketchily depicted. The novel, which was initially published in 15 serialized chapters in *The New York Times Magazine*, is, after all, less than 200 pages long and could easily have used an additional 50 pages to flesh out its rather slight story.

Still, *Gentlemen of the Road* is a fun read that is steeped in Jewish lore. From Hillel, Zelikman's beloved horse, and Hanukkah, the inept soldier of fortune the duo take along for the ride, to the fatalistic approach Zelikman and Amram bring to their battles, *Gentlemen of the Road* abounds with Jewish references. Clearly, Chabon has become the go-to guy for unusual depictions of Jewish characters and situations.

He's not the first genre writer to trade on his Jewish background and knowledge — Robert Silverberg and the late Avram Davidson come immediately to mind — but he's doing it more consistently and fascinatingly than anyone else. Be it the Golem legend addressed in his remarkable *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay*; the Holocaust theme woven through his fine Sherlock Holmes-type novella, *The Final Solution*; the alternate Jewish state at the heart of the imaginative *The Yiddish Policemen's Union*; and even the seder scene in the touching *Wonder Boys*, Chabon seems determined to wring new variations out of the Jewish themes and portraits created by senior writers such as Mordecai Richler and Philip Roth.

It helps, of course, that Chabon's such a good, descriptive writer, but it's the thoughtful books and stories in which he puts his immense writing skills to use, that are allowing him to stand out from the pack.



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EVERY STEP OF THE WAY.

Chaim's Love Song opens at Leah Posluns

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The C.J.N.

When audiences watch and listen to Chaim Shotsky share the stories of his life, they will instinctively relate to him, says Ari Weisberg, director of *Chaim's Love Song*.

"Everybody can identify with this man," Weisberg says.

"His humour, his wittiness and his friendships will remind people of who they are or someone they know."

Chaim's Love Song, produced by Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre, will be performed at the Leah Posluns Theatre from Feb. 27 to March 9.

A dramatic comedy penned by Marvin Cherno, the play centres on the experiences of Shotsky, a retired mailman in Brooklyn who, like the famed character Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof*, speaks to God and philosophizes, all with a twist of humour.

*Retired mailman
speaks to God*

As Shotsky chats in the park recalling various events from his life, the play harkens back to those moments in time with touching vignettes.

"The play is intimate and touching, but it is also funny," Weisberg says.

"I think what people will take home from it is that after all the challenges and debates Chaim has with the other characters, he still comes back to tradition. The message is that without being grounded by tradition, you will drift away."

Shotsky is played by Irving Dobbs, who appeared in the movie *Rock Garden*, which recently won the Global Audience Award for best short film at the Slamdance Film Festival.

Teatron was founded by Weisberg in 2002 with the aim of "unveiling the treasures of Jewish tradition, enriching and inspiring the Jewish experience of all theatergoers, [while] leading to better understanding and harmony."

"We are dedicated to [producing] plays that have major Jewish challenges or history," says Weisberg, who moved to Canada from Israel in 1976.

"This is what is close to my heart, and I think we have found there is a demand for these kinds of productions."

Now in its fifth season, Teatron has put on a diverse array of productions, including *This Night*, *The Chosen*, *The Sisters Rosensweig* and *The God of Isaac*.

As the Leah Posluns Theatre will soon be undergoing renovations, Teatron performances will be moving to the Toronto Centre for the Arts in 2010.

Weisberg spent 18 years working as a director and pro-



Irving Dobbs, centre, stars in *Chaim's Love Song*. Joining him are Julie Holdsworth as Kelly and Jack Berke as Oscar. The play runs Feb. 27 to March 9.

ducer for local television in Kingston, Ont., before switching over full time to live theatre, his true love.

"There is nothing better to me than live theatre," says the father of three.

"The live audiences, real actors on stage, and the fact you can really work on a character's evolution evening after evening is what attracts me to it."

Following *Chaim's Love Song*, Weisberg is looking to bring a play originally performed in Yiddish to the stage, as well as an Israel-themed production to celebrate Israel's 60th anniversary.

For information about tickets to *Chaim's Love Song*, call 416-781-5527. To learn more about Teatron, visit www.teatrontheatre.com.

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Arts & Travel

Oscar gift baskets include ex-Torontonian's sculptures

By LAUREN KRAMER
Special to The C/IN

Not everyone will walk away with an Oscar this weekend at the annual Academy Awards extravaganza.

But those nominated and not ultimately selected for an Oscar will get a gift basket, and in it, a colourful box containing the work of Vancouver ceramic sculptor Suzy Birstein, 56

Birstein, an artist and teacher who left Toronto's Bathurst Manor for Kitsilano in 1976, got her work into the Oscars' gift basket because Kristina Estlund of Distinctive Assets, a Los Angeles firm that assembles gift baskets for celebrity events, discovered her through the Internet. Estlund found Birstein's work while searching for Mexican pottery, for a gift basket for the Grammy Awards

"I fell in love with Suzy's work," Estlund says. "Her art is just stunning, and she's a very creative, cool and awesome individual."

"Kristina gave me carte blanche as to what I wanted to make for the Oscar gift baskets," says Birstein, who came up with the series Motion Pitchers, ceramic artwork designed to resemble a pitcher.

This is the first time Distinctive Assets is including ceramic items in its gift baskets. Concerns about possible breakage were alleviated when Birstein came up with a tube package secured with thick bubble wrap that would protect her sculptures until their hand-delivery to the residences of the non-winning nominees. "Everyone who doesn't win an Oscar gets a Suzy," she quips.

Birstein, the only artist whose work has been selected for inclusion in the baskets, made a total of 38 sculptures for the event, 21 of them for the nominees in the top categories and 17 for selected media.

"This is amazing exposure that I would never be able to get ordinarily," she says. She is already feeling the effects of that exposure; she has received an offer from the Jonathan Bancroft-Snell Gallery in London, Ont., to show her work.

Birstein is enclosing a DVD containing a slide show of her work in every gift package.

A graduate of the Emily Carr School of Art in 1980, she cites Chagall as a key influence. She has focused on creating sculpture and tableware, in-between raising two sons and teaching from her home studio and at Granville Island's Arts Umbrella for the past 18 years.



Suzy Birstein with one of her ceramic pieces that will be included in the Oscar gift pack.

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Arts & Travel



Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

COEN BROTHERS TO FILM CHABON'S YIDDISH POLICEMEN'S UNION

Michael Chabon, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Yiddish Policemen's Union*, has expressed jubilation that Joel and Ethan Coen, the maverick American filmmaking duo whose most recent film is *No Country For Old Men*, have agreed to write and direct a film adaptation of the 2007 bestseller.

"Naturally, I am over the moon about this," Chabon told JTA last week. "They are heroes of mine."

Set in Sitka, a fictional Yiddish semi-state in Alaska established after Israel supposedly lost its war of independence in 1948-49, *The Yiddish Policemen's Union* overlays a noirish crime novel overtop the geopolitical fantasy that a region of Alaska was set aside as a homeland for the Jews.

"Richly conceived and phenomenally detailed, Chabon's Sitka is home to just the sort of improbable characters that populate Coen brothers films," critic Ben Harris noted. But according to JTA, the novel has its critics, among them Yiddish scholar Ruth Wisse, who has decried its unmistakable anti-Zionist tone.

Other Jewish critics have noted the book's many negative Jewish characters, including dope addicts, pimps and prostitutes.

No Country For Old Men, meanwhile, is up for eight Oscars. Other films by the Coen brothers include *Fargo*, *Raising Arizona* and *The Big Lebowski*.

Goldfarb Lecture: Supported by Joan and Martin Goldfarb, the 2008 Goldfarb Lecture in Visual Arts presents a free public lecture by Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett of New York

University, on "Creating the Museum of History of Polish Jews: A Work in Progress." A former Torontonin, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett is an award-winning author whose recent book, *They Called Me Mayer July: Painted Memories of a Jewish Childhood in Poland Before the Holocaust* (written in collaboration with her father, painter Mayer Kirshenblatt), was a finalist for the 2007 National Jewish Book Award. York University, Accolade West Building 005, Feb. 28, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Koffler Chamber Orchestra: The Koffler Centre of the Arts presents an Afternoon of Music and Culture with the **Koffler Chamber Orchestra**, directed by TSO concertmaster Jacques Israelievitch, performing works by Mozart, Glick, Mozetich, Buczinsky and others. Sander Gilman, a professor at Emory University, delivers a pre-concert illustrated

kofflerarts.org

Names in the News: Ira Nadel, writer and professor of English at the University of British Columbia, has written a new biography of playwright David Mamet. *David Mamet, A Life in the Theatre* is due in bookstores this month. The publisher is Palgrave Macmillan.

A prolific literary biographer, Nadel's previous works have focused on James Joyce, Leonard Cohen, Tom Stoppard, Ezra Pound, Wilkie Collins and others.

At the Galleries: Neighbours Who Disappeared, a project of the Jewish Museum in Prague, Czech Republic, supported by the Forgotten Ones Civic Association, is on view in the Jacobs Lounge of the Miles Nadal JCC, Feb. 28 to March 28. Opens Feb. 29, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. RSVP for opening by Feb. 22 to 416-972-1476 or toronto@embassy.mzv.cz

Arts in Brief

• The Canadian Stage Company's current production is *The Clean House* by Sarah Ruhl, directed by Alisa Palmer and starring Seana McKenna, Fiona Reid, Joseph Ziegler.

Mary Ann McDonald and Nicola Correia-Damude. It's "a quirky, warm-hearted, romantic comedy about love, loss and the power of a good joke." Canadian Stage, Bluma Appel Theatre, 27 Front St. E. Until March 8. 416-368-3110.

• *Chaim's Love Song*, focuses on a retired mailman in Brooklyn, an American Teyve whose rich and exotic tale is the meat of the play. Directed by Ari Weisberg, it's at the Leah Posluns Theatre, Feb. 27 to March 9.

416-781-5527.

• **Jordan Klapman's** lecture series on Great Jewish Composers continues with "The Death of Tin Pan Alley – The Rise of Hollywood." \$9 admission includes bagels and coffee. Miles Nadal JCC, Sunday, Feb. 24, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

• **55 Forward for Seniors** presents a film on the history of Spadina Avenue, the Jewish community and the garment industry. Miles Nadal JCC, Thursday, Feb. 28, 1:30 p.m. Contact Phyllis Fien, 416-924-6211, ext. 155. phyllisf@mnjc.org

• **Syrinx Sunday Salons** presents a celebration of Canadian composer Anton Kuerti with pianist Peter Longworth performing a program that also includes Mozart, Brahms and Mussorgsky. \$20, \$15. Heliconian Hall, 35 Hazelton Ave. Sunday, March 2, 3 p.m. 416-654-0877. www.syrinxconcerts.org

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Arts & Travel

Film examines plight of displaced Israeli settlers

By JOSEPH SERGE
Arts Editor

In August 2005, thousands of journalists from Israel and around the world descended on the Gaza Strip to cover the controversial disengagement of settlers.

The same happened five months later in January 2006 when settlers were removed from the Amona settlement in the West Bank.

But since then the media have moved on. Whatever happened to these settlers? Where are they now? And, more importantly, why don't the media — Israeli or international — care about them?

These are some of the questions Toronto-based documentary filmmaker Igal Hecht examines in his latest film *Banished*, airing on Crossroads Television Feb. 24 at 9 p.m.

Banished is the latest in Hecht's trilogy on the disengagement, which began with *Qassam* (2004) and was followed by *Disengagement Democracy* (2006).

Hecht and his crew travel to Nitzan, where the majority of those evacuated are currently living. From afar, the settlement looks like a lovely suburban subdivision, but up close you are stuck with the reality of a shantytown.

Yehudit Damari, a young film student at Sapir College in Sderot, is one of those uprooted and has been documenting her experiences since two years before the disengagement. She shows us her tiny portable home, complete with cracks on the walls, and a hole she covered with duct tape to prevent rats from coming in.

"All these years we [settlers] were the 'obstacle to peace.' And we had to pay the price for there to be peace. Now that

we've paid, will there will be peace? Oh come on!" she says dejectedly.

Many of the disengaged settlers have become despondent and have lost their faith both in democracy and their spirituality. Many people, especially those in their 50s, have not been able to find work.

A settler, Laurence Bezit, takes us on a tour of the Nitzan settlement — originally meant to be only a temporary home — and points out its shortcomings. "It was very hard for many families in the beginning," she says, adding that there was no convenience store or bus stations. "It looks like a refugee

camp. We feel like refugees. We don't belong to any place right now."

This sentiment is echoed by Benny, the founder of Chomesh, a settlement built 25 years ago and one of those torn down during the disengagement.

"I feel like a refugee, unwanted. Here I was a somebody," he says, surveying the rubble

of the former settlement. "How can a 55-year-old start over again. I haven't worked a day since I left, and no one is helping us."

Despite a promise by Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to act swiftly, the settler issue seems to have been swept under the rug.

Many of the settlers believe that the media have purposefully ignored their post-disengagement plight.

The senior news editor for Israel's Channel One agrees. "The media covered them intensively during the disengagement and forgot them the next day," he says candidly. "It has ignored their existence as if the ground swallowed them whole."

He believes that covering the post-disengagement is not

a ratings booster and that most Israelis believe that whatever happens to the former Gaza residents is not their problem.

Produced by Chutzpa Productions, *Banished* is an engaging look at these forgotten people and a strong criticism of the news media and their disinterest in following up their own stories.

It is directed and produced by Hecht and co-written with Lior Cohen.



Film producer/director Igal Hecht, left, with Chomesh settlement founder Benny.

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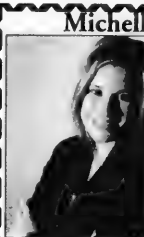
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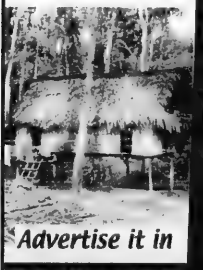
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Arts & Travel

Degrassi actor branches out into movies

By **SHERRY SMITHER**
Special to The C.J.N.

This season we can be sure Lauren Collins character on *Degrassi: The Next Generation* will reach new heights. After all, we can't expect less from the creators of the award-winning series, which has been pushing boundaries for seven years. Collins plays Paige Michalchuk on the hit show that evolved from *Degrassi Junior High*, a 1980s series about Toronto teens coping with social issues.

Degrassi: The Next Generation, co-created and produced by Epitome Productions' Linda Schuyler (one of *Degrassi Junior High's* creators), features story lines that include subjects such as abortion, school shootings, drugs and date rape — topics rarely covered on shows aimed at teens and tweens.

Many of these issues have touched Collins' character, Paige, who was a brash 14-year-old when the series began in 2001. "Paige has certainly gone through a lot," Collins, 21, says. "In season one, she started off as a great character, but very two-dimensional — she got in the way of everyone else's life and was only thinking about herself. In season two, the rape story line started, and that obviously affected her deeply."

"For an actor my age and when I was younger, to have the opportunity to deal with this kind of material is a blessing. Usually, what's available for youth actors is Disney fare. I've done that and I loved it, but this is acting — it's really challenging and ground-breaking. It makes waves everywhere," says the versatile actress who puts in 13- to 14-hour days when she's on the set.

While attending *Degrassi* Community School for eighth and ninth graders, Paige pursued a high school soccer player who raped her at a frat party.

"That influenced her right up until season seven now. It changed her. Especially in recent seasons, she's been questioning her sexuality," says the Toronto-born Collins.

Paige's brief same-sex relationship with Alex (Deanna Casaluce) is a first for a teen show on Canadian prime-time television.

Collins has garnered one win and two nominations for the Young Artist Foundation's Young Artist Award for best ensemble actor in a TV Series. And she is proud

of *Degrassi's* second nomination for a GLAAD (Gay, Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation) Media Award.

"It's really important to me because I had a big part in that story line," she says. "Paige has been dealing with the relationship with Alex and just growing up in general — moving away from home, going to university and coming back... she's really come a long way."

Collins says *Degrassi's* writers are open to suggestions to ensure that the series has realistic story lines.

"We have a good relationship with our writers. We have a table-read of every script, then talk about it, sometimes for 10

minutes and other times for an hour, getting into a deep discussion about the issue at hand. They're open to us sharing personal experiences."

"Since they're adults, sometimes we say, 'OK guys, no one would really say anything like this,' and they listen," Collins says.

Any hint as to what's in store for Paige?

"Great things — can't really give away too much, but as one relationship comes to an end, another might begin," Collins says.

Since *Degrassi: The Next Generation's* filming wrapped this past December — an impressive 24 episodes, its biggest season yet — Collins has had time for voice work in animation, and she completed the lead role, opposite Ashley Tisdale of *High School Musical* fame, in *Picture This*, directed by Stephen Herek, of *Bob and Ted's Excellent Adventure* fame.

"I play Mandy's [Tisdale] best friend, Alexa. Very different from Paige, she's punky and gothic. I had dark streaks in my hair and wore combat boots," Collins says.

"It's very much the *Pretty in Pink* movie or one of those '80s classics with a new spin to it. Really cute and lots of fun to work on. It may be coming out in the spring."

Collins' role as a cheerleader in another flick, *Charlie Bartlett*, a comedy about a high school hero with Robert Downie Jr. and Hope Davis, is out tomorrow in theatres.

Collins takes fame in stride. "I'm really thankful to my family, boyfriend, friends — if it weren't for them, well they keep me in my place. I owe them a lot," she says.

Degrassi: The Next Generation airs on CTVglobemedia Mondays at 7:30 p.m.



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Day school hockey league scores again with 2008 tourney

By **ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF**
Staff Reporter

Throng of excited kids swarmed Chesswood Arenas last week for the Jewish Day School Hockey League's (JDSHL) 13th annual Yitzhak Rabin Memorial Tournament.

Russell Pritchard, a parent who is now in his third year as co-convenor of the tournament and has a son at United Synagogue Day School who played in the tourney, called this year's games "amazing" and said he was proud of the effort on display by players and volunteers alike.

The rink's four arenas were packed with cheering parents and friends of the players, many of whom were bused in by their respective schools to support the players.

The JDSHL estimated that close to 600 people attended the day-long tournament, held Feb. 8.

"It was a whirlwind of excitement," Pritchard told *The C/JN* last week.

He also praised his co-convenor, parent Errol Singer, and tournament co-directors Kelly Bernknopf and Ellise Benitah, also parents, for their work.

"Errol and I arranged for the refs and the ice, but Kelly and Ellise were truly great, arranging the food, collecting the trophies and just making sure everything was done for the kids," Pritchard said.

The non-contact, co-ed league consists of 14 teams, 238 players in all, from five Jewish day schools and their various campuses: USDS, Associated Hebrew Schools, Bialik Hebrew Day School, Leo Baeck Day School and the Toronto Heschele School.

The regular season began last December – with weekly games being held in the early mornings at Chesswood Arenas, before classes – and culminated with the memorial tournament.

"We shaped a league that is more than just hockey," the 2008 JDSHL tournament program read. "It has been a social environment where kids could be amongst peers from many schools. It's a wonderful opportunity for families throughout the Jewish community... to bring us all together."

Pritchard, who this year coached the USDS Bayview campus senior team, echoed the sentiments while waiting outside his team's locker room.



Jewish day school hockey players gather en masse between games at this year's Yitzhak Rabin Memorial Tournament.

"At the end of the day, it's all about the kids and... realizing that we're giving them a chance to play against friends from other Jewish schools," he said. "A lot of these kids play in city leagues during the year, and this allows them to [re-connect] with their friends in a sport they love."

Singer noted that despite the odd complaint, most parents thanked the organizers for their work.

"They're very positive, because the kids love it," he said, pleased by the day's turnout. "In fact, my kid told me his main objective is to be on his school team from Grade 3 to Grade 8. Not exactly the [scholastic] priority I had in mind."

Once again, the tournament was divided into a competition for younger kids in grades 3 to 5, and one for grades 6 through 8.

This year, the eight junior teams were divided into four divisions – tiers A through D – while the six senior teams played a round-robin to determine the champs and consolation finalists.

In what Pritchard called "maybe the best

game ever played in the JDSHL," Associated Kamin defeated Leo Baeck North by a score of 3-2 in their third game of a mini-series to determine the Tier A junior champions.

"It was amazing," Pritchard said. "There were 300 or more fans in the crowd from each school watching that [series]."

Other results from the junior divisions saw Bialik capture the Tier B championship with a 4-2 win over USDS Bayview. USDS Bathurst took the Tier C championship with an 8-2 win over Leo Baeck South, and Associated Posluns won the Tier D championship with a 9-4 victory over Heschele.

On the senior side, Leo Baeck North beat Associated in a tough 5-4 battle to win the championship.

The consolation finals had USDS Bayview beating Bialik 3-2, while USDS Bathurst defeated Leo Baeck South 8-2 in another consolation game.

Pritchard noted that like any hockey league, the JDSHL has many "hockey parents" who sometimes get belligerent about

how the league is run or about some of the rules.

Still, he said most parents appreciate the work that he and his leadership team put into the JDSHL, and he said he is gratified by the support they continue to receive from the community.

"After I take a breath from the tournament, I just enjoy it," Pritchard said. "I think I'll be back doing it again next year."

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I'm learning to know and like myself

In a recent interview with *Vanity Fair*, actor Katherine Heigl made a comment that has really stuck with me and made me think.

"As women, we have more of a tendency to be people-pleasers, and I know a lot of women who are not vocal about what makes them happy. I was like that in my early 20s, but not anymore," she said.

"I spent a lot of time not being clear about who I was and what was important to me," she continued.

"It's easy to be taken advantage of if you're not honest. I knew that dance of trying to please a man, trying to guess what they want you to be, and I got really tired of that, really confused and frustrated. I decided I was sick of trying to figure out what everybody else wanted, and I should just decide what I want, and be honest, and not spend all my time guessing."

After reading that, I realized that her perspective on her early twenties rang true for me, too, although at the time, I never necessarily understood that I was trying to be a people-pleaser.

I just thought that making other people happy was the way to get what I wanted. You work hard at your job, your boss is happy and, therefore, you get promoted. You're nice to your boyfriend, your boyfriend is happy and, therefore, you live happily ever after.

Sometimes it worked, sometimes it didn't, but it's the shift in perspective from "them" to "us" that's important in Heigl's words.

This past New Year's, I made a toast with one of my girlfriends in which we promised each other that we'd "own" 2008, "own" our lives, and, most importantly, "own" ourselves.

It was an acknowledgment that up until then, we had never really asked ourselves honestly, "What do we want?"

Instead, we were trying to fit into a mould of a quintessential twentysomething woman. We had an idea, an archetype, of what it's supposed to be like, what people expected us to be like and act like at this age, and we were trying to fit into it. We'd told ourselves that that's what we

wanted.

Maybe it's not so much that we were being people-pleasers as much as we were going through a series of tests in which we were trying to find our voice and trying to find out what it is that we actually wanted out of life, rather than what life wants out of us.

And that was the case for each aspect of our life—every decision we made felt like we were trying on different hats to see which one fit the best.

But now I'm in my late twenties, and I'm sick of searching for my voice. I guess what we all have to realize is that our voice has always been there. We've just been listening to everything and everyone but ourselves.

What does it really mean to own 2008, to own our lives? It means taking responsibility for ourselves, our feelings, our actions, our jobs, our choices in boyfriends.

It means not needing validation that what we want, and who we are, are what we're supposed to be.

What does it mean to own yourself? It means getting to know yourself and, more importantly, getting to like yourself.

Because until we can achieve that, we'll always be the people-pleasers that manage to somehow please everyone but ourselves.

Sandie Benitah

20Something



PURIM PERSIAN LAMB STEW

Ingredients

- 6 tbsp PARVE margarine
- 1/4 c fresh parsley, chopped
- 3-1/2 lbs lean lamb meat, cubed
- 1 (16 oz) can red kidney beans, drained
- 2 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 2 scallions, chopped
- 1/4 c fresh lemon juice
- 1 lemon cut into wedges
- 1 tbsp salt

Directions

Melt 2 tbsp. margarine in a large pot. Add scallions and parsley - saute until parsley is dark green. Melt remaining margarine in a frying pan. Add lamb and brown the cubes. Place lamb in the pot. Add lemon juice and lemon wedges. Cover with water. Stir, cover and simmer for 1-1/4 hr. Stir in the kidney beans, salt and pepper. Add more water to cover ingredients + 1". Cover and simmer for 20 min. until lamb is tender. Serve with rice.

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About Life

embarrassing, especially when she does it to one of my friends or a service person that I may have recommended.

This seems to be a family thing, as I've noticed that other members of her family behave this way. I thought it might be because they are the children of Holocaust survivors. How do I work around this personality flaw that she has?

Hard To Take

Dear Hard To Take

There are a couple of points you mention that are very revealing - first, that other family members behave this way, and second, that they are children of Holocaust survivors.

Children of survivors have been raised by parents who have been through, and seen, unspeakable horrors. You can't survive the Holocaust and not have it affect every part of your life, including child rearing. That's why there are many books, studies and lectures on this subject.



Dear Ella,

I have a dear friend, Sue, who regularly alienates people around her. The best way I can describe it is paranoia. On the outside she smiles, makes conversation, jokes around, but on the inside, she is thinking that people have an ulterior motive and that they are going to take advantage of her. She constantly gets people's backs up, and for no good reason.

Sue is truly a lovely person, and I enjoy her company and her intellect, but at times I find this behaviour to be unacceptable and

After the war, survivors had no choice but to move on with life. They married, had children, ran businesses and seemed to fit in fine on the outside. But often, what went on behind closed doors was very different.

There is no question that many survivors had an increased sense of paranoia and nervousness. Many of them didn't believe in sharing any personal outside of the walls of their home. You can't grow up in a home environment like that and come out of it unscathed.

My suggestion to you is to stay calm and relaxed. If you feel uncomfortable, tell Sue that you know the new people you introduce her to very well. Set her mind at ease so that she has nothing to be concerned about.

Be supportive and try not to take her behaviour personally. You can't undo history, or the scars it has left on people who have been touched by it.

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN, email: eb@cjnews.com. But Ella is not a professional counsellor. She brings to the questions posed by readers her unique brand of earthy wisdom. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional.

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

I receive many requests to write columns on various topics, from the death of an animal to day school morning parking problems. Generally, I stick to a list of articles that I want to write. However, from time to time, I take a request.

I recently received an e-mail from someone in her 40s that I have known for many years - we'll call her Katie - asking me to write a piece on the need for people to be kinder to each other in the dating world.

She wrote: "Avrum, you need to write about how unkind people can be in the dating world." Unkind? Oy. Her words and some discussions I had with others convinced me that it was time to write.

Our community is one of the only growing Jewish communities in the world. You wouldn't think that we would have a large singles population. But we do. Proof can be found in the endless number of matchmakers, Internet dating services and singles events that exist in Toronto.



URBAN
WRITER

Kindness in the dating world

The challenge of being single in our community is great, especially the older you get, because our community - and Judaism in general - is set up to cater to the nuclear family.

As an example, if a single man of any age (even 60!) is called to the Torah, he is referred to as a "bochor" - a boy. Troublesome! Perhaps this is one of the reasons the dating scene is "unkind." Could it be that the Jewish perception in general is that if you're not married, you haven't made it and are, therefore, less valued? Maybe.

What follows are some examples that Katie gave me of disrespectful comments she has heard from people looking for their bashert (their match).

We live in a time when the Internet is a popular tool to find a date. Dating websites can be effective, but they're not always easy on the soul or self esteem.

Once Katie was sharing her Internet stories with a girlfriend, who told her that a guy asked her via e-mail about her dating site ad: "Are you sure you're 40?" His next question was, "How old is your picture?" He continued to badger her about the authenticity of the information she provided in her ad.

The poor woman called Katie crying, questioning her appearance and in essence asking if she was living up to the expectations "out there," which are, more often than not, to find a woman who is skinny and beautiful, or a guy who is rich.

Some of the expectations for men that I found on these sites include: a guy who is strong, self-sufficient, sure of himself, vulnerable, handsome, in great shape, works and plays hard, adventurous, family oriented, etc.

I believe Superman can be found on the magazine rack with the other superheroes.

Katie told me of other unflattering remarks she has heard, such as, "Can you still have

kids?" The question came right at the start of a first meeting. It's a reasonable thing to ask, but it must be framed in a sensitive way and asked at the right time during the dating process.

A male friend of Katie's was once asked, "How can you still not be married at your age?" The woman continued, "So what's wrong with you?" the inference being that if you're not married and are in your 40s or 50s their must be a serious problem.

Nonsense. We forget that the right person comes along at the right time.

Katie summed things up well in her e-mail to me. She wrote: "It's already difficult enough for people in search of their soul mates, but when they have to deal with these comments, it just adds to the suffering. I'm hoping this article can increase awareness and sensitivity in the dating world."

Amen.

P.S.: Match people up. It's a very kind thing to do.

Visit avrumrosensweigideas.blogspot.com, or e-mail avrum@veahavta.org Sderot/Sudan?

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Illustration for The CJN by Avi Katz

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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

The Day of the State

A special edition newspaper was published jointly by the newspapers of Israel on "Friday, the fifth day of Iyar, 5708, May 14, 1948, erev Shabbat, at 4:00 in the afternoon, one day after the end of foreign rule," to commemorate the founding of the Jewish state. The headline above the famous portrait of Theodor Herzl says: "The people proclaim the State of Israel." The headline of the article below Herzl's portrait says: "All the laws of the White Paper are null and void." The infamous White Paper promulgated by Great Britain restricted Jewish immigration to Mandatory Palestine. With the founding of the state, Jews worldwide were now free to seek sanctuary and join the ingathering of exiles in the State of Israel.



Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University
congratulates the State of Israel
on its exceptional achievements
as it celebrates its 60th Anniversary.



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*offer congratulations to the State of Israel
on the occasion of the 60th anniversary
of its founding*

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for Israel, its citizens and friends around the world.*



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Canadian Hadassah-WIZO salutes the
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and heroism** of the Israeli people,
as we join in celebrating the
60th anniversary
of our beloved spiritual homeland!

Sandy Martin
National President

Dr. Freda Ginsberg
National Executive
Vice President

Mazel Tov to the State of Israel on its 60th birthday.
May the future be blessed with peace and prosperity.

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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

Reflections as Israel approaches 60

The drama that surrounded the birth of Israel 60 years ago does not dim. With the passing of the United Nations resolution on Nov. 29, 1947, creating both a Jewish and an Arab state in a partitioned Palestine, many evil winds blew, often whipped into violent storms. Throughout the Arab world the killing and beating of Jews, and the looting of Jewish property, was widespread. Within 10 years of the United Nations resolution, more than 750,000 Jews had fled from Arab and Muslim lands. Among those Jews were many who came to Canada, where they rebuilt their lives and became integral, active, productive members of Canadian life.



By Sir
Martin Gilbert

The second evil wind that began in November 1947, within hours of the passage of the United Nations resolution, was the assault throughout Palestine, by Arab gangs, on Jewish buses, shops and homes. The Jewish commercial centre in Jerusalem was looted and burned. From the first hours following the Israeli declaration of independence on May 14, 1948, another evil wind threatened to destroy the newborn Jewish state, when five Arab armies attacked, determined to drive the Jews into the sea. The Egyptian air force bombed Tel Aviv. Egyptian troops reached the southern outskirts of Jerusalem. The Jordanians conquered the Jewish quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem. The Iraqis reached to within 16 miles of the sea. The Syrians reached

the southern shore of the Sea of Galilee and the gates of nearby Kibbutz Deganya.

Several thousand Jewish refugees, from the areas overrun by the Arab armies in 1948, including from the Jewish quarter of the Old City, made new lives as Israeli citizens within the "Green Line," the armistice lines of 1949. In contrast, the half million and more Arab refugees, many of whose homes were likewise levelled to the ground in the first months of Israeli rule, have remained as refugees to this day, as have their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Rather than resolve the refugee problem, as it did with all other wartime and post-war refugee groups, the United Nations perpetuated the refugee status of the Palestinian Arab refugees. The countries to which they fled – Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon – were happy to keep them in camps, not to absorb them, and to use them as political pawns.

There can be no greater contrast with this enforced Palestinian refugee status in the immediate postwar years, than the fate of more than five million German refugees in Europe. There is no German refugee problem today. The German refugees of 1945 rebuilt their shattered lives in new homes, turned their back on any notional "right of return," and became productive, successful citizens of the new Germany – they, their children, their grandchildren and now their great-grandchildren.

The survivors of the Holocaust also accepted that they would have to find new homes. Today, they and their descendants are productive citizens of the lands to which they went, including Israel, Britain, the United States and Canada.

There have been many miracles at work in Israel in the past 60 years. Each miracle had a powerful human element, the desire

of the Jews to make their homeland a centre of modernity, productivity and security. The largest Jewish immigration to reach Israel – more than a million people out of a population at that time of just over five million, 20 per cent – was from the former Soviet Union. Jews denied their rights fully to express their Jewishness and Jewish national identity had struggled for years to live that life in Israel.

In 1976, the Entebbe rescue (a hostage-rescue mission performed by Israel at Entebbe Airport in Uganda, in July 1976) showed that Israel would take great risks, and call on the highest courage, to save Jewish lives. In 1981, prime minister Menachem Begin ordered the bombing of the nuclear reactor in Iraq. This was done, and was successful. In 1984, Operation Moses flew 6,500 Ethiopian Jews to Israel, another act of rescue.

Today, Israel remains a haven for Jews whose lives in the Diaspora are confronted with upsurges in anti-Semitism. Israel is also a beacon of challenge and opportunity to immigrants from all over the world, seeking, not a refuge, but a vibrant life with Jewish neighbours and Jewish values.

As in past decades, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict casts a cloud today on optimism. The rule of Yasser Arafat as president of the Palestinian Authority (1995-2004) was a time of setback for both Israel and the Palestinians. An International Monetary Fund audit estimated that Arafat transferred \$900 million in Palestinian public funds to his personal bank accounts. At the negotiating table, Arafat repeatedly failed to enter into constructive compromise. Insisting that Arafat had not done enough to curb Palestinian attacks against Israel, both the United States

Continued on page B4



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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

'Road Map' offered promise of peaceful progress

Continued from page B3

and Israel demanded that he take no part in the "Road Map" peace plan negotiating process put forward by U.S. President George W. Bush in 2002, and proposed by the "Quarter" (the European Union, Russia, the United States and the United Nations), with the aim of establishing a sovereign, independent Palestinian state.

That Road Map offered the promise of peaceful progress.

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On March 19, 2003, Mahmoud Abbas was appointed prime minister of the Palestinian Authority. On April 30, the details of the Road Map were made public (Abbas was elected president of the PA in January 2005). On May 27, the Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon, hitherto a hardliner, stated that the "occupation" of Palestinian territories was "a terrible thing for Israel and for the Palestinians" and that it "cannot continue endlessly."

On June 2, 2003, the first day of a three-day visit by Bush to the Middle East, Israel freed 100 Palestinian political prisoners. While in Egypt, Bush met Abbas, and the leaders of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Bahrain. As a result, the Arab leaders announced their support for the Road Map and promised to end funding to "terrorist groups." But in the West Bank and Gaza, the Hamas movement, fundamentalist and confrontational, rejected an end to terror, won control of the Palestinian Authority through the ballot box, and embarked on a vicious battle against Abbas and his Fatah movement.

Today, Abbas rules the West Bank, and Hamas rules the Gaza Strip. The main, and destructive contribution of Hamas to the debate, is the rockets fired continually against the Israeli Negev town of Sderot.

Despite Israel's economic vigour and military strength, her enemies have two pernicious weapons that can undermine both prosperity and military might: education and propaganda. Cartoons and editorials in the Arab and Muslim world persistently seek to demonize Israel. Some of these cartoons come from openly hostile sources, including Syria and the Hamas-run Gaza Strip. Others come from those nations that the United States administration designates as "moderate": Saudi Arabia, the United



Security officials survey the damage to a school in Sderot hit by Qassam rockets. [Israel Sun photo]

Arab Emirates, Oman, Qatar, and, through government-funded newspapers, Jordan and Egypt.

In October 2007 in Egypt, the government-funded mass-circulation daily *Al-Ahram* showed an Israeli hand extended in peace, holding an olive branch, but with missiles instead of fingers. Also that October, a cartoon in Qatar's *Ash-Sharq* showed Ehud Olmert as a snake wrapping himself around the Islamic shrine of the Dome of the Rock. In November 2007, a cartoon in Jordan's *Ad-Dustur* showed a Jew, identified by a skullcap and a Star of David on his briefcase, wearing a suit covered with images of fighter jets and tanks.

Arab anti-Israel education and propaganda are a continual source of concern in Israel. Yet efforts are being made to counter the gulf of ignorance and hostility. In 2005, 16 Israeli and 20 Palestinian mayors met in Jericho to discuss a one-year "civilian truce."

Continued on page B5

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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

Outside forces seeking to intensify the conflict

Continued from page B4

Each year the Hebrew University of Jerusalem holds courses to train young Israeli and Palestinian entrepreneurs. Among the initiatives of the Peres Centre for Peace – based in Tel Aviv – is Viewpoints Theatre, where a mixed Palestinian-Israeli cast perform for Palestinian and Israeli audiences. In 2007, 500 Palestinian and Israeli youngsters participated in the finals of mixed Israeli-Palestinian soccer matches; they included a joint Israeli-Palestinian girls' team. On the northern border of the West Bank, the Palestinian district governor of Jenin and the Israeli head of the Gilboa Regional Council are creating a 250-acre free-trade industrial zone to generate 10,000 jobs for Palestinians.

Such efforts at Israeli-Palestinian cooperation, at the local level, are continuous. Despite the severity of the hundreds of Israeli road blocks and barriers, and the severe restrictions of the movement of Palestinians on the West Bank – restrictions Israel considers essential for security reasons – goodwill does exist on both sides and does find outlets.

But outside forces are also at work in the Muslim world, seeking to intensify the conflict. On Nov. 4, 2007, Tony Blair, the Middle East emissary of the Quartet, spoke of the dangers. "The essence is the struggle going on inside Islam," he warned, "either to modernize and embrace today's world, or retreat in the face of it into reactionary old-fashioned defiance, in which the West and all its allies, including for these purposes Israel, is seen as the enemy."

Fundamentalist Islam has no interest in an Israeli-Palestinian agreement, and sees the enmity of Israel and the Palestinians as something to be encouraged and fomented. Iran is a vo-



Former Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon sits with then-defence minister Shaul Mofaz, left, and then-chief of staff Moshe Ya'alon at a meeting with residents of Gaza before the disengagement in 2005. [Israel Sun photo]

ciferous leader in this anti-Israel stance. Hamas, now ruling in Gaza, shares this anarchic, destructive aim. Fortunately, the two current leaders of both sides of the divide, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Abbas, are both determined to try to find a peaceful resolution. They know that economic distress, ill will and bloodshed could follow, if the conflict continues to fester.

A month after Arafat's death in November 2004, Mahmoud Abbas declared: "The uprising should be kept away from arms,

because it is a legitimate right of the people to express their rejection to occupation by popular and social means. The use of arms has been damaging and should end."

First Sharon, and then Olmert, responded to what Abbas had urged upon his own people. In 2005, as a gesture of conciliation, all Israeli settlements were withdrawn from the Gaza Strip. That year, and again in 2007, the Israeli Supreme Court adjusted the route of the security barrier in favour of the Palestinians living on either side of it.

Explaining the new era that he believed was dawning, Olmert declared on the eve of the Annapolis conference in November 2007: "At the top of the Palestinian leadership stand leaders committed to agreements signed in past years... this is an opportunity and we need to take it." Olmert added: "I am committed to the vision of two States, the Jewish state of Israel and a Palestinian state for the Palestinian people – there will be no negotiations over this vision, there will be no concessions over this basic goal, so succinctly phrased by U.S. President George W. Bush – 'two countries for two peoples.'"

Continued on page B6



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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

Prospects for both sides great if peace can be secured

Continued from page B5

Olmert sought to be even-handed: "We will not compromise Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state," he said, "nor will we try to force the Palestinians to compromise their right to a state of their own. These are basic tenets which are a sine qua non of the process." Olmert did not minimize the need for both sides to act with equal honesty in carrying out the obligations laid down in the American-sponsored Road Map for peace. "The Road Map demands a series of moves on Israel's side," Olmert declared. "These, like the obligations of the Palestinians, have not been carried out. Some of these obligations and demands are not convenient for us. But I have no intention of running away from them."

Those obligations on both sides are heavy. There has been far too much bloodshed for an easy of quick resolution of the conflict. In the seven years and three months between Sept. 29, 2000, and Dec. 31, 2007, a total of 4,330 Palestinians were killed by Israeli security forces. Forty-one Palestinians were killed by Israeli civilians. A further 569 Palestinians were killed by fellow Palestinians, mostly in the Hamas-Fatah struggle. On the Israeli side, 705 Israeli civilians and 425 Israeli security force personnel were killed by Palestinians. All these killings, on an unacceptable scale in any situation of dialogue and compromise, must

be addressed — and the numbers brought drastically down — for Annapolis and the Road Map to have a chance of success.

Olmert is not a quitter, nor is Abbas. With their joint aim of achieving a final agreement and Palestinian statehood by the end of 2008, the two men agreed at Annapolis that they would continue to meet every two weeks, for discussions on matters of substance. At the same time, Israeli and Palestinian negotiators have been in continuous session since Annapolis with regard to all the problems that need to be resolved. Among these are three most contentious: the future of the Palestinian refugees, the borders of the Palestinian state and the status of Jerusalem. For the Annapolis timetable to succeed, and for a Palestinian state to come into being by the end of 2008, these problems will continue to be discussed throughout 2008 at a series of meetings in Israel, the PA areas and far beyond.

This process began on the day after Annapolis, when Bush, Olmert and Abbas met at the White House. At this Nov. 29 meeting — held 60 years to the day after the United Nations voted to set up a Jewish and a Palestinian state in a partitioned Palestine-Israel, the PA and the United States agreed to begin work on three parallel tracks.

The first track, that of Israeli-Palestinian bilateral negotiations, started with a steering committee meeting on Dec. 12 between Israeli and Pales-

tinian representatives. No American representatives were present. The steering committee is to meet on a regular basis to establish the framework for the negotiations that is intended to lead to an agreement by the end of 2008. It was in part to oversee the work of the steering committee that Olmert and Abbas would meet every other week.

The second track agreed upon by Olmert, Abbas and Bush at the White House was the Road Map implementation, with the United States in charge of a monitoring mechanism. Israel had declared that it would not implement any agreement until the Palestinians fulfil their Road Map requirements, including a halt to acts of terror. The monitoring mechanism, which will judge when this happens, is thus a crucial element in furthering Palestinian statehood. A retired United States general, James Jones, a former NATO supreme allied commander in Europe, has been appointed head of the monitoring mechanism.

The third post-Annapolis track was to enlist the practical support of the Arab countries, all of whom had been present at Annapolis, and of the inter-

national community, to produce "a favourable regional environment" — essentially Palestinian economic security and growth — to advance the two-state solution. To this end, the donor countries met in Paris on Dec. 17, to put in place practical steps to help create workable Palestinian governing institutions within a flourishing Palestinian economy. PA prime minister Salam Fayyad, a man of the highest integrity, asked for \$5.6 billion. Sixty-eight nations pledged \$7.4 billion between them. Canada, with \$300 million pledged, was among the top 11 donors.

The host of the Paris talks, Blair, had been at Annapolis as the representative of the Quartet. Among those whose help he was able to enlist was the British-based Portland Trust, an initiator of projects designed to create Palestinian business opportunities and to finance housing development in the West Bank. From the United States, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice gave her strong support to the American-based Aspen Institute's U.S.-Palestinian Public-Private Partnership, committed to attracting international investment, supporting existing Palestinian businesses, creating jobs and training for Palestinians, and, like the Portland Trust, fostering economic opportunities in the PA through economic and social projects.

One of the goals of the Annapolis process was to delegitimize Hamas in the eyes of Palestinians and the Arab world, by showing the PA as a viable alternative to it. To do this, the economic track is considered essential.

Today, as Hamas continues to serve as a destabilizing factor, the attempt by Abbas to assert PA control over the Gaza-Egypt border is an example of the positive efforts being made. But with Hamas approval, rockets are still being fired into Israel from the Gaza Strip, almost on a daily basis. Amid Israeli fears and casualties, Israeli counter-strikes lead to a Palestinian death toll far higher



Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, U.S. President George W. Bush and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas in Washington after the Annapolis peace conference. [Carrie Devorah photo]

than the Israeli death toll. A strong act of faith is needed to see the Annapolis and Paris process through to success. But without that act of faith, sustained by whatever efforts each individual can make to seek a fair balance, there can no prosperity, and no peace. Israelis and Palestinians are always going to share, in one form or another, the tiny strip of land. At its widest point — from Tel Aviv to the Allenby Bridge — Israel and the West Bank combined stretch the same distance as from Toronto's Union Station to the waterfront at Barrie, on Lake Simcoe.

Each side has to be shown, by the deeds and actions of the other, that the prospects for both are incalculably great if a true peace can be secured. Trade, commerce, exports, joint enterprises, common activities, shared aspirations, all are at stake and all are on offer, if only the will and the determination to grasp them is present on both sides of the divide.

Commenting on the gap between rich and poor in Victorian Britain, prime minister Benjamin Disraeli wrote: "The gulf is unbridgeable." The events of the next few months will show if this is true of the Israeli-Palestinian divide. No crystal ball can reveal it. As Churchill once commented: "The future, though imminent, is obscure."

Optimism is not a popular frame of mind just now in the Middle East. But for the sake of the next generation of Palestinians and Israelis, working toward it is surely worth the effort. Israel is a country with great resilience and hope. Despite the grave challenges, it has every chance of proving its endurance and its creativity.

Sir Martin Gilbert is writing a history of Jews from Arab and Muslim lands. An updated anniversary edition of his book *Israel, A History* is shortly being published in Canada by Key Porter Books. The ninth edition of his Routledge Atlas of the Arab-Israeli Conflict is being published in March.



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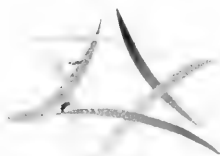
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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

Israel in search of peace

My great-grandfather, Rabbi Arye Leib Frumkin, went to Israel in 1871; his father had settled there 20 years earlier. His first act was to begin writing his *History of the Sages in Jerusalem*, chronicling the Jewish presence there since Nachmanides arrived in 1265.

In 1881 pogroms broke out in more than 100 towns in Russia. That was when he realised that aliyah was no longer a pilgrimage of the few but an urgent necessity for the many. He became a pioneer, moving to one of the first agricultural settlements in the new yishuv. The early settlers had caught malaria and left. Rabbi Frumkin led the return and built the first house there. The name they gave the town epitomizes their dreams. Using a phrase from the Book of Hosea, they called it Petach Tikva, "the gateway of hope." Today it is the sixth largest city in Israel.



By Chief Rabbi
Sir Jonathan Sacks

The Jewish connection with Israel did not begin with Zionism, a word coined in the 1890s. It goes back 4,000 years to the first recorded syllables of Jewish time, God's command to Abraham: "Leave your land, your birthplace and your father's house and go to the land that I will show you." (Ex. 12: 1) Seven times God promised Abraham the land, and repeated that promise to Isaac and Jacob. If any nation on earth has a right to any land – a right based on history,



Two young Israelis recently wave the flag along the ancient ramparts of Jerusalem in a bid to re-emphasize the millennial Jewish connection to the city. [RNS/Reuters photo]

attachment and long association – then the Jewish people has a right to Israel.

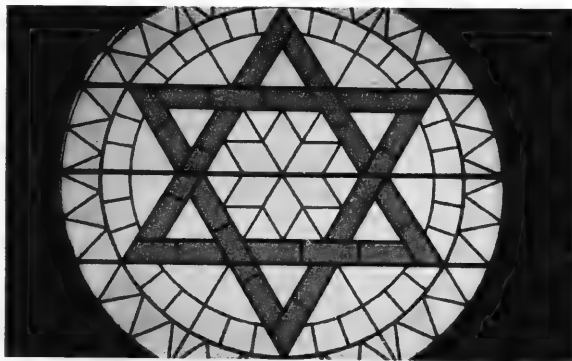
Judaism – twice as old as Christianity, three times as old as Islam – was the call to Abraham's descendants to create a society of freedom, justice and compassion under the sovereignty of God. A society involves a land, a home, somewhere where the "children of Israel" form the majority, and can thus create a culture, an economy and a political system in accordance with their values. That land was and is Israel.

Jews never left Israel voluntarily. They never relin-

quished their rights. They returned whenever they could: in the days of Moses, then again after the Babylonian exile, then again in generation after generation. Judah Halevi went there in the 12th century. So did Maimonides and his family, though they found it impossible to stay. Nachmanides went after being exiled from Spain. There was a large community there in the 16th century. There are places, especially in Galilee, where they never left at all.

Those with a sense of history long ago recognized the injustice of denying Jews their ancestral home. In 1799 Napoleon, at the start of his Middle East campaign, called on Jews to return (the campaign failed before there was a chance to act on this proposal). So did many British thinkers in the 19th century, among them Lord Palmerston, Lord Shaftesbury, and the writer George Eliot in her novel *Daniel Deronda*.

Continued on page B9



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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

Jews as 'outsiders', a perverse, modern myth

Continued from page B8

The Balfour Declaration in 1917, ratified in 1922 by the League of Nations, was an attempt to rectify the single most sustained crime against humanity: the denial of Jewry's right to its land and its subsequent unparalleled history of suffering. Prime minister Winston Churchill never wavered from this view. There were Arab leaders who understood this, too. In 1919, King Faisal, of Iraq, wrote to the American-Jewish judge Felix Frankfurter: 'We Arabs, especially the educated among us, look with the deepest sympathy on the Zionist movement... The Jewish movement is national and not imperialist. Our movement [Arab nationalism] is national and not imperialist. Indeed I think that neither can be a real success without the other.'

The idea that Jews came to Israel as outsiders or imperialists is among the most perverse of modern myths. They were the land's original inhabitants: they have the same relationship to the land as native Americans to America, aborigines to Australia, and Maoris to New Zealand. They were ousted by imperialists. They are the only rulers of the land in the past 3,000 years who neither sought nor created an empire.

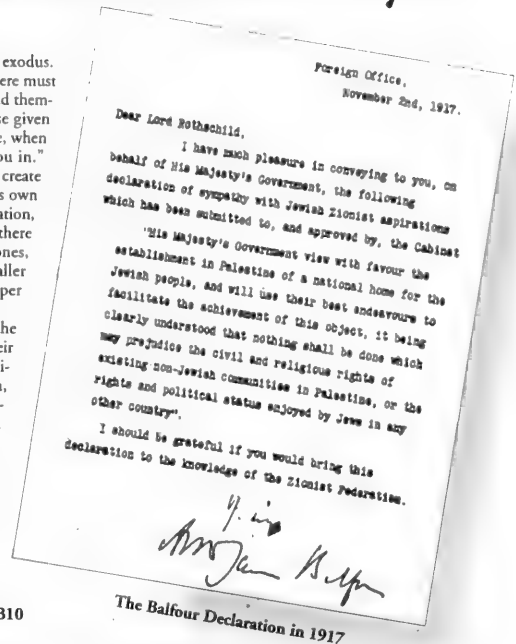
In fact, no other people, no other power, has ever created an independent state there. When it was not a Jewish state, Israel was merely an administrative unit of empires: the Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Umayyads, Fatimids, Abbasids, Crusaders, Mamluks and Ottomans. The existence of Israel, in ancient times and today, is a sustained protest against empires and imperialism: against Mesopotamia

of Abraham's day and the Egyptians of the exodus.

Do we really need a Jewish state? Yes. There must be some place on earth where Jews can defend themselves, where they have a home in the sense given by the poet Robert Frost as "the place where, when you have to go there, they have to take you in." Every nation has the right to rule itself and create a society and culture in accordance with its own values. That right, to national self-determination, is among the most basic in politics. Today, there are 82 Christian nations and 56 Muslim ones, but only one Jewish one: in a country smaller than the Kruger National Park, 1/4 of one per cent of the land mass of the Arab world.

Long ago, Jews recognized the right of the Arab population of the land to a place of their own. There were various plans for the partition of the land into two states, one Jewish, one Arab, in the 1920s and 1930s. Jews accepted them; the Arabs rejected them. In 1947, the United Nations voted for partition. Again, Jews accepted, the Arabs refused. David Ben-Gurion reiterated the call for peace as a central part of Israel's Declaration of Independence in May 1948. Israel's neighbours – Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq – responded by attacking it on all fronts.

Continued on page B10



The Balfour Declaration in 1917



Mazel Tov to Israel

on its
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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

Palestinians betrayed by their own supporters

Continued from page B9

The offer was renewed in 1967 after the Six Day War. The response of the Arab League, meeting in Khartoum, Sudan, in September 1967, was the famous "Three Nos": no to peace, no to negotiations, no to the recognition of the State of Israel. The call was repeated many times by Golda Meir, and always decisively rejected.

The boldest offer was made by prime minister Ehud Barak at Taba, 2001. It offered the Palestinians a state in the whole of Gaza and 97 per cent of the West Bank, with border compensations for the other three per cent, with east Jerusalem as its capital. The story is told in detail in Dennis Ross' *The Missing Peace* (Ross was the chief negotiator). Many members of the Palestinian team wanted to accept. The Saudi ambassador at the time, Prince Bandar bin Sultan, said, "If Arafat does not accept what is available now, it won't be a tragedy, it will be a crime."

Tragically, the Palestinians have been betrayed by those who claimed to be their supporters. They were betrayed in 1948 by the Arab states who promised them that if they left now they would return soon, all Jews having been expelled. They were betrayed by the Arab nations to which they fled, who refused to grant them citizenship, in marked contrast to Israel and its treatment of Jewish refugees from Arab (and other) lands.

They were betrayed by countries that encouraged them to pursue violence instead of peace, bringing poverty to an entire population which, under Israeli rule from 1967 to 1987, had achieved unprecedented levels of affluence and economic growth.



A file photo of Palestinians rallying in support of leaders whose politics condemned them to violence, poverty and despair. (RNS/Reuters photo)

They are betrayed today by those who encourage impossible expectations – Palestinian rule over the whole of Israel – thus condemning yet another generation to violence, poverty and despair.

The Egyptians, who ruled Gaza between 1949 and 1967, could have created a Palestinian state, but did not. The Jorda-

nians, who ruled the West Bank during the same years, could have created a Palestinian state, but did not. Instead, Egypt persecuted its Islamist intellectuals, sentencing many to death.

Continued on page B11



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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

Israel's achievements have been immense

Continued from page B10

The Jordanians expelled the Palestinians in 1971, after killing almost 10,000 of them in 1970 in the massacre known as "Black September." The only country that has ever offered the Palestinians a state is Israel.

What has systematically derailed Israel's efforts for peace is the fact that every concession it has made, every withdrawal it has undertaken, has been interpreted by its enemies as a sign of weakness, and has led to more violence, not less. The Oslo process led to suicide bombings. Barak's offer led to the so-called El Aqsa intifadah. The withdrawals from Lebanon and Gaza led directly to the onslaught of Katyushas and Qassams. How does any nation make peace under these conditions? Hamas and Hezbollah have made it clear that they do not seek peace. They seek Israel's destruction.

Under constant threat of violence or war, Israel's achievements have nonetheless been immense. It has taken a desolate landscape and turned it into a place of farms, forests and fields. It has taken immigrants from more than 100 countries, speaking more than 80 languages, and turned them into a nation. It has created a modern economy with almost no resources other than the creative gifts of its people. It has sustained democracy in a part of the world that had never known it before. It has taken Hebrew, the language of the Bible, and made it speak again. It has taken a people devastated by the Holocaust and made it live again. Israel remains a Petach Tikva, a gateway of hope.

We must challenge the blatant falsehoods

Is criticism of Israel anti-Semitism? No. Criticism is a legitimate part of democratic politics and free speech. Many of Israel's most acute critics are Israelis. No nation is perfect; no nation can be perfect; a good society is one that makes space for, and listens to, constructive criticism. That is something with which we must live. The Hebrew Bible is the most self-critical document in religious or national history.

What we must challenge are the blatant falsehoods: that Israel is the aggressor, that it has not sought peace; above all the idea that it has no right to exist. Equally we must challenge the false paradigm that the Israel-Palestinian relationship is a zero-sum game in which one side loses and the other wins. It is not. From peace, both sides gain. From war, violence and terror, both sides lose.

The call on both sides must be for peace: peace for Israel, peace for the Palestinians. You cannot have one without the other. The choice is not between supporting Israel or supporting the Palestinians, but between peace or violence. Peace is sacred, violence a desecration. Too many lives have been lost, too much blood has been shed. Eventually both sides must recognize the other's right to be — and if not now, when?

Sir Jonathan Sacks is chief rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth.



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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

Jewish youth in Montreal celebrate the Jewish rebirth in Eretz Israel with the dancing of the horah at the YM/YWHA.

[CJC archives photo]



Canadian Jewry Responds

For the Jews of Canada the years immediately following World War II were the worst of times. The news trickling out of Europe was appalling. No one yet knew how many Jews had been murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators, but it was increasingly evident that events too horrible to be believed were not too horrible to have happened. The world's largest Jewish community had all but disappeared, and with it the fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, aunts and uncles of most Canadian Jews. The extent of the genocide was not yet clear – and would not be for years – but Canadian Jewry realized the world had changed.

But for them it had not yet changed for the better. Continuing its pre-war policy, the Canadian government was still not allowing Jews into the country. The remnant of European Jewry who survived the Holocaust would largely remain cooped up in displaced persons camps for another three years despite frantic efforts by their relatives in Canada to bring them over. And the blanketing anti-Semitism that enveloped Canada in the years before the war refused to lift. In fact, it got worse.

Despite the contributions of Canada's Jews to the war effort – thousands had enlisted and fought and died for their country – anti-Jewish attitudes and behaviour persisted. Restrictive covenants still prevented Jews from buying or renting homes in most parts of Canada. Quotas still kept many Jews from admission into universities and professional schools. Hospitals would still not accept Jewish doctors. There were still barely any Jewish judges and university professors. Whole sectors of industry and government still refused to hire Jews, including veterans.

Indeed, very little had changed for Canada's Jews as several public opinion polls at the time made clear. More than half of those questioned did not want any more Jews in the country, and in fact, preferred German immigrants to Jewish ones. As well, many Canadians felt that there were already too many Jews in Canada. Even as more and more Canadians learned through newspapers, magazines and newsreels about the extent of Nazi depravities, rates of anti-Semitism rose in Canada, reaching their peak in 1948.

Worse, Jews everywhere, including Canada were increasingly concerned over the situation in Palestine, where the British were blocking the arrival of Jewish refugees and seemed to be siding with the Arabs in their efforts to preclude the creation of a Jewish state. As the number of Jewish casualties grew Canadian Jews grew more frantic. For them the future of the Jews both at home and abroad seemed increasingly bleak.

And then came November 29, 1947.

On that day, after several false starts, the United Nations voted to create a Jewish state in Palestine. During the day, Canadian Jews, like their counterparts everywhere huddled around their radios listening to the vote. Once it was announced there was an outpouring of rejoicing in every Jewish community in Canada, the likes of which had never been seen before. The re-creation of a Jewish homeland after an absence of some 2000 years prompted spontaneous rallies in every Jewish neighbourhood in every village, town and city across the country. This was the first bit of good news for Canadian Jewry in over two decades and was their first opportunity to celebrate. The marches, demonstrations, and meetings over the next few days were absolutely cathartic for a community desperately in need of letting loose its long pent-up frustrations.

As Mordecai Richler described it:

Continued on page B13



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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

Support always strong

Continued from page B12

"In our neighbourhood people charged out on to the streets to embrace. Men and women who hadn't been to a synagogue since last Yom Kippur surprised themselves, turning up to offer prayers of gratitude and then toss back glasses of schnapps with slices of schmaltz herring. Horns were honked. Photographs of Chaim Weizmann or Ben-Gurion, torn from back issues of *Life* and *Look* were passed up in bay windows. Blue-and-white Stars of David flapped in the wind on some balconies. Many wept as they sang *Hatikvah*, the Zionist anthem. We ... trooped downtown singing *Am Yisrael Hai* ("the People of Israel Lives") and then danced the horah in the middle of St. Catherine Street, just outside the Forum, bringing traffic to a halt."

And what happened in Montreal was replicated in Toronto, Winnipeg, Glace Bay, Hamilton, Vancouver, Brantford, Edenbridge, indeed everywhere in Canada where there was a Jewish community. I remember joining the huge rally on Spadina Avenue proudly waving the Jewish flag my father had given me. Typically I was brought back to earth the next day when I naively took the flag to my local public school to show off to my classmates in Grade 1 and was promptly beaten up by two bullies in the school yard who grabbed the flag and shouted anti-Semitic epithets. I never did get to show my flag to my friends. In fact I never did go back to that school. The next day my father removed me from Ogden public school in the Queen Street and Spadina Avenue area and enrolled me in the new Hebrew Day School on Brunswick

Avenue. It is to these two bullies to whom I am indebted for my Hebrew and Zionist education.

Support for a Jewish homeland had always been strong in Canada, much stronger, for example than in the United States. Throughout the inter-years the many Zionist organizations in Canada raised millions of dollars to buy land for Palestinian Jews. From time to time leaders of its umbrella organization, the Zionist Organization of Canada, met with government officials to lobby on behalf of the homeland promised to the Jews by the British government in the famous Balfour Declaration of 1917. More persistently they pleaded with prime minister Mackenzie King to intercede with the British to open up Palestine to some of the persecuted Jews of Europe. But King and his cabinet supported the British restrictionist policy and politely rebuffed every delegation's entreaties.

Once the war began, Canadian Zionists adopted a more militant approach. A new massive public relations campaign on behalf of Palestine was launched. But it too achieved little. A Canada at war had even less time and patience for Jewish grievances than a Canada at peace. Only after the end of hostilities in Europe, when the United Nations took up the problem of Palestine, did Canadians evince some interest in what was to become of the promise made to the Jews in the Balfour Declaration – and then only because a Canadian, Ivan Rand of the Supreme Court of Canada, was appointed to the United Nations Special Commission on Palestine.

Continued on page B14



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A young Golda Meir, front centre, visited Canada in the early pre-state days of the Yishuv to drum up support for the efforts to build a Jewish homeland. [CJC archives photo]

Israel: 60 Years of Independence

New Jewish state gave Jews everywhere self-esteem

Continued from page B13

Canadian Jews did what they could. Divided by ideological splits among the supporters of labour, the right-leaning revisionists, the liberals and the religious parties, Canadian Zionists turned to a high profile committee of non-Jews to help turn the tide. And it seemed to work. The Canadian Palestine Committee issued statements and press releases, sponsored radio broadcasts, bought newspaper advertisements, and lobbied government officials. The committee gave Canadian Zionists a credibility they had not had before in government circles. These activities certainly played a role in Canada's decision to vote for partition on that fateful November evening and to create a state for the Jews in part of Palestine. But as most historians believe, Canada's decision was based on its own self-interest and not on the lobbying of Canada's Jews.

But it was not only in fundraising and lobbying for Palestine that Canadian Jews were selfless. Many also put their own bodies on the line. Hundreds of war veterans volunteered to fight for the new Jewish state when it was attacked by five invading Arab armies. For those who could not go over and fight there were equally important tasks to be done at home. Zionist activists were able to procure tons of surplus war materials—guns, mortars, radios, even airplanes—through dummy corporations and ship them to a desperate Israeli army in crates marked 'agricultural tools'. Other Jews launched a



Canadian Jews of all religious and political leanings show their support for Israel.

[Benji Feldman photo]

massive fundraising campaign. In one year, nearly \$10 million was collected for the State of Israel, making it probably the most successful fundraising campaign in Canadian history to that time. Indeed in per capita terms the amount of money raised for the Jewish State was the largest in the world.

Like November 29, 1947, May 14, 1948 was another red-letter day for Canadian and world Jewry. That day marked the official

birth of the State of Israel. At a ceremony in Tel Aviv a Jewish state was proclaimed and a government created. Within hours the United States announced its recognition of the new state. Canada, ever careful, would not grant recognition for another seven months.

But Canadian Jews did not seem to care. They did not expect much from a government that had been a constant disappointment to them. For them, the creation of the state was sufficient and the community launched days of celebration and rejoicing. In Toronto, Jews piled out into the streets singing and dancing. Synagogues were full and 20,000 piled into Maple Leaf Gardens in tribute. In Montreal they jammed into the Montreal Forum, and across Canada hockey arenas and auditoriums were filled by raucous Jewish crowds commemorating the establishment of the Jewish state. There had been so little to celebrate for so long Canadian Jewry took the opportunity to revel in their pride.

They were proud of the achievements of the Jews of Palestine. But they also celebrated their own accomplishments. They felt their vigorous cam-

paigns had moved a reluctant Canadian government to support partition. Many toasts were drunk to the leading Canadian advocates of the Jewish state at the United Nations, Justice Ivan Rand and a young Lester Pearson. Both had played key roles in the creation of the State of Israel. Forgotten for the moment were the anti-Semitic, restrictive policies of King, who chose this moment to leave office.

The formation of the new Jewish state gave Jews everywhere a self esteem they had not had for centuries. They were no longer homeless; after 2,000 years of dispersal they finally had returned home. In the words of Abba Eban, Jews everywhere were now walking with a new jump in their step, especially when the Jews in Palestine triumphed over the attacking Arab armies in Israel's war of independence.

In Canada Jews were now viewed from a different perspective. Capitalizing on the victories of their Israeli cousins, Canadian Jews achieved a new level of prestige that had eluded them for generations. Anti-Semitism, which had been on the rise in the years after the war, according to all the polls, reached its peak just before the creation of Israel. In the following months and years, however, began an inexorable slide for the next 50 years. For Canadians there was now a new Jewish stereotype. The ragged, bearded peddler was now replaced by the heroic, vigorous Sabra who had just won a spectacular military victory. The world does not like losers, and finally Jews were winners.

But the birth of Israel had a more profound impact on Canada's Jews. Confident that most of the survivors of the Holocaust would choose to move to their new homeland, after 30 years of keeping them closed, the Canadian government opened the country's doors to Jewish refugees. No longer concerned that Jews would flood Canada, Ottawa ordered officials in the displaced persons camps to recruit Jews for Canada. Until then of course, in the three years following the war, very few Jews were allowed admission. Suddenly the gates were wide open and over the next few years over 35,000 survivors and their families poured into the Canada.

As well, taking their cue from the courage of the Jews in Palestine, Jewish human rights activists in Canada became more militant in their fight against the discrimination and restrictions confronting Canadian Jews. Within a few years they had achieved an astonishing success. Laws were passed to protect minority rights. With Jews in the vanguard and with a more accommodating government and society Canada became the tolerant, welcoming, humane nation that is still its hallmark today.

Jewish Canadians have much to celebrate in the creation of the State of Israel some 60 years ago. Perhaps more than they thought...

Irving Abella is the Shiff Chair of Canadian Jewish Studies, York University, and a past president of the Canadian Jewish Congress.

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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

The Declaration

Issued by the Provisional Government of Israel in Tel Aviv, on 5 Iyar 5708, May 14, 1948.

The Land of Israel was the birthplace of the Jewish people. Here their spiritual, religious and political identity was shaped. Here they first attained to statehood, created cultural values of national and universal significance and gave to the world the eternal Book of Books. After being forcibly exiled from their land, the people kept faith with it throughout their Dispersion and never ceased to pray and hope for their return to it and for the restoration in it of their political freedom.

Impelled by this historic and traditional attachment, Jews strove in every successive generation to re-establish themselves in their ancient homeland. In recent decades they returned in their masses. Pioneers, defiant returnees, and defenders, they made deserts bloom, revived the Hebrew language, built villages and towns, and created a thriving community controlling its own economy and culture, loving peace but knowing how to defend itself, bringing the blessings of progress to all the country's inhabitants, and aspiring towards independent nationhood.

In the year 5657 (1897), at the summons of the spiritual father of the Jewish State, Theodore Herzl, the First Zionist Congress convened and proclaimed the right of the Jewish people to national rebirth in its own country.

This right was recognized in the Balfour Declaration of the 2nd November, 1917, and re-affirmed in the Mandate of the League of Nations which, in particular, gave international sanction to the historic connection between the Jewish people and Eretz-Israel and to the right of the Jewish people to rebuild its National Home.

The catastrophe which recently befell the Jewish people – the massacre of millions of Jews in Europe – was another clear demonstration of the urgency of solving the problem of its homelessness by re-establishing in Eretz-Israel the Jewish State, which would open the gates of the homeland wide to every Jew and confer upon the Jewish people the status of a fully privileged member of the community of nations.

Survivors of the Nazi holocaust in Europe, as well as Jews from other parts of the world, continued to migrate to Eretz-Israel, undaunted by difficulties, restrictions and dangers,

and never ceased to assert their right to a life of dignity, freedom and honest toil in their national homeland.

In the Second World War, the Jewish community of this country contributed its full share to the struggle of the freedom- and peace-loving nations against the forces of Nazi wickedness and, by the blood of its soldiers and its war effort, gained the right to be reckoned among the peoples who founded the United Nations.

On the 29th November, 1947, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution calling for the establishment of a Jewish State in Eretz-Israel; the General Assembly required the inhabitants of Eretz-Israel to take such steps as were necessary on their part for the implementation of that resolution. This recognition by the United Nations of the right of the Jewish people to establish their State is irrevocable.

This right is the natural right of the Jewish people to be masters of their own fate, like all other nations, in their own sovereign State.

Accordingly we, members of the People's Council, representatives of the Jewish Community of Eretz-Israel and of the Zionist Movement, are here assembled on the day of the termination of the British Mandate over Eretz-Israel and, by virtue of our natural and historic right and on the strength of the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly, hereby declare the establishment of a Jewish state in Eretz-Israel, to be known as the State of Israel.

We declare that, with effect from the moment of the termination of the Mandate being tonight, the eve of Sabbath, the 6th Iyar, 5708 (15th May, 1948), until the establishment of the elected, regular authorities of the State in accordance with the Constitution which shall be adopted by the Elected Constituent Assembly not later than the 1st October 1948, the People's Council shall act as a Provisional Council of State, and its executive organ, the People's Administration, shall be the Provisional Government of the Jewish State, to be called "Israel."

The State of Israel will be open for Jewish immigration and for the Ingathering of the Exiles; it will foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective

Continued on page B17



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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

of the Establishment of the State of Israel

Continued from page B16

of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions; and it will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

The State of Israel is prepared to cooperate with the agencies and representatives of the United Nations in implementing the resolution of the General Assembly of the 29th November, 1947, and will take steps to bring about the economic union of the whole of Eretz-Israel.

We appeal to the United Nations to assist the Jewish people in the building-up of its State and to receive the State of Israel into the community of nations.

We appeal – in the very midst of the onslaught launched against us now for months – to the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to preserve peace and participate in the upbuilding of the State on the basis of full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its provisional and permanent institutions.

We extend our hand to all neighbouring states and their peoples in an offer of peace and good neighbourliness, and appeal to them to establish bonds of cooperation and mutual



David Ben-Gurion reading the declaration in Tel Aviv. (IGPO photo)

help with the sovereign Jewish people settled in its own land. The State of Israel is prepared to do its share in a common effort for the advancement of the entire Middle East.

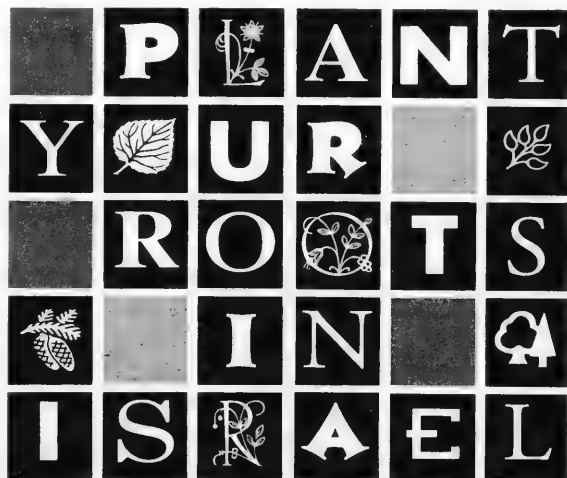
We appeal to the Jewish people throughout the Diaspora

to rally round the Jews of Eretz-Israel in the tasks of immigration and upbuilding and to stand by them in the great struggle for the realization of the age-old dream – the redemption of Israel.

Placing our trust in the Almighty, we affix our signatures to this proclamation at this session of the provisional Council of State, on the soil of the Homeland, in the city of Tel-Aviv, on this Sabbath eve, the 5th day of Iyar, 5708 (14th May, 1948).

Signed by

David Ben-Gurion, Daniel Auster, Mordechai Benton, Yitzchak Ben Zvi, Eliyahu Berligne, Fritz Bernstein, Rabbi Wolf Gold, Meir Grabovsky, Yitzchak Gruenbaum, Dr. Abraham Granovsky, Eliyahu Dobkin, Meir Wilner-Kovner, Zerach Wahrhaftig, Herzl Vardi, Rachel Cohen, Rabbi Kalman Kahana, Saadia Kobashi, Rabbi Yitzchak Meir, Levin Meir, David Loewenstein, Zvi Luria, Golda Myerson, Nachum Nir, Zvi Segal, Rabbi Yehuda Leib Hacohen, Fishman David, Zvi Pinkas, Aharon Zisling, Moshe Kolodny, Eliezer Kaplan, Abraham Katznelson, Felix Rosenbluth, David Remez, Berl Repetur, Mordechai Shattner, Ben Zion Sternberg, Bekhor Shitreet, Moshe Shapira, Moshe Shertok



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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

They fought for the nascent Jewish state

On a cold night in early 1948 the main auditorium of the Brunswick Avenue Talmud Torah in Toronto was filled to capacity as Maj. Ben Adelman, a Canadian-born member of the Yishuv – the pre-state Jewish community in Palestine – addressed an expectant crowd. Adelman had moved to Palestine in the 1930s and served in the British Army in World War II. As a former Canadian he had been sent to



By
David Bercuson

Canada by the Haganah – the official pre-state army of the Yishuv – to recruit Jewish veterans to serve in Palestine. The previous November the United Nations General Assembly had voted to partition Palestine into a Jewish state and an Arab state upon the expiry of the British mandate at midnight, May 15, 1948. Everyone knew a war would erupt between the new Jewish state and the Arab countries surrounding it as soon as the partition became official. Indeed, a civil war between Arabs and Jews in Palestine had broken out within hours of the UN vote. Now, representatives of the Yishuv were fanning out across the globe trying to raise money, gather surplus arms from the recent war, and attract volunteers to fight.

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The Volunteers: How a Handful of Jews (and non-Jews) From Overseas Helped Establish The State of Israel

Most of the men at the Talmud Torah that evening had come to listen. Some were too young to have served in the recent war but were fired up by the ideal of helping avoid a second Holocaust, this time in Palestine. Others were veterans of the war – almost one out of every 10 Jews in Canada had donned a uniform to fight Nazism. There had been no formal announcement of the meeting, just a few mysterious posters urging Jewish men to “stand up and be counted,” because everyone thought

it was illegal for a Canadian to serve in the armed forces of another country (it was not, but many believed it was) and thus illegal to recruit Canadians for service abroad. Men had also been phoned, or spoken to quietly at the Wingate branch of the Royal Canadian Legion, founded by Canadian Jewish war veterans in Toronto.

One man in the room who had not come to listen, but to volunteer and to convince others to volunteer as well, sat on the stage as Adelman addressed the crowd. He was Benjamin Dunkelman, former major in the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, who had been a decorated mortar platoon officer in World War II. The scion of a wealthy Toronto family, Dunkelman had also moved to Palestine in the 1930s – the two men had once planned to establish a Canadian kibbutz there – but had returned to Canada before the war. He was an avid supporter of the Zionist cause and he was ready to lead 1,000 Canadians to Palestine – if that many could be recruited.

The recruiting campaign was surreptitiously launched in Toronto and Montreal by leading members of the local Jewish communities and carefully watched by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, who reported to the Canadian cabinet on the activities. But although Canada had passed a law during the Spanish Civil War to discourage Canadians from serving in the militaries of other countries, actual prohibition only applied to service for nations at war with

Continued on page B19

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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

Recruitment campaign locally financed

Continued from page B18

Canada. So the government did nothing about the recruiting though it was rather more vigilant about allowing the Yishuv to acquire war surplus planes, ships, or guns in Canada.

Most of Canada's Jews, then as now, lived in Montreal and Toronto and thus the recruiting effort was focused on those two cities. But Jewish war veterans and young Jewish men eager to serve could be found all across the country, literally from Nova Scotia to British Columbia. And wherever they were, it was easy for them to volunteer simply by approaching the local Zionist Organization of Canada branch, or via the Jewish War Veterans of Canada or through the handful of Jewish dominated Royal Canadian Legion branches in Montreal (The Brigadier Kisch Branch), Toronto or Winnipeg, which had the third largest number of Jews in Canada at that time. And although Dunkelman and others yearned for a chance to eventually recruit up to 1,000 men, the Haganah eventually decided to aim for a quota of approximately 300 volunteers from Canada. The best figures available indicate that about 5,000 "volunteers from outside the country", as they were called by the Haganah, or Machal in Hebrew, joined the Jewish forces in Israel's War of Independence. They literally came from all parts of the world;



Pilots of 101 Fighter Squadron. Top row (l. to r.): John McElroy, Chester Baker, Rudy Angarten. Second row: Arnie Bare, Sandy Jacobs, Cesar Dangut, Denny Wilson, Jack Doyle, Ezer Weizman, Syd Cohen. Third row: Syd Antim, unknown. Bottom row: Wayne Peake, Lee Sinclair, Cy Feldman, Arnie Cohen, Sam Pomerantz.

the largest contingents were from the United States, South Africa, the United Kingdom and Canada.

The recruitment campaign in Canada was to be entirely locally financed by funds raised secretly for that very purpose. The chief organizer of the overall fundraising campaign was D. Lou Harris, a Toronto businessman who worked closely with Samuel J. Zacks, president of the Zionist Organization of Canada

Continued from page B20



Reena's Board of Directors, clients, staff and volunteers join our community in wishing the state of Israel Mazal Tov on reaching this momentous anniversary.

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Israel: 60 Years of Independence



Irvin Schindler's B-17 at the Royal Canadian Air Force Station, Dartmouth, N.S.

Fledgling air force sought pilots

Continued from page B19

and Zack's wife Ayala who had been an underground agent in France during the war and who had risked her life helping downed Allied flyers escape to the United Kingdom. In Vancouver, local lawyer Harold Freeman was asked by Harris to raise money on the west coast and help recruit local volunteers. In Montreal, lawyer Leon Crestohl, a Polish-born graduate of both McGill University and the Université de Montréal who had worked for the government during the war, was one of the key personnel, along with Moshe Myerson, a veteran of the Canadian army, and Sydney Shulemson, Canada's most highly decorated Jewish war veteran, who had pioneered ship-busting flying a twin-engined strike fighter for the RCAF.

Shulemson had a special assignment; as an air force veteran it was his job to find air crew, especially pilots, for an Israeli air force that was not even born yet. David Ben-Gurion was certain that when the war began in earnest, warplanes would be needed to protect the skies over Tel Aviv, to ferry men and supplies to outlying settlements cut off by the invading Arab armies and – if necessary – to bomb strategic Arab targets. Negotiations were already underway to buy war surplus transport aircraft in the United States and fighters from Czechoslovakia. The transports would also fly arms to Jewish controlled areas of Palestine from Czechoslovakia and elsewhere. Eventually the Israelis, as they were to become after May 15, even obtained three war surplus B-17 bombers in the United States and flew them to Israel via Czechoslovakia. Since there were very few pilots, let alone pilots with war experience in the Yishuv, it was vital to obtain pilots from wherever they could be found. At the end of the day, the majority of Israel's air crew came from the United States, Canada, Britain and South Africa. A few were not Jews, but men who came to fight either for the excitement or for the cause.

One of the most prominent – a man Shulemson recruited – was Canadian ace George "Buzz" Buerling who had shot down 31 enemy planes flying with the RAF and the RCAF to become Canada's highest scoring fighter pilot of the war. Buerling was on his way to the Middle East piloting a small transport plane when he crashed and was killed at Rome's Urbe airport just five days after Israel's independence. He is buried in an Israeli military cemetery in Haifa alongside several other non-Jewish volunteer pilots including Canadian Len Fitchett.

Aircrew from Canada, the United States and other countries flew directly to various points in Europe, then made their way to Israel either directly or via Czechoslovakia. The Czechs were the chief source of fighter aircraft and many other weapons because the Soviet Union was, at that time, a strong supporter of the new Jewish State. Transport aircraft flew constantly between Israel and Czechoslovakia either directly or via Corsica. Volunteers for the other fighting arms – mostly the army – were sent by ship to Le Havre, in France, overland to Marseille, then by steamer (or sometimes even via illegal refugee ships) to Palestine/Israel. Most were then gathered at a former British army base near Tel Aviv before being assigned to units in the Haganah.

The Yishuv had already built a sizable fighting force even before the partition vote. It was composed mainly of either veterans who had fought for or had been trained by the British in World War II or young men and women, mostly in the Palmach, who had been training in the forests, hills and deserts of Palestine since the 1930s. These young commandos had a thorough knowledge of the terrain and of their potential antagonists, but for them, as for the others, heavy weapons were in very short supply and almost no one had experience in modern open warfare.

Continued on page B21

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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

Many extraordinary people

Continued from page B20

The Machal was intended to fill the gap. No matter how many young Jewish (or non-Jewish) enthusiasts wanted to come to Israel's aid, manpower itself wasn't the problem. Israel needed pilots and aircrew. It needed veterans of tank warfare, artillerymen, signals and communications personnel, logistics and supply experts, radar operators and men (and women) who had had sea duty in the recent war. It needed veteran non-commissioned officers who knew how to train soldiers. It needed veteran officers who knew how to plan complex operations or command tanks, planes and ships. In large measure the volunteers from Canada, the United States and elsewhere did fill that gap.

There were many extraordinary people among the Canadian volunteers, some of whom had never fired a shot in anger before. A number of them received their baptism of fire on May 11, 1948 as part of a Givati Brigade attack on Bash-Shit, home to some 1600 Palestinian Arabs, situated about three kilometres east of the main road between Tel Aviv and Gaza. Unimportant in itself, Bash-Shit was nevertheless at the junction of five dirt roads that had to be secured as part of a larger Haganah offensive known as Operation Barak. Half of one company of Givati's 2nd Battalion consisted of 27 Canadian volunteers known throughout the brigade as "the Canadian platoon."

Among the soldiers in the Canadian platoon were Toronto's Murray Cappell, Irving Kaplansky and Moe Dankovy, Syd Cadloff from Montreal and Lionel Drucker from Vancouver. Their Israeli officers seemed as young and untried as they were and the platoon ran into an ambush. Cadloff's leg was stitched

by machine gun fire – he later lost it entirely – while Drucker and the three Toronto men, carrying a Spandau machine gun, tried to shoot their way out of the town. Luckily they were successful. They were subsequently transferred to the north of the country to fight the Arab Liberation Army, a group of irregulars and volunteers under the leadership of Fawzi-al-Kaukji which was threatening to cross the Lebanese border and seize all the

Galilee. Their new unit was the 7th Brigade, commanded by Ben Dunkelman.

The chaotic early weeks of fighting were brought to a halt by a four week UN ceasefire order on June 11. There was no sign of a diplomatic solution since both the Arab Higher Committee – which represented the Arabs of Palestine – and the Arab League, which stood for the invading Arab countries, would not enter into direct talks with the Israelis. The ceasefire was a respite and in that respite both



Lionel Drucker, from Vancouver

sides tried to rush as many arms and men into the fighting fronts as they could manage despite a UN embargo on such activity. The Israeli forces had held the Egyptians back from Tel Aviv and the Syrians from the upper Galilee, but the Trans-Jordan Arab Legion was dug in on the approaches to Jerusalem, and had besieged the old Jewish quarter. The danger remained of an Egyptian-Jordanian junction in the northern Negev which would truncate Israel at Beersheba. Ben Gurion was determined to go on the offensive in the next round.

Continued on page B22



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Ontario



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on achieving 60 years of Statehood

Israel: 60 Years of Independence



Moshe Cappell in a Seventh Brigade armoured car in Israel
[Photos reproduced with permission from *The Secret Army*,
David J. Bercuson, Lester & Orpen Dennys publishers]

*Camp Solelim's
Board of Directors and Staff
wish Israel
Yom Huledet Sameach!*

*CHAZAK
VE'AMATZ!*

The sacrifice was palpable

Continued from page B21

When the ceasefire ended, Dunkelman had a large contingent of volunteers under command including Canadians and Americans. One of his battalions was commanded by Joe Weiner, a Canadian veteran of the Armoured Corps who led a motley collection of rebuilt halftracks mounting anti-aircraft guns and home-made armoured cars during one phase of an advance from the coast north of Haifa to Nazareth. The attack on Nazareth was part of Operation Dekel, designed to eliminate the threat from the Arab Liberation Army to the coastal plains north and east of Haifa and the largely Jewish-settled areas of northern and eastern Galilee. Not only did Dunkelman's forces take Nazareth, but Dunkelman interceded with commanders who had ordered him to chase Nazareth's residents out. He simply refused to carry out the order and eventually the Arabs were allowed to stay. In later fighting Dunkelman's brigade crossed the Lebanese border and drove the Lebanese troops up to the Litani River before the shooting finally stopped. About 10 per cent of his troops were volunteers. Other Canadians helped to defend the upper Galilee from Syrian attack and using the growing numbers of heavy mortars, machine guns, artillery and even tanks that began making their way into Israeli hands, helped to drive the Arabs back over their borders with but one exception – the Trans-Jordan Arab League retained its grip over the West Bank.

As the ground fighting raged, Canadian pilots and aircrew joined other Machal in the new airforce. They attacked Egyptian forces on the ground (that was how Fitchett lost his life), sometimes using Harvard trainers smuggled out of Canada and equipped to dive bomb. They flew Palmach troops from central Israel into the blockaded Negev to prepare for a breakout attack against the Egyptians. They flew twin-engine Dakotas and C-46 Curtiss Commandos equipped as horizontal bombers to hit key Arab junctions and strong points. One Canadian pilot flying a war surplus Spitfire even shot down several British RAF pilots in newer model Spitfires when they flew top cover for the Egypt-

ian army in the Sinai in the last days of the war.

After the war, most of the volunteers returned to Canada and other countries though there were some notable exceptions. Joe Weiner wrote a manual of training for the Israel Armoured Corps before returning to Canada. Lionel Drucker and Arthur Goldberg, two youthful volunteers from Vancouver, started what later became the largest private tour operator in Israel. But there were very few opportunities for most of these men – the Jewish Agency seemed to take their volunteering for granted and failed to recognize how much their technical skill might benefit the new state. At the same time, hundreds of thousands of refugees from the Holocaust and the displaced persons camps in Europe and Cyprus started to crowd in to Israel almost immediately. No one seemed to have the time or patience to make a real effort at keeping the Machalniks. The war effectively ended in early 1949 and by early 1950, the vast majority of the volunteers had left for home.

Israel might have won the War of Independence without the help of the 5,000 or so volunteers around the might. If it had, it would have paid a much higher price and taken much longer. But the War of Independence forced the mostly covert militia army of the Haganah to begin to evolve toward a modern conventional military force. That new force – the IDF – would almost immediately have at its disposal an air force, a navy, an armoured corps, artillery, and modern communications, logistics, and supply centres. That was where Machal counted most. Their sacrifice was palpable – 80 Americans and Canadians were killed in action with an unknown number of killed and wounded from other countries. Perhaps Machal was even more important in a symbolic way – the Holocaust had united Jews all over the world as never before to help the birth of the new Jewish State. That state was founded primarily on the success of Jewish arms and the Machal contributed palpably to that victory.

Prof. David J. Bercuson is professor of history and director of the Centre for Military and Strategic Studies at the University of Calgary.

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Zionist Youth Movement
wishes Israel a
Yom Huledet Same'ach!*

*Chazak Veamatz,
The CYJ Board, Staff, and Members.*

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the person, the nation and the idea."*

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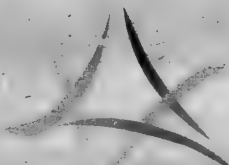
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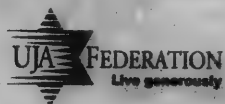


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of excitement and entertainment guaranteed to knock your socks off.



ISRAEL@60
TORONTO



ISRAEL@60

FROM '48 TO '08: TORONTO CELEBRATES OUR JEWISH STATE

BY DANIEL HOROWITZ-

With Israel's special 60th Yom Ha'atzmaut birthday bash drawing near, Toronto is gearing up for what is expected to be the highlight of its year-long celebration of all things Israel with many festivities throughout.

But the biggest of them all will take place on May 8th, with more than 8,000 members of Toronto's Jewish community expected to celebrate at the Ricoh Coliseum. The evening of festivities, which has many surprises planned, will celebrate Israel's countless achievements, most notably in science and technology, agriculture, education, the arts, medicine and much more.

Even before the creation of Israel and certainly since its establishment, the bond

when its very existence was threatened - and has never wavered in its commitment. Several prominent Torontonians have served in senior positions with the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI) - UJA Federation's overseas partner - as well as with Keren Hayesod, the fundraising arm of JAFI, and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. Thousands of our community members have visited Israel on organized missions since 2000 and more than 11,000 young Toronto Jews have participated in Taglit Birthright Israel trips since the inception of the program in 2000.

The chairs of UJA Federation's Israel@60 - Fred Waks and Sara Zagdanski - are both honoured and excited to celebrate our Jewish homeland's 60th.

"Being a child of Holocaust survivors, I understand how important Israel is to the community-at-large," says Waks. "And Israel at sixty years is definitely something for us to celebrate. We've invited every single community organization to participate in this, and that's something that is unique."

"I'm honoured to be involved because Israel is completely my passion and I have a special connection to both the State and its people," says Zagdanski. "I think it's extremely important to recognize - and celebrate - everything that's

UJA FEDERATION OF GREATER TORONTO'S FIRST EVER MISSION TO ISRAEL 10TH ANNIVERSARY - SETS TO DEPART FROM MALTON AIRPORT (NOW

been accomplished by Israel in only sixty years, in spite of all the challenges and threats it faces."

When Yom Ha'atzmaut 5768 arrives, Waks will - appropriately enough - be touching down at Israel's Ben Gurion Airport aboard UJA Federation's Prime Minister's Mission while Zagdanski takes to the stage at the Ricoh Coliseum. But, regardless of where they are, both are certain it will be a night to remember.

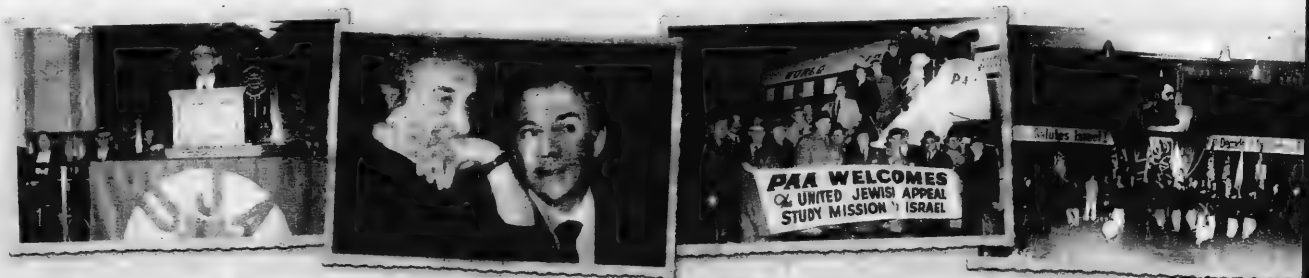
"We have such tremendous pride in all of the achievements this little country has given the world," says Waks. "It's a time to have a little *naches* for the country that we're all so much a part of. This is going to be one amazing celebration."

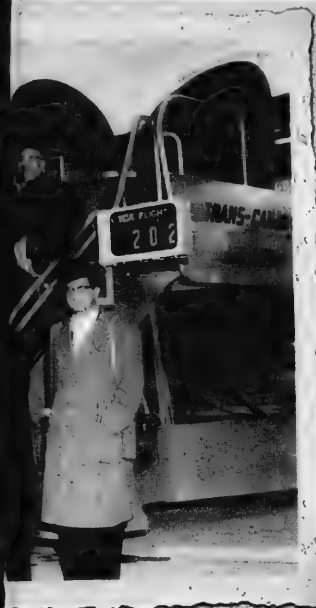
"When reading the story of the exodus, we are always amazed at how the Israelites, who saw the ten plagues, the splitting of the sea, and received the Ten Commandments, could take it



FRED WAKS & SARA ZAGDANSKI

between Jewish Toronto and Israel has been unbreakable. Our Jewish community played a significant role in providing financial support for Israel in its fledgling years and more recently





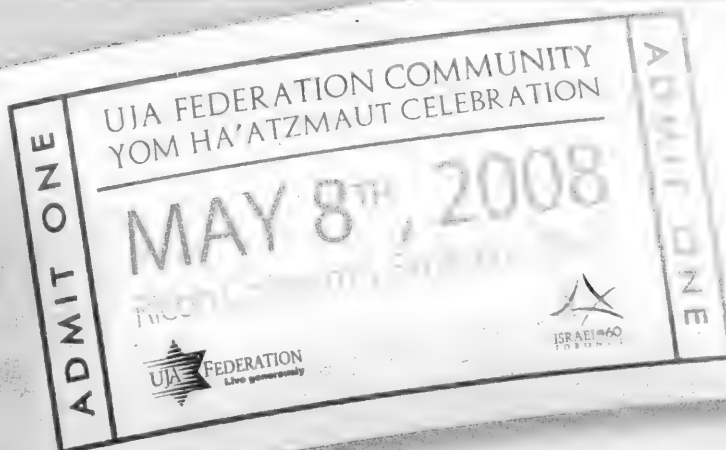
Photos courtesy of the Ontario Jewish Archives & Graphic Artists

GOLDA MEIR (SECOND FROM LEFT) ON NOVEMBER 16, 1958.

all for granted," says David Koschitzky, Board chair, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. "Living today, with the State of Israel as a reality, many communities take for granted something that for over 2000 years was an impossible dream. We are so fortunate that our community of Toronto, time and time again, proves that we understand how important Israel is. We do it in times of emergency; how much nicer to be doing it to celebrate something as wonderful as Israel at 60."

"What a wonderful time – and a special opportunity – this is to celebrate all that Israel has contributed to not only Jews around the world, but to the world itself," says Ted Sokolsky, president and CEO, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. "Toronto and Israel have always had a special bond, a bond that grows stronger as each year passes. Our Israel@60 celebrations – and those in other cities across the globe – will provide a great opportunity to showcase Israel as one of the world's most creative, imaginative, cultural, productive and beautiful countries."

1. TORONTO CELEBRATES ISRAEL'S 5TH IN 1953
2. GOLDA MEIR, SEEN HERE WITH MURRAY KOFFLER, ADDRESSES A UJA MEETING AT BETH TZEDEK SYNAGOGUE IN 1976
3. A UJA STUDY MISSION PREPARES FOR A VISIT TO ISRAEL
4. ISRAEL'S 10TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION, TORONTO, 1958



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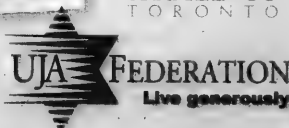
It was anything but business as usual at a session of the Provincial State Council in Tel Aviv at 4:00 p.m. on May 14, 1948.

On this date, just hours before Shabbat, the council members were about to proclaim a new State – the State of Israel, the first Jewish State in 2,000 years.

On Sunday, May 16, 1948, thousands of Toronto Jews flocked to Maple Leaf Gardens for a massive rally sponsored by the United Zionist Council of Toronto. "I remember marching along College Street as a proud member of the Jewish community, celebrating the establishment of the new State of Israel," says Mira Koschitzky, who was 12 at the time. "I'll never forget the wonder, excitement, and goodwill of that evening."



JEWISH TORONTO CELEBRATES YOM HA'ATZMAUT IN 2007.



For more information about UJA Federation's Israel@60 celebrations, please call 416-840-2987.

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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

So you think you know *Hatikvah*?

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Hatikvah is Israel's national anthem and, most would say, the uniting hymn of Jewry worldwide. It's sung by millions across the world in schools, camps, community events, in the Knesset or almost anywhere Jews congregate for a formal occasion.

Though many know the words – whether by rote or by devotion – fewer know the rich history behind the song whose title translates into English as *The Hope*.

Originally, a nine-stanza poem, the song was written in 1878 by Naphtali Herz Imber (1856-1909) – a wandering Jewish poet and writer from Galicia – and was first titled *Tikvateinu* (*Our Hope*) as a reflection of his feelings on the founding of the city of Petach Tikvah that year.

The poem was first published as part of a collection of poems titled *Barkai* (*Morning Star*) in 1886 in Jerusalem.

Samuel Cohen, a Moldavian-born pioneer-farmer residing in Rishon LeZion, read Imber's poem and inspired, set the words to music using a Romanian-Moldavian folk song *Carul cu boi* (*Cart and Oxen*) as a template.

According to historical accounts, soon after the song grew in popularity with the Rishon LeZion pioneers, who sang it on their daily walks to work in the vineyards of Rehovot, and its fame quickly spread throughout the nascent Jewish state.

There is some dispute as to whether Cohen borrowed the tune from a composition by Cantor Nissan Belzer, but most research points to Cohen using his own Moldavian roots for inspiration.

Hatikvah's central musical theme can be heard in Czech composer Bedrich Smetana's 1874 symphony, *The Moldau*, which was also based on known Moldavian folk music.

According to various researchers, over the years Imber's words were alternately dropped or rearranged by Jewish pioneers in Palestine, as they co-opted his sentiments to fit their new lives and aspirations in the Holy Land, leading to the eventual phrasing we read today.

Hatikvah was also sung at the First Zionist Congress in 1897. By the time of the Sixth

Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, in 1903 – the last one presided over by Theodor Herzl – *Hatikvah* had become the de facto hymn of the Zionist movement, and was sung at all ensuing Congresses.

The song was officially adopted as the hymn of the Zionist movement at the 18th Zionist Congress in Prague in 1933.

Between then and Israel's birth in 1948, *Hatikvah* had, by virtue of its popularity among the chalutzim, become the unofficial anthem of Jewish Palestine under the British mandate.

When the State of Israel was declared on May 14, 1948, *Hatikvah* was jubilantly sung by a rejoicing Jewish People's Council at the Tel Aviv Museum.

In 1953, Imber's body was reinterred in the National Cemetery on Mount Herzl in Jerusalem. He had died in America after settling in New York near the turn of the 19th century.

Despite all this, *Hatikvah* was not formally adopted as the official anthem of Israel until 2004, when a Knesset vote finally entrenched the hymn as the country's national anthem.

The reasons for this 56-year delay were numerous. Among them were concerns voiced by Israel's Arab com-

munities who refused to accept the anthem because its core wording refers to the "nefesh Yehudi" (Jewish soul), and is considered exclusionary by some of the country's non-Jewish citizenry.

Other reasons included movements by various Jewish parties to consider alternate songs for the anthem, such as the popular Naomi Shemer composition *Jerusalem of Gold*; Hayyim Nahman Bialik's *Birkat Am* and Psalm 126 or *Shir Hama'alot*, which is traditionally recited after meals on Shabbat, festivals and special occasions.

Regardless, *Hatikvah* won out in a Knesset vote of 38-8 on Nov. 10, 2004, to become state law.

The C/JN's retranslation of *Hatikvah* follows:

As long as a Jewish soul stirs
Deep in one's heart,
And we cast our eye
To the far horizon of the east
and towards Tzion,
Our hope will not be lost.
The hope of 2,000 years,
To be a free nation in our own land,
In the land of Tzion and Jerusalem.



הַתִּקְוָה

כָּל עוֹד בְּלִבְּךָ פְּנִימָה,
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אֶרֶץ עֵיוֹן וִירוּשָׁלַיִם.

Israel: 60 Years of Independence



A time of great hope

The visit to Israel by former Egyptian president Anwar Sadat on Nov. 7, 1977 ushered in a period of great hope for Israelis that the Jewish state might finally be able to live in peace with all its neighbours. Clockwise from top left, Sadat addresses the Knesset; he arrives at Ben-Gurion Airport and is met by leading Israeli figures; and he laughs at a joke made by former Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin at a subsequent meeting in Sharm el-Sheik. (IGPO photos)



We would like to take this opportunity to wish the State of Israel a hearty Mazel Tov in reaching this very important anniversary. And may we see peace in Israel and around the world.



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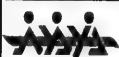
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Israel: 60 Years of Independence



Chaim Weizmann on a pre-State of Israel visit to Canada

[CJC archives photo]

'The highest expression of Zionist humanism'

*Excerpt from an address by Chaim Weizmann,
First President of Israel, on the occasion of the
25th anniversary of the establishment of Hebrew
University, April 1950.*

I am reminded of the finest days of the dawn of the Zionist movement. For many of us, the ideal of the Hebrew University was the highest expression of our Zionist humanism, embodying the dreams of our youth movement days and our endeavours in maturity. A Hebrew university in the Land of Israel meant a liberation from a condition of inferiority, the condition of Jewish youth at most of the universities of Eastern and Central Europe. The Hebrew University was destined to become the focus for the free development of the Jewish spirit; it was to provide scientific instruction and impart a moral influence to the builders of the new Zion. It was to lead the way to the synthesis between the spiritual heritage of our people and the cultural currents of our time.

Such were the ideals that animated us in those five early years of our movement. Some of them, though not all, have been attained.

The frightful calamity of the last two decades has left the Jewish people wounded in spirit no less than in body. Entire communities have been wiped off the face of the earth. Among those who perished were many talented and promising men and women. Now the problem of providing a higher education for the Jewish youth of Eastern Europe is no longer before us - because that youth is gone. The few who survived have made their way here, to the ancient homeland and much of what has been and being built up here is due to their efforts and their sacrifices.

Today the Hebrew University, no longer serving as a haven for Jewish students from abroad, is the new Israel's first alma mater. A younger generation of scientists, scholars and technicians has grown in the lecture halls and laboratories on Mount Scopus. Our achievements in the political, military, administrative and economic spheres would have been impossible but for the training and instruction provided by the Hebrew University. Indeed, it has laid firm foundations which, I am confident, will in the days of peace and security to come, provide the basis for a great centre of scientific education and fruitful research.

Israel: 60 Years of Independence

Israel's universities – the engine behind Israel's economic growth

In December 2007, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) published the best report any leading international body ever wrote about Israel's economy. "The economy is performing exceptionally well," begins the concluding statement of the IMF report. The report went on to forecast that "economic activity is likely to remain strong" noting too that household real income has been rising and that corporate profits and stability have improved.

Israel's industrial growth in 2006 was the highest in the Western World, and according to the *Economist*, expected inflation for 2007 is two to three per cent, third lowest in the world. Foreign direct investments in 2007 are expected to grow by eight per cent, reaching \$15.3 billion as compared to \$14.2 billion in 2006. Figures for the third quarter of 2007 show a five-year record in venture capital investment in the high-tech sector led by the communications sector, semiconductors, and the software and Internet sectors.

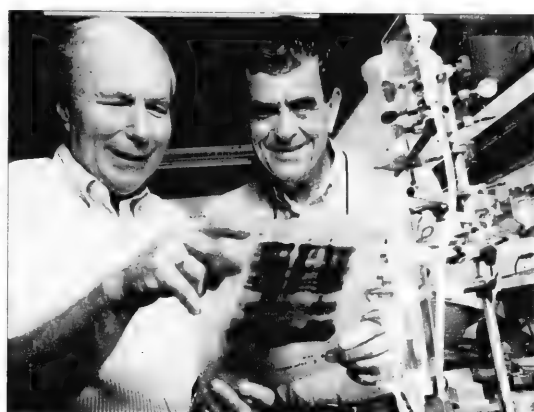
Israel's basic geopolitical realities remain unchanged since the state's establishment 60 years ago. Israel is one of the smallest countries in the world. Indeed, it is the 100th smallest country in the world, with less than 1/1000th of the world's population ... about the size of Belgium or the U.S. state of New Jersey. Yet despite its small size, both geographically and in population, and despite the absence of any natural resources of any significance, and despite the fact that the country is in an ongoing state of constant war and conflict with its neighbours, Israel is today recognized as a world leader in science and technology, second only to Silicon Valley in California.

Some salient facts:

- Israel's \$157 billion economy is larger than the economies of all of her immediate neighbors combined.
- Israel is home to the highest number of high-tech and start-



Left, Robert Aumann, of Hebrew University, was awarded the 2005 Nobel Prize in Economics for his work on conflict and co-operation through game-theory analysis. He shared the prize with Thomas Schelling. Right, Avram Hershko, and Aaron Ciechanover, of the Technion (along with Irwin Rose of the United States) were awarded the 2004 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for the discovery of ubiquitin-mediated protein degradation.



[Isranet and Israel Sun photos]

up companies in the world after the United States – more than 3,000 high-tech companies, and 1,500 start-ups.

• Israel is no. 2 in the world for venture capital funds after the United States, no. 2 in the world after the United States for the number of NASDAQ listed companies, and no. 3 in the number of patents per capita following the United States and Japan.

Only recently, in a lead article, the *Wall Street Journal* described Israel as "the best initiative economy in the world."

From 1967 to 2007, Israel's population grew from 2.6 to 7.1 million, of whom two million are immigrants. The Israeli gross domestic product (GDP) grew from \$21.4 billion (in 2007 dollar terms) to \$157 billion in 2007, a compounded growth of 630 per cent. GDP per capita, a measurement of the degree of economic development, rose by 163 per cent (2.4 per cent per year

on average), and for the first time last year crossed the level of \$21,000.

How did little Israel reach this level of achievement over the last decade despite two Palestinian uprisings; a long sequence of fatal terrorist attacks; several wars with her neighbours; maintaining a high cost of defence (nearly one-quarter of the GDP in the 2000 to 2006 period); the integration of massive immigration of nearly one million people from the former Soviet Union; and the competition and challenges of growing globalization?

There are at least five primary factors behind the growth and potential of Israel's economy.

Continued on page B30



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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

Successive governments have encouraged foreign investment

Continued from page B29

1. National orientation

Following the 1967 Six-Day War, Israel set out to develop an indigenous science-based industry with sophisticated, new product-oriented, export-focused industrial research and development capabilities. And over the past decade, successive Israeli governments have made a strong effort to encourage foreign investment and trade and become technologically competitive. This included legislation aimed to attract foreign investment, reinforced by a strong banking system. The government encouraged Israeli and foreign companies (primarily from the United States) to form partnerships in which the Israeli firms focused on research and development, and the foreign firms on marketing and sales. Israel also linked both its companies and its venture capital industry to foreign financial markets. This approach led to a winning formula, i.e., R&D leading to either the development of new technologies or new products based on cutting edge technology. Free trade agreements were also signed with the United States and European Union to facilitate economic growth.

Government also provided strong support for the R&D sector, with conditional grants amounting up to 50 per cent of the approved R&D budget and grants for companies sub-contracting R&D work in Israel. Indeed, the percentage of Israelis engaged in scientific and technological pursuits, and the amount spent on research and development in relation to GDP are among the highest in the world.

In addition, there are a number of bi-national research foundations that provide up to 50 per cent of the R&D costs for joint R&D projects. Israel is also the only country outside of Europe participating in the European Union Sixth and Seventh Framework research initiative. Israeli researchers have been particularly successful in this highly competitive forum.

Nearly 100 leading international companies have established corporate R&D centers in Israel including Intel, IBM, Microsoft, Motorola, Google, Applied Materials, Cisco Systems, National Semiconductor, and many more.

2. Socioeconomic infrastructure

Israel has succeeded in developing the necessary physical, financial, and human resources needed to support a modern, technology-based nation. This is primarily a result of Israel's human capital, and the country's strong encouragement of foreign investment. Today, Israel leads the world in the number of scientists, engineers, and technicians in the workforce – 145 per 10,000 compared to 85 in the United States, 70 in Japan, and 60 in Germany. With over 25 per cent of its workforce employed in technical positions, Israel places first in the world in this category as well.

3. Technological infrastructure

The Israel of today houses the infrastructure needed to advance a high technology, science-based economy. These include a system for the protection of intellectual property rights, readiness for the application of R&D to industry; competency in high-technology manufacturing; and the capability to train highly-qualified scientists and engineers.

4. Productive capacity

Israel is home to a relatively large pool of skilled labour; made-in-Israel high-technology companies; and proven management ability. As a result, Israel has the highest number of start-up companies in the world after the United States, and it is no. 2 after the United States for the largest number of NASDAQ listed companies.

5. World-class research universities

Israel's achievements in high technology and science-based industries are a direct result of the presence of world-class research

universities that provide the knowledge, the highly qualified scientists and engineers, cutting-edge research, personnel, and initiative to succeed in a global marketplace.

In a comprehensive study of the global marketplace published in 2006 by the National Science Board of the U.S. National Science Foundation, Israel and China received the highest scores of nations positioning themselves for future prominence as exporters of technology products in the global marketplace.

Israel's economic miracle could not have been accomplished without the leadership of the nation's research universities. It is the universities that provide the knowledge through innovative research and the highly trained graduates that ensure a strong and innovative Israeli economy. Israel's high-technology and science-based industries in particular are wholly dependent upon the nation's universities to provide the personnel needed to ensure their lead and growth.

Over 80 per cent of all published Israeli research, and almost all basic research and basic research training are conducted within the nation's universities. Israeli researchers publish more scientific papers per capita than any other nation (109 per 10,000 people), and in many fields, such as chemistry and computer sciences, they have a high impact on the world scientific community. Relative to the size of its labour force, Israel has a significantly large number of scientists and scholars who have published in the natural sciences, engineering, agriculture and medicine as compared to other countries. Indeed, over the last five years, no fewer than three Israeli scholars have received the coveted Nobel Prize – professors Aaron Ciechanover and Avram Hershko (winners in chemistry) from the Technion, and Prof. Robert Aumann (winner in economics) from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem – in recognition of their breakthrough discoveries in their respective fields, evidence of the high level of science and research in Israel.

**Israeli researchers
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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

Research guarantees future

Continued from page B30

In order to ensure Israel's place in the international academic community, Israeli institutions encourage post-doctoral research and sabbaticals abroad as well as frequent attendance at foreign scientific conferences. The universities maintain and encourage a wide range of exchange programs and joint projects with leading institutions of higher learning around the world, as well as hosting international scientific conferences on a regular and frequent basis.

All six Israeli universities have established technology transfer companies for the commercial utilization of their research. The Technion-Israel Institute of Technology, Weizmann Institute of Science, and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem have established science-based industrial parks in proximity to their respective campuses to encourage interaction between scientists and the corporate sector. Indeed, it was the universities that pioneered "incubators" for developing technology allowing talented entrepreneurs to turn innovative ideas into products. The universities have also set up "spin-off" industrial firms for the commercialization of specific products based on their research, often in partnership with local and foreign firms.

The large number of patents issued by Israel's universities also indicates the effectiveness of the interactions between the universities and industry.

Interdisciplinary research and testing institutes are functioning at the universities in various scientific and technological fields vital to the country's industrial capability. And a high proportion of faculty serves as advisors to industry.

R&D - related products comprise more than one-half of the total of Israel's industrial exports (excluding diamonds). The key sectors include electronics; optics; computer-based equipment; robotics; and aeronautics. Israel's industrial strategy rests on fostering the growth of research and development in the industrial sector. And such activity is also wholly dependent on knowledge gained and personnel enlisted from the universities, particularly of graduate students, especially in the last decade, who have pursued advanced degrees.

As Israel looks to the challenges and opportunities ahead, its ability to remain a leader in the competitive high-tech world will continue to rely upon the nation's universities to produce innovative research and talented graduate professionals. A prime example is Israel's young and rapidly growing life sciences industry. This sector is focused on major diseases for which existing therapies are largely ineffective. These include treatments for cardiovascular and peripheral vascular diseases, oncology, neurodegenerative disease, and age-related diseases such as ophthalmic and orthopedic.

More than any other high-tech industry, the life sciences require long and expensive research.

All six of Israel's research universities offer high level studies in the life sciences, and no fewer than 35 per cent of Israel's researchers are involved in this field. Israeli universities are considered to have a competitive advantage due to their interdisciplinary approaches with other disciplines such as computer science, chemistry, and physics. The abilities and achievements of Israel's universities and its researchers will "make or break" Israel's position in this future-oriented, highly promising sector.

The Israeli economy is today heavily dependent upon the success and achievements of her high-technology and science-based industries, and this sector is in turn strongly dependent on the ability of the universities to employ outstanding scientists and scholars to pursue cutting-edge research and to graduate and train qualified and motivated personnel. As Israel approaches her 60th anniversary, this winning formula for success

is now endangered by the government's dramatic reduction in the funding of higher education. Successive Israeli governments have reduced public funding of universities by no less than 25 per cent over the past six years - the deepest cut of any sector in the country.

Reduction in government support represents a real, long-term, strategic threat to Israel's ability to grow and thrive. Without world-class research universities, and without a well-trained workforce, Israel will not be able to maintain a modern, technologically oriented vibrant economy. Furthermore, if the universities cannot offer attractive, long-term careers to its young scholars and scientists, they will simply "vote with their feet" and pursue their careers elsewhere, including overseas, and other countries, mainly the United States, will benefit from their talents. And if the research universities cannot offer well-equipped teaching and research environments, academic standards will be adversely affected and Israel will not have the high level of trained manpower it requires to attract foreign investment and remain competitive in the global economy.

In a very real, strategic sense, Israel needs its research universities to remain in a leading position in order to guarantee its future.

In speaking before the Technion's Board of Governors meeting in 1959, in an address entitled "Israel and the Mission of Science", Israel's first prime minister David Ben-Gurion remarked: "The progress of man is built on three things: Knowledge, energy, and raw materials. Of the three, knowledge is the greatest for on it depends the discovery and utilization of the other two. Since the day when we began to build our new culture as an independent people in our ancient homeland, we have zealously striven to foster science, both pure and applied."

As Israel marks its 60th year of independence, we look toward the future with confidence in our abilities and the strength of our nation.

Yitzhak Apeloig is the President of the Technion - Israel Institute of Technology.

Mazel Tov

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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

The gradual progress toward gender equality in Israel

It has long been a Jewish tradition to evaluate any given phenomenon or situation in terms of the glass half full and that which is half empty. This seemingly evenhanded approach is as appropriate in relating to women's status in Israel as it is on any other issue.

The numerous positive changes and achievements of the past three decades, initially engendered primarily by sobering lessons learned from the Yom Kippur War and further fostered by invaluable moral and material support from the community of Diaspora women, are counterbalanced by profound awareness of continued discrimination, inferiority and even victimization.



By
Alice Shalvi Born

Evidence of improvement in the role and status of women can be found in almost every aspect of Israeli life and society, due to the longtime existence of much admirable legislation dating back to the 1950s. There are currently 18 women members of Knesset; two of them, Tzipi Livni and Yuli Tamir, head major ministries, Foreign Affairs and Education respectively. The trans-party Knesset Committee on the Status of Women, which was originally established as an ad hoc body in 1992 but rapidly attained statutory status, has successfully initiated an impressive body of legislation and legislative amendments relating to women. Women currently constitute more than 30 per cent of elected members of local government and two of Israel's largest cities, Netanya and Herzliya, have women mayors heading their municipal councils. Furthermore, women now head some of the best known and most influential organizations in the "third sector," that of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that are playing an increasingly important role in creating a vital civil society, in advocating for increased and improved state action in funding social welfare and ensuring social and economic justice, citizens' rights and transparent democratic government.



Tzipi Livni in Jerusalem with U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice



Yuli Tamir

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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

Astonishing increase of women entrepreneurs

Continued from page B32

Israel ranks second worldwide in the number of NGOs active in the country. Many of these are grassroots feminist organizations established by and dedicated to specific populations or issues: Bedouin women; Arabs; modern Orthodox Jewish women; Women in Black who demonstrate weekly under the slogan, "End the occupation"; Women in Green, who favour continued Jewish settlement across the 1967 Green Line (Israel's pre-1967 border); and Machsom Watch, whose members monitor Israel Defence Forces behaviour toward Palestinians at the checkpoints that operate on the border between Israel and Palestinian territory. There are also a number of more loosely organized groups, of both Jewish and Arab Israelis, who are actively engaged in dialogue with Palestinian women, both Muslim and Christian. All of these and hundreds of others now operate alongside the traditional, older organizations such as WIZO (the Women's International Zionist Organization), Na'amat (the Women's Division of the Histadrut Labor Union) and Emunah, the religious women's organization. All three of these are concerned primarily with providing day care and educational services, particularly for children of mothers in the workforce.

The business sector has witnessed an astonishing increase in the number of women entrepreneurs and CEOs, some of them extremely wealthy and influential. A similar increase has occurred in the legal profession. There are at present six women among the 12 members of the Supreme Court, current president of which is Dorit Beinisch. Indeed, the number of women lawyers, especially in the civil service, now appears to exceed that of men, just as women now constitute more than 50 per cent of law students.



Dorit Beinisch is congratulated by her predecessor Aharon Barak on assuming the presidency of Israel's Supreme Court. [RNS photo]

Continued on page B34



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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

Playing vital roles in all units of the IDF

Continued from page B33

Women's studies, long the despised Cinderellas of Israeli academia, are flourishing, producing a steady flow of groundbreaking research and publication, most of it readily accessible even to the wider reading public. While some courses in gender studies have existed at various universities since the 1980s, the first full BA program in Israel (indeed, in the entire Middle East) was established at Tel Aviv University in 1998. Overseas aid from the Ford Foundation and from U.S./Israel Women to Women facilitated an astonishing proliferation of women-related academic and non-academic activity and applied research, much of which served as a stimulus for political advocacy in favour of legislative innovation and change.

Culturally, Israeli women have also finally come into their own. A number are senior editors and contributors in both print and electronic media. Once rarely visible on TV screens, whether as newscasters or commentators, many now present their own, often highly influential, prime-time investigative programs. Some of them have exposed egregious examples of corruption, racism and gender discrimination. In entertainment, too, women are now major and highly influential innovators, whether as theatre directors, museum curators or performers. The country boasts an impressive number of women filmmakers, particularly of documentaries that relate to women's issues such as family violence, marriage and divorce. A similar trend is apparent in literature, especially in fiction and poetry. In 1987, when the Israel Women's Network organized the world's first international conference of women writers, there were only a very few Israelis who had works in translation to present at the reading sessions. None of them enjoyed the fame or status of colleagues

from overseas, such as Grace Paley, Marilyn French and Rosellen Brown. They exuded a strong sense of inferiority and exclusion from the literary establishment. Now the situation is different. While no woman has achieved the worldwide acclaim accorded to Amos Oz, A. B. Yehoshua, David Grossman or Aharon Appelfeld, there is an ever-growing body of Israeli women's writing to be found not only on the Israeli market and bestseller lists, but also in translation to various European languages, and even Japanese.

Even in the male, macho stronghold of the Israel Defence Forces, women are now no longer auxiliaries, but are playing vital roles as skilled technicians, in intelligence and as instructors even of all-male combat units, though they themselves do not participate in front-line combat. Following the precedent-setting 1995 High Court ruling, based on the Equality of Men and Women Law, that women could not be excluded from pilot training simply on grounds of their sex, women now serve as pilots and navigators. There are high-ranking policewomen, and a woman recently headed the country's Prison Services.

The list of achievements could be lengthened even further, yet probably the most encouraging change, one that to a large extent underlies all the impressive progress that has been achieved, is the exponential growth of awareness of – and resistance to – discrimination, not only among women but also



Amira Dotan, was the Chief Officer of the IDF Women's Corps and is the first woman to receive the rank of Lieutenant-General in the IDF.

among an increasing number of enlightened, educated and well-informed men. This awareness is of vital importance, since without it there is no impulse to change and reform. And further reform is still required, for the half-empty glass can no longer be ignored, no matter how gratifying the contents of the other half.

There may be more women members of Knesset, but they are still less than 14 per cent of the total 120, and the majority of them no longer feel committed to the cause of equality between the sexes. It is perhaps significant that the Knesset Committee on the Status of Women is currently chaired by a man.

The number of women gainfully employed in the workforce has indeed increased, but they are still to be found primarily in the less well-paid "pink collar" service occupations such as teaching, nursing, social work, clerical work and customer service, and in the unskilled labour force, working as domestic help, waitresses and so forth.

Women's average wage is lower than that of men by some 30 per cent, even when they are doing identical work. More women than men are unemployed, and women heads of households constitute the majority of those eligible for National Insurance Income Supplements (social welfare), which have recently been radically reduced. Thus more women and children than ever before are living below the poverty line.

In 1996, when the Israel Women's Network first brought trafficking of women to the attention of the government and the general public, its findings were greeted with disbelief and, in consequence, inaction. Now there is a law prohibiting the trade in women, yet police action remains inadequate, Israel is high on the list of the world's worst offenders and the women victims continue to be treated as though they, rather than their handlers or clients, are the offenders.

The Israel Defence Forces can boast of more women at higher ranks, but they are still absent from the General High Command, which makes the most important decisions, including whether or not to go to war. Since women constitute the majority of peace activists and have even established their own peace-oriented organizations, it is not unreasonable to surmise that were there more women involved in security-related decision making, on both the Israeli and the Palestinian side, greater progress might be made toward the resolution of the ongoing bloody conflict. In July 2005, the Knesset did indeed pass a law, proposed by two women MKs, requiring the government to include women in any group appointed for peace negotiations. This was in line with UN Resolution 1325, but the law has not yet been implemented, nor does it seem likely to be enforced.

Encouraged by a law that now criminalizes sexual harassment and supported by admirable feminist groups such as the rape crisis centres, more women are finding the courage to lodge complaints against the perpetrators of one of Israel's most widespread practices. Sexual harassment, especially of women subordinates, in the military, academia and other places of employment, was long tolerated by society at large and accepted even by women as something they had to endure, rather than risk non-promotion or dismissal. Sometimes women were even expected to be proud of being sex objects. The situation was succinctly summed up about 25 years ago in the well-known dictum of President Ezer Weizmann when he was still Commanding Officer of the elite Israel Air Force: "The best men go to be pilots; the best women go to the pilots." Nobody took exception at the time, but it is fair to assume that, were any public figure to make so outrageously hubristic a statement today, he would at once be forced to retract it and to offer a public apology.



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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

Little progress in religious sphere

Continued from page B34

There is also now far greater awareness of widespread spousal abuse, wife beating and even murders. The victims more readily report abuse to the police, and their complaints more frequently lead to police action and restraining orders. Yet the violence continues, and among the Arab population so-called "honour killings" of women suspected of pre-marital or extra-marital sexual relations even go unreported. Only recently have the women of one family, nine of whose members have been murdered, dared to report the crimes to the authorities and request protection against further attempts on their lives.

One important subject in which virtually no progress has been made is that of women in the religious sphere. Despite strong moral and financial support from the Diaspora, which has helped them survive years of appealing to the Supreme Court, the Women of the Wall are still denied the right to pray at the Western Wall wearing prayer tallit and tefillin or to raise their voices in song and prayer. But while this edict affects only a relatively small number, thousands are victims of religious courts, both Jewish and Muslim, in which women's legal status is inferior to that of men. No woman can be divorced without her husband's acquiescence, and the number of "anchored" women (agunot) currently living in the limbo of neither leading a real married life nor enjoying the freedom of divorce is estimated as being in the thousands.

The International Coalition for Agunah Rights, founded in 1990 at the initiative of the Israel Women's Network, is a unique organization which brings together women of every religious stream – Orthodox, Conservative, Reform and secular – and includes virtually every women's organization in Israel and many in the Diaspora. Over the years, its members have demon-

strated outside the headquarters of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel, held meetings with the chief rabbis, submitted petitions and proposed solutions, aroused media attention and enlisted the support of many public figures – but to no avail. Personal status (conversion, marriage, divorce) remains under the sole jurisdiction of the Orthodox rabbinical establishment, all of whose members are men.

In fact, tradition – and especially that based on religious law, principles and practice, whether Jewish, Muslim or Christian – is still the overriding factor in social definition. It continues to perceive women's primary role as being that of the helpmate – the wife, mother and homemaker. Women are expected to marry and bear children. It is surely not by chance that while Israel's health insurance system covers the cost of expensive infertility treatments until the woman has successfully given birth to two children, contraceptive devices are not included in the "basket" of free or heavily subsidized health services to which Israelis are entitled.

To this discriminatory religion-based tradition must be added the ongoing military conflict, in which women play no part, whether as actual participants or as effective peacemakers. One may thus sadly conclude that, until Israel separates state and religion, and until such time as the armed conflict gives way to peaceful coexistence between Israel and its neighbours, erasing military considerations from the public agenda, there will be no true equality of opportunity, reward or status between the sexes. The glass may be steadily filling, but much still remains to be done before we can lift it and raise a toast to the attainment of justice, freedom and equality.

Alice Shalvi Born is an educator and social-feminist activist. She was the recipient of the Israel Prize for Lifetime Achievements in May 2007.



File photo of tensions at the Western Wall among women of various levels of religious observance. (RNS photo)

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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

Jerusalem's Jews showed no fear during 1948 siege

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

For Jews born after Israel's War of Independence in 1948, it is easy to take for granted that Jews all over the world have the freedom to visit and live in Israel. But Rhoda Lipkin-Perel, a 94-year-old woman who lived through the siege of Jerusalem in 1948, said she'll never forget the brave men and women who fought against all odds to ensure the establishment of an independent Jewish state.

Lipkin-Perel came from a Zionist family in Cape Town, South Africa, and moved to Rehavia in Jerusalem in 1935 when she was 22.

Soon after moving to Israel, she was offered a job at the Evelina de Rothschild School, a school for girls in Jerusalem, and met her husband, Zvi Lipkin.

"I married into the Lipkin family, and they were here for generations, born in Jerusalem, some in the Old City," she said, adding that her husband was working for the British government. "We had a pleasant life. On Saturdays, we would go to the beautiful King David Hotel."

She said they would sit for tea, entertain each other and talk politics with government officers who were her husband's colleagues.

But everything changed after World War II. In 1946, the King David Hotel, which was also the site of the British military headquarters, was bombed by the Irgun, a Zionist militant group that fought against the British for restricting Jewish immigration to Palestine.

The Irgun chose it as a target after British troops invaded the Jewish Agency a month earlier, and confiscated secret documents.

"At that time, the Irgun gave a warning, and John Shaw, the chief secretary of the British administration, said, 'Here, I give the orders,'" Lipkin-Perel said.

It has been reported that Shaw didn't heed the warning, didn't

evacuate the building, and more than 90 people were killed in the attack.

"We lost a lot of our friends," she said.

The Jewish minority continued to fight through underground organizations including the Haganah, the Jewish defence force, and the Irgun.

She said she would never know who was involved with the underground, and often it was those she'd least expected.

She remembered a "jolly, plumpish lady who baked marvellously" and owned a bakery.

"Do you know what I learned she was doing? The Hadassah Hospital used to be near the bakery before it was on Mount Scopus. The doctors would come in for pastries and coffees, and the British would come in and search. Where did she hide the armaments? In the dough."

Lipkin-Perel also played her role in helping the Jewish cause.

When members of the Haganah were operating out of Katamon, a town about 20 minutes from her home, they took over an apartment and erected an apparatus that enabled them to intercept British communications. Eventually, they cracked the code of the British police.

But most had trouble understanding the British accents, and Lipkin-Perel was one of the few who could.

"I had to go. I was young, leaving my kids at night. We'd listen to the police. There was one horrible night. I still want to weep," she said, becoming emotional as she recalled what happened.

"I was there with another man. And we heard that the police had picked up two boys, two Jewish boys... and they just threw them to the Arabs. There were a lot of these incidents."

In the midst of the violence, the British pulled out of Palestine in 1947, and in November of that year, the UN General Assembly approved Resolution 181 to partition Palestine into two states — one

Jewish and one Arab.

She said that when it was announced that the partition passed by the UN, she remembered staying up all night by the radio.

She said that while people celebrated in the streets of Tel Aviv, in Jerusalem, the atmosphere was much more contained because there was so much more to worry about and deal with.

Lipkin-Perel said that soon after the resolution passed, the violence escalated between the Arabs, who rejected the resolution, and the Haganah and the Irgun. She said that being surrounded by millions of Arabs, she couldn't imagine that the Jews in Jerusalem would survive.

"When the British pulled out, they had built over the years forts and police stations, and all these were handed over to the Arabs in very strategic positions. They definitely got support," she said.

Soon after, the Siege of Jerusalem began. For weeks at a time, Arabs cut the Jews off from food, water and were placed under a strict 7 p.m. curfew.

"The siege was terrible because they cut the water pipes, and there was very little water. We were fortunate that Jerusalem always had cisterns, and they would come around once every two weeks or whenever, and you got a bucket of water," she said.

She said that despite the fact that the Jews had been at war with the Arabs and the British since 1946, it wasn't until the siege in 1948 that she really feared for her life.

"Guns were firing day and night. It was a terrifying time. I had very young boys," she said, adding that they were nine and three at the time.

"During the siege, we were all terrified. There were people who hid under tables. It was a terrible, terrible time, and I think a lot of it, I've blocked out of my mind because it was too [traumatic]. I didn't know if we would get out alive... We didn't know if the world had



Zvi and Rhoda Lipkin-Perel
in Jerusalem, June 1937

Continued on page B37

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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

The war had taken its toll on the city

Continued from page B36

forgotten us. You mustn't forget there wasn't a TV like today, there weren't helicopters to bring in food, and no food was brought in until [Haganah] made the Burma Road across the mountains," she said.

"People were starving. People were eating the grass... One thing that saved us when we were absolutely cut off from food was that there was an Arab man in my husband's office, and he... brought us a tin of oil, a bag of rice and a bag of sugar... We divided this with family and it wasn't food, but it was food," Lipkin-Perel said.

"I think a lot of the world didn't realize how starved we were, how frightened we were and how in danger we were... I think a lot of people even in Israel didn't know what we were going through. All they had to do was march and starve us out... Even to go out to get your bucket of water, you could have been killed. They were just shooting and bombing."

Lipkin-Perel said that before the siege, she had an Armenian maid named Mary from the Old City.

She said that they liked each other very much, but Lipkin-Perel decided that it would probably be best for both of them if Mary stopped working for her because the Arabs might consider her a traitor for working for a Jew.

"We regretfully parted. One day there was a knock at the door, and Mary and her sister brought a big basket full of vegetables because we had no vegetables or food for the children. Now, I made some coffee, but I didn't know if she had come to spy, or she was my friend," she said.

"I'd learned already, that you don't take gifts, but as much money as I had in my house, I gave her, and I blessed her and I thanked her, and she spent a little while with me. We didn't talk politics."

She said that soon after this visit, when her husband was away for work, she got a phone call at about 10 p.m.

"I was one of those really privileged to have a phone... The phone rings and the children are asleep, and it's Mary. She says to me, 'Mrs. Lipkin,' as I was then. 'Please take your children and go to South Africa.'"

Mary, who was working for a very well-known Arab doctor, told her that there was a meeting and she'd heard them say they were going to kill all the Jews in Jerusalem.

"I wasn't sure if she was telling me this to frighten me, or to be a friend. You don't know what to think. The one thing we were taught was not to show fear. And we would walk down to Jaffa Road and say, 'It will be good. *Yihyeh Tov*. I had to think quickly. I said to Mary, 'Tell the doctor we Jews don't want war. But for every Jew they kill, we'll kill 100 Arabs. Good night.'"

Throughout the fear, the shortages of food and water and the violence that claimed thousands of lives, the Jews persevered and Israel was declared an independent state in May of 1948.

But the war had taken its toll on Jerusalem.

"Between '48 and '51, it was a sad city because the Israeli government had moved to Tel Aviv," said Lipkin-Perel, who also moved

to Tel Aviv in 1951.

"That's what Jerusalem was made up of. So when all of us left, it was a sad, sad city with very little food."

Lipkin-Perel's husband, Zvi Lipkin, died of a heart attack in the early 1950s, and she later met a South African man in Israel. She remarried, and in 1956, they went back to Cape Town.

Although it's been 60 years since she and her family lived through Israel's War of Independence, she is still in awe of the fact that the Jews came out on top against all odds.

"You would have thought it was impossible to have a Jewish state in 1948. Not to be all killed in Jerusalem. That was a miracle. In that siege, we could have been finished... [But] we had the bravest army. Those men were absolutely marvellous, the bravest army. We've got no alternative, this was our feeling. We had no alternative and we've got to have a homeland. Otherwise, we're not safe anywhere."



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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

UIAFC and Israel:

Israel is celebrating a 60th birthday. If the state were a person we would wish Bis 120 – and kvell that we were halfway there! As a country, we are in fact just in our infancy – but – what a tremendous Jewish achievement to have reached this milestone! It is truly a cause for celebration as well as a time for reflection! Let's review for a moment what has been accomplished in our short history and what we can expect of the future. For United Israel Appeal Federations Canada (UIAFC), this landmark speaks to its very core and purpose. In fact, UIAFC which is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year was created in order to have a vehicle through which Canadian Jewry could support Israel both financially and socially. What a successful partnership we have enjoyed!

In so many ways, the history of the UIA's relationship with Israel mirrors the history of the state itself. We shared the early pioneering and Zionist ideals and values: we shared moments of great excitement such as the founding of the state and the related optimism as it grew and developed, and we shared the tremendous pride of helping to ensure that all Jews had a safe place to go – their homeland. We have stood proudly with Israel in times of greatness and glory just as we have stood steadfastly with her in times of distress and crisis. We have been with Israel in every sense even before its official birth and through all of its stages of development through to maturation.

Our connection and responsibility goes beyond the traditional areas of support such as social welfare programming and educational initiatives. This is particularly evident as we work to ensure that Israel's concerns and issues are understood not only in our own community, but among those who are in positions of influence in the public domain. We confront the skeptics and the cynics while trying to instill an understanding of Israel's needs and challenges as we continue to engage people from all ends of the political spectrum. We work to enlarge Israel's circle of friends and supporters from diverse environments.

We will always reinforce the mantra that as Jews, we are all responsible for one another. Israel, like any other modern industrial society, regardless of its enormous successes in a variety of sectors, has ongoing social and educational challenges, and with our support, is working tirelessly at attacking the problems.

Since its inception, UIAFC has been active at every pivotal moment in the evolution of Israel. We participated in Operation Magic Carpet, Operation Exodus, Operation Moses and Operation Solomon. We continued to visit and to send our children on trips to Israel during the intifadah, because we clearly understood that our presence was crucial to the morale of our brothers and sisters and we also understood that our risks paled in comparison to the daily

risks taken in Israel by average citizens of all ages.

In the most recent days of the Second Lebanon War, Canada was among the first countries to galvanize support across the country and mount a nationwide emergency campaign that resulted in outstanding and unprecedented levels of giving. Not only were the results of these fundraising efforts incredibly robust, but the quick receipt of funds had a major impact on the ground. We are very proud that our infusion of \$45M has been so far reaching. We have made a major contribution to post-secondary education, in helping with the expansion of Tel Hai College. Tel Hai College is not only an excellent educational institution catering

to students from all parts of the country, it also is among the largest employers in the north. Canadian funds have contributed to the college itself and have facilitated in the building of the dormitories for the student population in Kiryat Shmonah.

Our support extended beyond the financial. Concurrent with the emergency fundraising,

we continued to send missions, and organized some special ones to show not just moral support but to really be there on the ground seeing how we could be helpful. Our professional team based in Jerusalem provided unbelievable support and commitment above and beyond the call of duty. And our Israel experience travel groups completed their summer program in Israel, albeit in a modified way and we continue to do so in record numbers. We were there with full unequivocal conviction.

The priorities of the Jewish Agency, our primary partner, have been incorporated into UIAFC's priorities, aliyah and klitah. Educating youth at risk are examples of two such priorities. Collectively, we have ensured that there are adequate resources to welcome and integrate new immigrants and to provide them with the tools and skills to become independent and contributing members of the Israeli society. We have been present through it all, and we are still there supporting aliyah and klitah while ensuring that there are adequate resources to guarantee the successful integration of all who want to make Israel their home. We have worked together with respect to our young people, on such innovative programs as Youth Futures, which are designed to provide youth at risk with a significant intense mentoring relationship. We expect that these relationships will provide a positive role model that will be an influence on actualizing the potential for success. We help to ensure that all young people get opportunities that may be lacking in their own social or family environment. Our goal is to help strengthen communities as a whole and to assist in helping them to reach their potential. We are experiencing great success!



By
Barbara Farber



By
Linda Kislowicz

Israel: 60 Years of Independence

Standing proudly together throughout all times

Continued from page B38

Imagine the excitement that we have felt in helping to transform a barren country into a flourishing metropolis. In the early days of Project Renewal we worked in development towns such as Yerucham and Beit Dagan, assisting them in raising the standard of living and enhancing their capacity to manage themselves effectively. We built early childhood centres which provided a supportive educational experience for young children while at the same time we facilitated the re-entry of young mothers into the workforce. We invested in after-school care for the very same reasons. We developed residential programs for young people who were not able to live with their families or who had no families. We contributed to the innovative work with children and adults who have special needs whether they are physical, developmental or emotional.

And we continue to provide expertise, and support, along with our funds to develop programs and projects that continue to benefit these regions.

More recently, we evolved to a partnership program based on common objectives, aimed at creating long-lasting people-to-people relationships that were mutually beneficial and fulfilling. We focused all of our Canadian partnerships in the peripheral regions, in Be'er Sheva, in Eilat/Eilol, in the Galilee Panhandle. The choice of these regions was based on the understanding that there is a strategic need to reinforce and strengthen regions of the periphery and to expand and deepen the repertoire of services and their capacity to work independently. In so doing, we gained a mutual understanding of how to contribute to the overall common good. We continue to support disadvantaged areas in growing their capacity as we have always done, but we now do it collaboratively. We exchange, we learn from each other, we share experiences and expertise. We have become increasingly creative in finding common interests and new ways of connecting and we continue to do so successfully. Not only do Canadians visit Israel, Israelis visit Canada. Today we are extremely pleased and excited to welcome Israeli volunteers to the circle, working side by side with Canadian volunteers, shaping the activities and programs in each of our partnership regions. The development of indigenous leadership is truly becoming a reality.

We can proudly state that our partnership continues to evolve, and we continue to add new members. Our traditional NGO partners are now being complemented by an emerging group of Israeli philanthropists, individuals who have succeeded in business, and who are increasingly active and interested in working together on many of our projects. This latest development presents new opportunities for building together that take our collaborative spirit to a new level, never before imagined. The possibilities continue to grow exponentially and things that we only dared to imagine are actually becoming realities.

Our partnership with Israel is emotional and practical. It is also



Jay and Amy Papernick of Thornhill, Ont., with the aid and support of UIAFC, helped organize a festive Rosh Hashanah meal for newly arrived immigrants at the Tzahal Absorption Center Tsfat. The youngsters and their families arrived in Israel at the height of the deluge of rockets from Hezbollah into northern Israel during the Second Lebanon War. [J. Hazan photo]

physical. And it can be communal and individual. We facilitate relationships on all levels, and we create opportunities for collective contributions as well as individual projects.

Nothing represents Canada's commitment to Israel and her citizens more concretely than the range of capital projects that are evident all over the country. Among these projects is one that stands above the rest, and best symbolizes Canadian support. It is Canada Centre in Metulla. This athletic and recreational facility was built by UIAFC as a way of enriching the lives of the residents of the area, and of attracting others to visit and participate in the variety of programs and activities that are offered. Canada Centre has experienced good times as well as difficult times. Its very location, which is close to the Lebanese border, has been an important factor in its history. Just recently, UIAFC made a strategic decision to reinvest in the centre in order to allow the facilities and the programs to be renovated and updated. It is undoubtedly our Canadian flagship and we are proud of its contribution to the country. Without the introduction of Canada Centre, ice hockey would

never have been introduced into the Israeli society!

We are so proud of the way in which UIAFC and Israel have forged an unwavering and intertwined relationship. We are proud of our strong engagement and of our continuous and mutual support. We will continue to nurture this special relationship, to deepen it, to update it in accordance with changing realities and capacities, but we will always be there for ourselves, for our children and for generations to come. We will do whatever may be required to ensure that our next generation of leaders follows in these footsteps and stays connected and invested.

Would it be presumptuous to say that the destiny of Israel and UIAFC are interlinked? Maybe, but it would not be far from the truth. And so we say, mazel tov, *Ishatzlacha*, and we hope and pray that we all have the required wisdom and strength to deal with the challenges of the day so that there will always be a safe and secure tomorrow.

Barbara Farber is the president of UIAFC. Linda Kislowicz is the CEO of UIAFC.

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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

Israeli Ambassador Chaim Herzog's response in the General Assembly of the United Nations on Nov. 10, 1975 to the infamous Zionism Is Racism resolution

Mr. President,

It is symbolic that this debate, which may well prove to be a turning point in the fortunes of the United Nations and a decisive factor in the possible continued existence of this organization, should take place on Nov. 10. Tonight, 37 years ago, has gone down in history as Kristallnacht, the Night of the Crystals. This was the night in 1938 when Hitler's Nazi storm-troopers launched a co-ordinated attack on the Jewish community in Germany, burned the synagogues in all its cities and made bonfires in the streets of the holy books and the scrolls of the holy law and Bible. It was the night when Jewish homes were attacked and heads of families taken away, many of them never to return. It was the night when the windows of all Jewish businesses and stores were smashed, covering the streets in the cities of Germany with a film of broken glass which dissolved into the millions of crystals which gave that night its name. It was the night which led eventually to the crematoria and the gas chambers, Auschwitz, Birkenau, Dachau, Buchenwald, Theresienstadt and others. It was the night which led to the most terrifying Holocaust in the history of man.



By
Chaim Herzog

UN resolution an assault on Judaism

It is indeed befitting, Mr. President, that this debate, conceived in the desire to deflect the Middle East from its moves towards peace and born of a deep pervading feeling of anti-Semitism, should take place on the anniversary of this day. It is indeed befitting, Mr. President, that the United Nations, which began its life as an anti-Nazi alliance, should 30 years later find itself on its way to becoming the world centre of anti-Semitism. Hitler would have felt at home on a number of occasions during the past year, listening to the proceedings in this forum, and above all to the proceedings during the debate on Zionism.

It is sobering to consider to what level this body has been dragged down if we are obliged today to contemplate an attack on Zionism. For this attack constitutes not only an anti-Israeli attack of the foulest type, but also an assault in the United Nations on Judaism — one of the oldest established religions in the world, a religion which has given the world the human values of the Bible, and from which two other great religions, Christianity and Islam, sprang. Is it not tragic to consider that we here at this meeting in the year 1975 are contemplating what is a scurrilous attack on a great and established religion which has given to the world the Bible with its Ten Commandments, the great prophets of old, Moses, Isaiah, Amos; the great thinkers of history, Maimonides, Spinoza, Marx, Einstein, many of the masters of the arts and as high a percentage of the Nobel Prize-winners in the world, in the sciences, in the arts and in the humanities as has been achieved by any people on earth? ...

The resolution against Zionism was originally one condemning racism and colonialism, a subject on which we could have achieved consensus, a consensus which is of great importance to all of us and to our African colleagues in particular. However, instead of permitting this to happen, a group of countries, drunk with the feeling of power inherent in the automatic majority and without regard to the importance of achieving a consensus on this issue, railroaded the UN in a contemptuous maneuver by the use of the automatic majority into bracketing Zionism with the subject under discussion.

I do not come to this rostrum to defend the moral and historical values of the Jewish people. They do not need to be defended. They speak for themselves. They have given to mankind much of what is great and eternal. They have done for the spirit of man more than can readily be appreciated by a forum such as this one.

I come here to denounce the two great evils which menace society in general and a society of nations in particular. These two evils are hatred and ignorance. These two evils are the motivating force behind the proponents of this resolution and their supporters. These two evils characterize those who would drag this world organization, the ideals of which were first conceived by the prophets of Israel, to the depths to which it has been dragged today.

Continued on page B41

Mazel Tov to the State of Israel on her 60th Anniversary

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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

Dynamic, vibrant national movement

Continued from page B40

The key to understanding Zionism is in its name. The easternmost of the two hills of ancient Jerusalem during the 10th century B.C.E. was called Zion. In fact, the name Zion, referring to Jerusalem, appears 152 times in the Old Testament. The name is overwhelmingly a poetic and prophetic designation. The religious and emotional qualities of the name arise from the importance of Jerusalem as the Royal City and the City of the Temple. "Mount Zion" is the place where God dwells. Jerusalem, or Zion, is a place where the Lord is King, and where He has installed His king, David.

King David made Jerusalem the capital of Israel almost 3,000 years ago, and Jerusalem has remained the capital ever since. During the centuries the term "Zion" grew and expanded to mean the whole of Israel. The Israelites in exile could not forget Zion. The Hebrew Psalmist sat by the waters of Babylon and swore: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning." This oath has been repeated for thousands of years by Jews throughout the world. It is an oath which was made over 700 years before the advent of Christianity and over 1,200 years before the advent of Islam, and Zion came to mean the Jewish homeland, symbolic of Judaism, of Jewish national aspirations.

While praying to his God every Jew, wherever he is in the world, faces towards Jerusalem. For over 2,000 years of exile these prayers have expressed the yearning of the Jewish people to return to their ancient homeland, Israel. In fact, a continuous Jewish presence, in larger or smaller numbers, has been maintained in the country over the centuries.

Zionism is the name of the national movement of the Jewish people and is the modern expression of the ancient Jewish heritage. The Zionist ideal, as set out in the Bible, has been, and is, an integral part of the Jewish religion.

Zionism is to the Jewish people what the liberation movements of Africa and Asia have been to their own people.

Zionism is one of the most dynamic and vibrant national movements in human history. Historically it is based on a unique and unbroken connection, extending some 4,000 years, between

the People of the Book and the Land of the Bible.

In modern times, in the late 19th century, spurred by the twin forces of anti-Semitic persecution and of nationalism, the Jewish people organized the Zionist movement in order to transform their dream into reality. Zionism as a political movement was the revolt of an oppressed nation against the depredation and wicked discrimination and oppression of the countries in which anti-Semitism flourished. It is no coincidence that the co-sponsors and supporters of this resolution include countries who are guilty of the horrible crimes of anti-Semitism and discrimination to this very day.

Support for the aim of Zionism was written into the League of Nations Mandate for Palestine and was again endorsed by the United Nations in 1947, when the General Assembly voted by overwhelming majority for the restoration of Jewish independence in our ancient land.

The re-establishment of Jewish independence in Israel, after centuries of struggle to overcome foreign conquest and exile, is a vindication of the fundamental concepts of the equality of nations and of self-determination. To question the Jewish people's right to national existence and freedom is not only to deny to the Jewish people the right accorded to every other people on this globe, but it is also to deny the central precepts of the United Nations.

As a former Foreign Minister of Israel, Abba Eban, has written:

"Zionism is nothing more – but also nothing less – than the Jewish people's sense of origin and destination in the land linked eternally with its name. It is also the instrument whereby the Jewish nation seeks an authentic fulfilment of itself. And the drama is enacted in 20 states comprising 100 million people in 4 1/2 million square miles, with vast resources. The issue therefore is not whether the world will come to terms with Arab nationalism. The question is at what point Arab nationalism, with its prodigious glut of advantage, wealth and opportunity, will come to terms with the modest but equal rights of another Middle Eastern nation to pursue its life in security and peace."

Continued on page B42

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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

'The embodiment of a unique pioneering spirit'

Continued from page B41

The vicious diatribes on Zionism voiced here by Arab delegates may give this assembly the wrong impression that while the rest of the world supported the Jewish national liberation movement the Arab world was always hostile to Zionism. This is not the case. Arab leaders, cognizant of the rights of the Jewish people, fully endorsed the virtues of Zionism. Sherif Hussein, the leader of the Arab world during World War I, welcomed the return of the Jews to Palestine. His son, Emir Feisal, who represented the Arab world in the Paris Peace Conference, had this to say about Zionism:

"We Arabs, especially the educated among us, look with deepest sympathy on the Zionist movement.... We will wish the Jews a hearty welcome home.... We are working together for a reformed and revised Near East, and our two movements complement one another. The movement is national and not imperialistic. There is room in Syria for us both. Indeed, I think that neither can be a success without the other."

It is perhaps pertinent at this point to recall that when the question of Palestine was being debated in the United Nations in 1947, the Soviet Union strongly supported the Jewish independence struggle. It is particularly relevant to recall some of Andrei Gromyko's remarks:

"As we know, the aspirations of a considerable part of the Jewish people are linked with the problem of Palestine and of its future administration. This fact scarcely requires proof.... During the last war, the Jewish people underwent exceptional sorrow and suffering. Without any exaggeration, this sorrow and suffering are indescribable. It is difficult to express them in dry statistics on the Jewish victims of the fascist aggressors. The Jews in the territories where the Hitlerites held sway were subjected



File photo of demonstrators in New York protesting the Zionism is Racism resolution.

to almost complete physical annihilation. The total number of Jews who perished at the hands of the Nazi executioners is estimated at approximately six million....

"The United Nations cannot and must not regard this situation with indifference, since this would be incompatible with the high principles proclaimed in its charter, which provides for the defence of human rights, irrespective of race, religion or sex....

"The fact that no Western European State has been able to ensure the defence of the elementary rights of the Jewish people and to safeguard it against the violence of the fascist executioners explains the aspirations of the Jews to establish their own

state. It would be unjust not to take this into consideration and to deny the right of the Jewish people to realize this aspiration."

How sad it is to see here a group of nations, many of whom have but recently freed themselves of colonial rule, deriding one of the most noble liberation movements of this century, a movement which not only gave an example of encouragement and determination to the peoples struggling for independence but also actively aided many of them either during the period of preparation for their independence or immediately thereafter.

Here you have a movement which is the embodiment of a unique pioneering spirit, of the dignity of labour, and of enduring human values, a movement which has presented to the world an example of social equality and open democracy being associated in this resolution with abhorrent political concepts.

We in Israel have endeavoured to create a society which strives to implement the highest ideals of society – political, social and cultural – for all the inhabitants of Israel, irrespective of religious belief, race or sex.

Show me another pluralistic society in this world in which despite all the difficult problems, Jew and Arab live together with such a degree of harmony, in which the dignity and rights of man are observed before the law, in which no death sentence is applied, in which freedom of speech, of movement, of thought, of expression are guaranteed, in which even movements which are opposed to our national aims are represented in our parliament.

The Arab delegates talk of racism. What has happened to the 800,000 Jews who lived for over 2,000 years in the Arab lands, who formed some of the most ancient communities long before the advent of Islam. Where are they now?

Continued on page B43

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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

To build a society

Continued from page B42

The Jews were once one of the important communities in the countries of the Middle East, the leaders of thought, of commerce, of medical science. Where are they in Arab society today? You dare talk of racism when I can point with pride to the Arab ministers who have served in my government; to the Arab deputy speaker of my parliament; to Arab officers and men serving of their own volition in our border and police defence forces, frequently commanding Jewish troops; to the hundreds of thousands of Arabs from all over the Middle East crowding the cities of Israel every year; to the thousands of Arabs from all over the Middle East coming for medical treatment to Israel; to the peaceful co-existence which has developed; to the fact that Arabic is an official language in Israel on a par with Hebrew; to the fact that it is as natural for an Arab to serve in public office in Israel as it is incongruous to think of a Jew serving in any public office in an Arab country, indeed being admitted to many of them. Is that racism? It is not! That, Mr. President, is Zionism.

Zionism is our attempt to build a society, imperfect though it may be, in which the visions of the prophets of Israel will be realized. I know that we have problems. I know that many disagree with our government's policies. Many in Israel, too, disagree from time to time with the government's policies ... and are free to do so because Zionism has created the first and only real democratic state in a part of the world that never really knew democracy and freedom of speech.

This malicious resolution, designed to divert us from its true purpose, is part of a dangerous anti-Semitic idiom which is being insinuated into every public debate by those who have sworn to block the current move towards accommodation and ultimately towards peace in the Middle East. This, together with similar moves, is designed to sabotage the efforts of the Geneva Conference for peace in the Middle East and to deflect those who are moving along the road towards peace from their purpose. But they will not succeed, for I can but reiterate my government's policy to make every move in the direction towards peace, based on compromise.

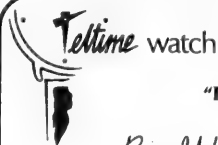
We are seeing here today but another manifestation of the bitter anti-Semitic, anti-Jewish hatred which animates Arab society. Who would

have believed that in this year, 1975, the malicious falsehoods of the "elders of Zion" would be distributed officially by Arab governments? Who would have believed that we would today contemplate an Arab society which teaches the vilest anti-Jewish hate in the kindergartens?... We are being attacked by a society which is motivated by the most extreme form of racism known in the world today. This is the racism which was expressed so succinctly in the words of the leader of the PLO, Yassir Arafat, in his opening address at a symposium in Tripoli, Libya: "There will be no presence in the region other than the Arab presence...." In other words, in the Middle East from the Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf only one presence is allowed, and that is Arab presence. No other people, regardless of how deep are its roots in the region, is to be permitted to enjoy its right to self-determination.

Look at the tragic fate of the Kurds of Iraq. Look what happened to the black population in southern Sudan. Look at the dire peril in which an entire community of Christians finds itself in Lebanon. Look at the avowed policy of the PLO, which calls in its Palestine Covenant of 1964 for the destruction of the State of Israel, which denies any form of compromise on the Palestine issue and which, in the words of its representative only the other day in this building, considers Tel Aviv to be occupied territory. Look at all this, and you see before you the root cause of the twin evils of this world at work, the blind hatred of the Arab proponents of this resolution, and the abysmal ignorance and wickedness of those who support them.

The issue before this assembly is neither Israel nor Zionism: The issue is the fate of this organization. Conceived in the spirit of the prophets of Israel, born out of an anti-Nazi alliance after the tragedy of World War II, it has degenerated into a forum which was this last week described by [Paul Johnson] one of the leading writers in a foremost organ of social and liberal thought in the West as "rapidly becoming one of the most corrupt and corrupting creations in the whole history of human institutions ... almost without exception those in the majority came from states notable for racist oppression of every conceivable hue." He goes on to explain the phenomenon of this debate:

Continued on page B44



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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

I stand here not as a supplicant

Continued from page B43

"Israel is a social democracy, the nearest approach to a free socialist state in the world; its people and government have a profound respect for human life, so passionate indeed that, despite every conceivable provocation, they have refused for a quarter of a century to execute a single captured terrorist. They also have an ancient but vigorous culture, and a flourishing technology. The combination of national qualities they have assembled in their brief existence as a state is a perpetual and embittering reproach to most of the new countries whose representatives swagger about the UN building. So Israel is envied and hated; and efforts are made to destroy her. The extermination of the Israelis has long been the prime objective of the Terrorist International; they calculate that if they can break Israel, then all the rest of civilization is vulnerable to their assaults...."

"The melancholy truth, I fear, is that the candles of civilization are burning low. The world is increasingly governed not so much by capitalism, or communism, or social democracy, or even tribal barbarism, as by a false lexicon of political clichés, accumulated over half a century and now assuming a kind of degenerate sacerdotal authority.... We all know what they are...."

Over the centuries it has fallen to the lot of my people to be the testing agent of human decency, the touchstone of civiliza-



Herzog tears the resolution.

tion, the crucible in which enduring human values are to be tested. A nation's level of humanity could invariably be judged by its behaviour towards its Jewish population. Persecution and oppression have often enough begun with the Jews, but it has never ended with them. The anti-Jewish pogroms in Czarist Russia were but the tip of the iceberg which revealed the inher-

ent rottenness of a regime that was soon to disappear in the storm of revolution. The anti-Semitic excesses of the Nazis merely foreshadowed the catastrophe which was to befall mankind in Europe....

On the issue before us, the world has divided itself into good and bad, decent and evil, human and debased. We, the Jewish people, will recall in history our gratitude to those nations who stood up and were counted and who refused to support this wicked proposition. I know that this episode will have strengthened the forces of freedom and decency in this world and will have fortified the free world in their resolve to strengthen the ideals they so cherish. I know that this episode will have strengthened Zionism as it has weakened the United Nations.

As I stand on this rostrum, the long and proud history of my people unravels itself before my inward eye. I see the oppressors of our people over the ages as they pass one another in evil procession into oblivion. I stand here before you as the representative of a strong and flourishing people which has survived them all and which will survive this shameful exhibition and the proponents of this resolution.

The great moments of Jewish history come to mind as I face you, once again outnumbered and the would-be victim of hate, ignorance and evil. I look back on those great moments. I recall the greatness of a nation which I have the honour to represent in this forum. I am mindful at this moment of the Jewish people throughout the world wherever they may be, be it in freedom or in slavery, whose prayers and thoughts are with me at this moment.

I stand here not as a supplicant. Vote as your moral conscience dictates to you. For the issue is neither Israel nor Zionism. The issue is the continued existence of this organization, which has been dragged to its lowest point of discredit by a coalition of despots and racists.

The vote of each delegation will record in history its country's stand on anti-Semitic racism and anti-Judaism. You yourselves bear the responsibility for your stand before history, for as such will you be viewed in history. We, the Jewish people, will not forget.

For us, the Jewish people, this is but a passing episode in a rich and event-filled history. We put our trust in our Providence, in our faith and beliefs, in our time-hallowed tradition, in our striving for social advance and human values, and in our people wherever they may be. For us, the Jewish people, this resolution based on hatred, falsehood and arrogance, is devoid of any moral or legal value.

(At this point, Ambassador Herzog tore up the paper on which the resolution was written.)

Source: Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

Israel: A miracle that renews itself every day

I

Sixty years after the establishment of the State of Israel, a self-interrogation seems in order. What is its place in Jewish history? Its role, its appeal? What does it symbolize? What does it demand of us? Was Ahad Haam right: a spiritual homeland only? Was the great historian Shimon Dubnov wise in refusing in the early '40s to leave Riga and go to Jerusalem?

For a Jew of my generation, Israel represents a miracle that renews itself every day. At times, it is difficult for us to relate to it and to the dream it embodies: we are seized by a strange, yet not so strange feeling that, personally and ontologically, we owe it something. Without Israel, would we have had the motivation and the strength to begin our life again and build on ruins?

Often I wonder: how did the Jewish people manage 60 years ago to rise up so soon from an oppressive state of mourning? Three years after

the most murderous Jewish catastrophe in recorded history, it issued a challenge to destiny and proclaimed a new Jewish sovereign state on its ancestral soil. How did it succeed in creating such a dazzling shortcut between the dark tragedy of Auschwitz and the glorious victory of national independence?

Naturally, from a legal viewpoint, one credits the United Nations with this event. The last time, the United States and Stalin's Soviet Union voted in favour of the partition plan recommending the creation of two states, one for the Jews and the other for the Arabs. Six months later the Iron Curtain divided the world and the vote on Palestine would have been different. Thus in many quarters, political scientists and commentators maintain that Israel draws its legitimacy from that United Nations decision.

For Zionists among us, the answer is that we owe the Jewish state to the fervent and imaginative endeavours, all over the world of Zionist visionaries, writers and activists.

Jews were not alone in defending that aspiration. Remember Maxim Gorky's statement? "I am told that Zionism is a utopia. Perhaps. But in as much as I see in this utopia an unconquerable thirst for freedom, one for which the people will suffer, it is for me reality."

Other gentiles – writers and journalists, po-



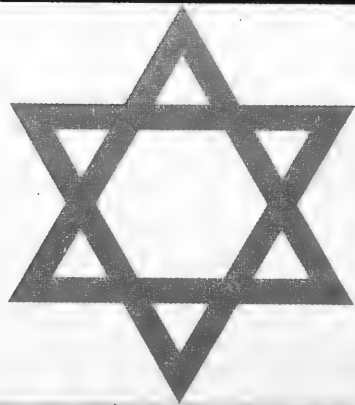
Jews poured out onto the streets of Tel Aviv to celebrate the news of the partition plan vote on Nov. 29, 1947. [IGPO photo]

litical personalities, businessmen in the free world – joined the movement. But that was not enough. The heroic underground operations of Zionist movements in Palestine – the Haganah and Palmach, the Irgun and the Stern group played their role in obtaining statehood for our

people. They performed the miracle of creating a new nation in an old land.

Is that all? I beg to differ. I prefer to believe that we owe the establishment of the Jewish

Continued on page B46



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Israel: 60 Years of Independence**'There is no substitute to peace'**

Continued from page B45

state also to the Jewish people at large who, in their prayers and dreams, kept Jewish memory and hope alive. Granted, the Baal Shem Tov's disciples made aliyah in the 17th century and were followed by young Zionists who left their families and friends to go to Eretz Israel to work there, build there, live there and fight there. But it was in the name of our entire people, faith and its history that the old fashioned Chassidim and the modern Zionists accomplished the miraculous rebirth of political life in Israel. The recent past embodies distant centuries when David and Solomon ruled there and imposed the will of God.

As a student of history, I love reading descriptions of Eretz Israel in the Middle Ages. There was never a time when the land was empty of Jews. I read Nachmanides' (the Ramban) letters to his family in Spain, Rabbi Nahman's dramatic journey to the holy land and understand why the descendants of prophets, sages and merchants were meant to leave a legacy that became contemporary Israel.

All of us could have joined them at one time or another but we did not. The reasons were varied and often personal. Let us state it frankly: History called us and we have not answered its appeal. We stayed in the Diaspora. Some did more for Zionism, others did less. When Theodore Herzl met the Turkish Sultan, he was offered Palestine for \$7 million. He failed to raise them. Today the Jewish response to Israel's needs has vastly improved.

Is it because, in Diaspora, we all feel or must feel morally in Israel's debt? Is our love for Israel fed by frustration and/or guilt? I remain attached to Israel with all the fibres of my being. Is there another land where the distant past dominates changing events to such a degree? Where names of streets bring you back



The 'displaced persons' of Europe stand at attention holding on to their symbol of hope - the flag of Israel. [IGPO photo]

thousands of years? In Be'er Sheva you think of Abraham's faith, in Ashkelon you recall Samson's strength; on Mount Carmel, you hear Elijah's voice.

When Israel goes through crises, we are concerned, almost physically. Whatever happens there affects us. Thus we take part in its festivities and victories as well as in its anguish and sadness. We weep with the mothers who lost their sons in battle. We embrace young orphans and seek ways to comfort them. And when Israel is slandered, as it is now in so many quarters, we feel not only outrage but pain. Israel's wounds are ours. As is Israel's hope.

Thus we should perhaps redefine Zionism. Arthur Koestler once described the movement as "one Jew raising money from another Jew to send a third Jew to Palestine." No more. Today Zionism means love of Zion. It implies total solidarity with Israel. The dream of aliyah may remain valid and even burning but while dreaming, Jews conscious of their Jewishness ought to do whatever they can, and more, always more, to help our people in Israel.

That is why recent events in Israel touch us so deeply. We watch young Palestinians on the screen, their faces twisted with hatred and somehow we know that we too are their target. Their Moslem fanatics don't shout "Death to Israelis" but "Death to the Jews." Iran's infamous President Mahmoud Ahmedinejad again and again threatens Israel with extermination. And I am worried. Not because of their threats but of their implication. Their hatred is so pervasive, so perverse, so fatalistic, that it eliminates all possibility of reconciliation. But although I belong to a generation that learned to trust the enemy's threats more than the friend's promises, with all my heart and soul, I do cling to the ideals of peace, the loftiest and noblest of all.

It is urgent to attain it. There is no substitute to peace. Too much blood has been shed already on the soil of ancient priests and prophets. Too many families remain in mourning. This 60 year war must come to an end. In human relations, hatred must be abolished as option.

The Jew in me loves Israel in its joy as well as in its distress. Like its leaders and citizens, I pray for reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians. That day history itself will participate in celebration.

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Israel: 60 Years of Independence

Jerusalem, the place that pulls all Jews together

II

The sound coming from the mountains, a melancholy song, a joyous prayer, a dream, a memory: this miraculous place reaching into heaven, I remember it as clearly and with as much intensity as I remember the child who cherished it. I think I pronounced its name before my own. A melodious name, a lullaby, evocative of a distant, familiar yet unknown past, a name that soothed even as it inspired awe, especially at dusk when children and wanderers are afraid to stay alone.

Seventeen times conquered and destroyed, and as many times rebuilt, this timeless capital of Jewish history has, if we are to believe ancient legends, two faces, two destinies. Earthly Jerusalem and heavenly Jerusalem; the one, visible filled with memories of lamentation and mourning; the other, intangible, promising peace and harmony. The two meet in those who place their faith and fervour in memory.

An image in the Talmud:

When the Roman legions, under the command of the wicked general Titus, prepared to ransack and burn the Temple, four angels descended from heaven and set fire to it, as though to demonstrate the impotence of the enemy when attacking God's city. Then, some young priests emerged from the burning sanctuary, climbed to the roof and addressed the Master of the universe: "We have been unable to safeguard Your dwelling, and so we return its keys to You." Whereupon they threw the keys toward heaven. And a hand of fire appeared, seized they keys and carried them away.

There was a time when I blamed those young priests: why give back those precious and sanctified keys? I would have preferred a more provocative language: "God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, You are free to renounce Your sanctuary, sacrifice your servants and do without Your people. But the keys are ours, they are our memories, and we are determined to keep them."

I remember: it was night. Hungarian Jews in the hundreds and thousands had just disembarked in a weird and accursed kingdom dominated by barbed wire, barking dogs, short commands, demented cries. Men, women and children torn from every land, bearers of every name in Jewish history, representing every facet of the Diaspora - I saw them converge on this place, and suddenly, in what I thought was a dream, a shattering idea crossed my mind: This is a moment of redemption and *Kibutz Gahgot*, the Ingathering of Exiles. Gone, the time of torment;

gone, the era of darkness. The Third Temple, built in flames, was about to receive those who believed in its power to resist destruction. In a crazy way, for a fleeting instant, I wanted to laugh. Now I can die, I thought in my dream, we can all die, happy and at peace. In Jerusalem.

Then we all awoke to reality. We found ourselves in a place that will forever represent whatever Jerusalem is not: the unholy side of humanity, the destructive urge of man, the ugly hatred of those who replaced God with their own idols.

Another image, an exulted memory: Moscow, Simchat Torah 1965. That evening I thought I was delirious, so overwhelmed was my imagination by the unexpectedness, by the dynamic impact of what I witnessing. The event began at dusk. Suddenly the centre of the capital shifted from Red Square to the dusty Arkhipova street. To the alley next to the synagogue. For thousands and thousands of Jewish youngsters that hour, every road led to the same place. College students and labourers, soldiers and musicians, they arrived alone or in small groups, at first hesitant then elated, hair tousled by the wind, balalaikas swung over their shoulders. They came not only from Russia but also from Saragossa in Spain and York in England and Fez in Morocco. Wary but proud as they mingled with the crowd, they were greeted with shouts: "Long live this day, hurrah! Long live the Jewish people, hurrah!" Caught in the frenzy of the dance, they seemed to float on air, transfigured, torn from their shadows, rising above, above the present, as though climbing Jacob's ladder, the one that reaches into the seventh heaven and perhaps higher still.

I had not felt so strong in a long time, nor so proud. Before the courageous and valiant political dissidents, these youngsters dared to brave the brutality of the Kremlin and its secret police by claiming their kinship with the Jewish people everywhere. Watching them, I let myself drift into the past, into the future, into the clouds; luminous waves carried me to a unique place where words become songs: Jerusalem.

Then, still a third memory: Jerusalem 1967. The fighting was still going on at various fronts. Snipers were everywhere. But this did not prevent people in mystical ecstasy from running toward the Old City which had been inaccessible to all Jews while it was still under Jordanian rule.

Warriors and talmudic scholars, Chassidim and grocers, school-children and old dreamers, survivors of every hell, faces of every destiny - I saw them breathlessly running, almost flying, toward the winding alleys, the barricaded buildings, running to meet the wall. And there, incredulous and awed, like children afraid to wake up, they all came to an abrupt halt. Then somebody began to weep, others to pray, still others to dance. The entire country danced. Jewish history danced.

Bursting with joy and gratitude for the privilege of witnessing that moment, I thought: that is Jerusalem, the place that pulls all Jews together, the true city of eternal longing and promise. Never shall I forget that image, that scene, that day. What would my work and my life be without them?

Elie Wiesel is the Andrew W. Mellon professor in the humanities and a university professor at Boston University as well as a Nobel Peace laureate.



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Jews of Kosovo face uncertain future

The News in Brief

CANADA

Seifert Extradited

VANCOUVER — Canadian Jewish Congress welcomed news that Canada had extradited convicted war criminal Michael Seifert to Italy, but it urged quicker action on other Nazi war criminals who lied about their past to get into Canada. Seifert was extradited Feb. 15 after a drawn-out legal process. Seifert, 83, was given a life sentence in absentia by an Italian court in 2000 for nine

killings during his service as an SS guard at the Bolzano concentration camp in northern Italy in 1944 and 1945. Seifert began serving his sentence Feb. 16 in a military prison near Naples. In January, the Supreme Court of Canada turned down a request to review a decision allowing his removal to Italy.

WORLD

Hitler Fave Performs

AMSTERDAM — A 104-year-old Dutch singer who

was a favourite of Hitler performed in his hometown amid protests. Johannes Heesters performed Feb. 16 in Amersfoort, 35 miles east of Amsterdam, for the first time since 1963, when he was booed off the stage. Dozens of protesters and a handful of neo-Nazis came to his Feb. 16 show. Heesters was a popular German-language singer and film star who performed for German soldiers in World War II. The singer, who now lives in Germany, has said he knew nothing about the Shoah, despite a visit to the Dachau concentration camp in 1941.

Survivor Raps Sarkozy's Shoah Program

PARIS — A French Holocaust survivor and former European Parliament president slammed Nicolas Sarkozy's new Holocaust education proposal.

Simone Veil told the French magazine *L'Express* that "her blood turned to ice" in response to the French president's initiative to pair every fifth grader with the profile of a child killed by the Nazis. Sarkozy announced his new idea in a speech this month to the CRIF, the umbrella organization of French Jewry.

"We cannot ask a child to identify himself with a dead child. This remembrance is far too heavy to carry," said Veil, a one-time Auschwitz deportee.

At a Feb. 15 education conference in southwest France, Sarkozy defended his proposal to pair every 10- and 11-year-old in the country with the detailed story of a child killed during the Shoah, saying, "We don't traumatize children by giving them the present of a country's memory."

JCC Attacked

LOS ANGELES — A Molotov cocktail was placed or thrown at a Jewish centre in suburban Los Angeles Feb. 18. No one was injured in the 2 a.m. attack at the back of the Bernard Milken Jewish Community Campus in West Hills, Calif. It's unclear who was responsible. Police are investigating

the next decade is to create a stronger community of young people and families," the group's chair said. "This additional money is sometimes what a young family needs to have another child."

Israeli Dodged Bullet

LONDON — A retired Israeli general escaped arrest on war crimes charges when he flew to Britain in 2005, due to police fears of a shootout when El Al refused to allow them to board a plane in London and seize him. British police decided against boarding the El Al plane carrying Maj.-Gen. Doron Almog in September 2005 out of concern the plane's armed guards would open fire if they entered, the BBC reported last week.

Almog, an ex-head of Israeli forces in Gaza, went to Britain for a charity event, but was tipped off that a pro-Palestinian group had gained a warrant for his arrest. He stayed on the plane and flew home within hours.

Actor Wins Apology

LONDON — U.S. actor Will Smith received undisclosed damages and an apology Feb. 22 for allegations that he described Adolf Hitler as a "good person." The High Court in London ruled the statement, made in a Dec. 23 article on a website owned by World Entertainment News Network Limited, caused Smith deep distress and embarrassment. He will donate the money to charity.

Chabad Baby Bonus

MOSCOW — The Chabad-Led Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia says it will pay Jewish families to have more babies. At an event marking its 10th anniversary, the federation said it will pay families with three or more children about \$100 a month. "Our goal for

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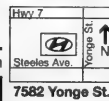
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HIGHEST QUOTES ON RRIF's, ANNUITIES, etc.
Creative Ideas in Financial Planning

Israel travel consul optimistic 2008 will be record year

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Two thousand and eight is starting just like 2007 ended – at least when it comes to travel to Israel.

Israel's Ministry of Tourism reported a record-breaking figure for travel to Israel in the month of January, as some 182,000 travellers flocked to the country, a 57 per cent increase over the same period the year before.

That continues a trend set in 2007, when a record two million tourists visited the Jewish state.

The January figure has Israeli tourism ministry officials smiling and local tourism consul Oded Grofman confident that a new record for Canadian visitors to Israel can be set in 2008 – helped in part by celebrations of Israel's 60th birthday.

In a media briefing last week, Grofman said the Israel Government Tourist Office (IGTO) has set a target of 65,000 Canadian visitors for the current year, a figure he

called conservative, but which would exceed last year's record of 60,153.

The 2007 figure counts only those with Canadian passports who visited the Jewish state. If all travellers from Canada were included – including those with other travel documents – the figure would be 20 per cent higher, he suggested.

Grofman attributed the boost in tourism to an improvement in "the geopolitical situation" and to a strong loony, making it more affordable for Canadians to visit Israel.

Research shows Canadians spend an average of 10 nights and \$1,355 in Israel, providing a substantial boost to the local economy, he said.

He added that most take a "classical tour," which includes trips to historic sites in Jerusalem, Haifa, the Dead Sea, Tiberias and Tel Aviv. Most stay in four or five-star hotels as part of organized tours.

While 25 per cent of travellers to Israel are Jewish, the IGTO is hoping to make inroads among Christian pilgrims and "sophisticated travellers," who might visit

Israel for the nightlife, spas, restaurants and wineries.

Grofman said the IGTO is devoting substantial sums to promoting travel to Israel. Last year, its efforts included a \$250,000 media campaign that ran from July to November. In addition, Israel hosted 24 journalists and two television crews, sponsored community and trade events, and launched a new website, www.goisrael.ca.

This year the IGTO will continue to cultivate relationships in the travel industry and among tour operators while strengthening its pitch to a number of ethnic communities that are beginning to discover Israel as a travel destination.

Grofman noted that Israel's image is improving. People who were once concerned about security now see that terrorism can occur anywhere – including New York, London, Madrid or Istanbul, he said.

In addition, Israel has been getting good publicity in various media. One-third of the high selling *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit issue was shot in Israel, and other publica-

tions feature the fun and cultural benefits of visiting the country, he said.

About \$12 million has been allocated to the North American market to promote travel to Israel this year, and on March 4, the French-language version of goisrael.ca will be launched.

Two air carriers seem to share Grofman's optimism for growth. He noted that El Al will offer four weekly flights to Israel in the peak summer months, up from the current three, while Air Canada will increase the frequency of its flights from four to between five and seven.

After severe downturns in the tourism economy due to the Palestinian intifadah, travel to Israel has jumped in recent years.

Suggesting that Israel is enjoying a travel renaissance, Grofman noted that Russia, which used to account for 15,000 to 20,000 visitors per year, many visiting relatives, last year sent more than 100,000 travellers to Israel.

Russia is Israel's fastest growing tourism market, he added.

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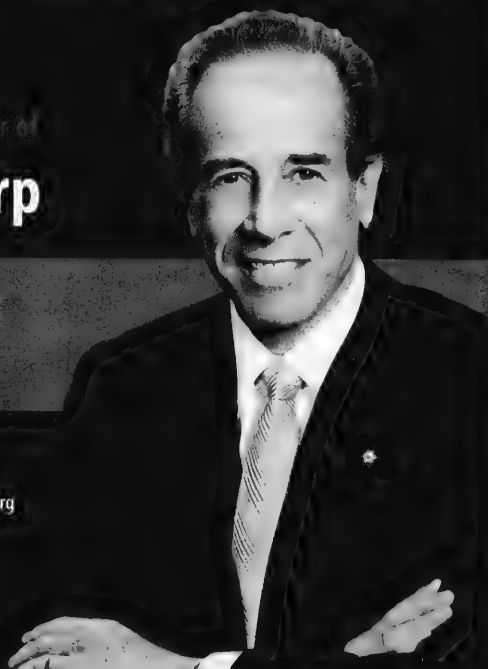
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**Greater Toronto Area****Light that will always shine**

Four years and some two months ago, on Dec. 11, 2003, Rabbi W. Gunther Plaut's last column appeared in *The CJN*. To that date, he had been a regular contributor to the paper for more than two decades.

With tender honesty, he announced to his readers that he had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. "I want you, my friends and readers, to know this straight from me," he wrote. "I will continue to do my best, but my best is no longer what it once was."

"How exactly can I do my best?" he asked? "*Chazak, v'amatz*," he answered. "I will attempt to be as strong as possible and muster up as much courage as possible."

Since he wrote those words, Rabbi Plaut has endeavoured to follow his own prescription. Last November, he turned 95 years old. But his voice, alas, is quiet now and he no longer picks up the pen to record his thoughts.

We miss him.

Moreover, the world is such that we still need him, his insights, his sage counsel and his historical perspective on current events.

Thus, the recent publication of the single-volume anthology of some of the rabbi's writings is a cause for individual and communal gratitude, if not celebration too.

One Voice: The Selected Sermons of W. Gunther Plaut (Dundurn Press, 2007) is a collection of 44 sermons and lectures, edited by Rabbi Plaut's son, Rabbi Jonathan V. Plaut. The Dec. 11, 2003, column in *The CJN* is also reproduced in the collection.

The filial love and respect of the editor for his father, the task of selecting the material for the book and the deep learning in each of the essays are evident in the book's introduction.

"My father is a Renaissance man – a scholar, a leading authority on Reform Judaism and a passionate supporter of nu-

merous human rights causes. Why then, one might ask, should the sermons he delivered over a period of almost 55 years be now worthy of publication? The answer is simple: because each one of them is as timely and meaningful today as it was when first delivered from a pulpit."

Having read through the book, one can have no quarrel with the editor's assertion.

Jonathan Plaut has organized the works into eight broad categories that deal with religion; faith and God; ethics and values; being a Jew; Reform Judaism; Israel; age and generation; and death.

On which page of this collection do we not find scintillating, inspiring gemstones of wisdom from Rabbi Gunther Plaut? The controlled cadences and elegant vocabulary of his voice echo on every page.

And what is more, the subjects that concerned Rabbi Plaut and on which he offered his insights dealt with the large, ultimate issues of existence. We therefore have an opportunity to read his thoughts on questions such as: The Individual and the Cosmos, How Can I Believe in God?, The Meaning of Life, The Challenge of Freedom, Why Remain Jews?, Our Responsibility to Israel, and so on.

In speaking about the meaning of life on Yom Kippur, Sept. 18, 1972, he told his congregants: "At the roots of my being there is a conviction that merely to be is not enough, merely to live is not sufficient. Merely to breathe and exist is no warrant for true experience. For me, the

values of life lie in my acceptance of life as meaningful. And so, when I am asked to make a choice between good and evil, life and death, I find this choice important rather than unimportant, meaningful rather than meaningless. Despite... the doubts in my own soul, I hold that a mitzvah is better than a sin or that doing a mitzvah is better than not doing it. I believe that there is a God who cares about man and who has built this caring into the very structure of life."

In a sermon delivered on Erev Rosh Hashanah, Sept. 22, 1968, on the subject of The Counterforce in Human History, he said: "The world cries 'Zionist' and we know they mean us and we are proud of it, we do not shrink back from it. The world cries 'Jew' and we respond, yes!

God says to us, 'Where are you, My people?' On this eve of another year, we respond with one voice, 'Here I am: Thy ways are dark, the road uncertain, but I believe – and here I am.'

Rabbi Plaut's voice is now silent, but he still has the power to stir our hearts. Sometimes we feel enveloped by darkness, but his words are a light that still shine. I have no doubt that many of us will turn to the pages of this anthology

from time to time, seeking, as we inevitably must, the strength and the courage to contend with the struggles and travails in our own lives.

CORRECTION

In the special supplement we published last week on the 60th anniversary of Israel's independence, we inexplicably and inexcusably identified our essayist Alice Shalvi as Alice Shalvi Born. We apologize for the error.

-MBD

**From the
editor's
desk****W. Gunther Plaut**

See JN

**CONSUL
GENERAL
AT BAYCREST**

The Consul General of Israel Amir Gissin recently visited Baycrest Centre and Mount Sinai Hospital. At Baycrest, he participated in a live videoconference with Middle East directors of the Canada International Scientific Exchange Program (CISEPO) and eHealth co-ordinators. He also learned about Baycrest's missions to Israel to exchange knowledge with professional colleagues in health care. From left are Telehealth co-ordinator Tim Patterson, Rabbi Norman Berlat, Baycrest president and CEO Dr. William E. Reichman, Gissin, Dr. Arnold Noyek, director of the Peter A. Silverman Centre for International Health at Mount Sinai and Dr. Morris Freedman, head of the division of Neurology at Baycrest.



Greater Toronto Area

Rabbi Kelman honoured for lifetime of inclusion work



Rabbi Joseph Kelman

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Rabbi Joseph Kelman is being honoured this week by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto for almost five decades of work on behalf of people with special needs. The catalyst for his initial foray into the field, however, was as much happenstance as it was his innate optimism.

"It's a fantastic story," he said in a recent interview in his study at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue, where he is rabbi emeritus. Fantastic as in unbelievable, not just the kind of story – instructive, a bit humorous – that the rabbi likes to share.

In 1960, when Beth Emeth was a fledgling congregation, a congregant approached Rabbi Kelman to ask whether his developmentally delayed child – in those days they used the term "mentally retarded" – would be able to have a bar mitzvah.

To this day, Rabbi Kelman finds it hard to fathom how little he knew about the issue, having had no experience with special needs children. "You could say I was naive," he recalled. I said, "What are you worried about? We'll get a private tutor."

The father's initial silence was his first clue that there was more to the issue. But that child and others went on to celebrate their bar and bat mitzvahs after the rabbi instituted a bar/bat mitzvah program for children with special needs.

When the rabbi learned of another developmentally disabled boy in the neighbourhood, who was attending a non-Jewish camp, he was motivated to start a Jewish program for "retarded" children.

He contacted a downtown school for special needs children to ask for a list of their Jewish students. After being turned down twice, he called a third time to say that he didn't want to take the school's students away, but just wanted to start a Sunday school program. "I don't give up," he said, his words belying his low-key, affable manner.

"They gave me 20 names. I sent out 20 letters, and 16 came for a meeting." That was the beginning of Kadimah, a school that provided Judaic and Hebrew education for students with developmental disabilities. "Every Sunday we would sit down and map out a program for the following Sunday," he recalled of its early days.

A pioneer in the field, Rabbi Kelman developed a conviction early in his career that a person with a handicap is entitled to the same Jewish experience – or a similar one – as anyone else.

He went on to co-found Ezra, a program for students with learning disabilities; the Dr. Abraham Shore She'arim Hebrew Day School, to educate children with learning disabilities; and Reena, an organization that integrates adults with developmental disabilities into the community.

He chaired the North America-wide committee on special education under the auspices of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism for more than 30 years, and he was instrumental in having developmentally disabled children accepted

into Ramah camps as part of a program now called Tikvah.

At the same time, the father of three (now a grandfather of 10), was also involved in prison and hospital chaplaincy, and was tending to the needs of his congregation as it grew from 100 families to more than 1,500 at the time of his retirement in 1997.

Kelman, who turned 80 last April, said he "sheps nachas" from his involvement with the various schools and organizations, using the Yiddish term to describe the pride and pleasure Jewish parents derive from their offspring.

At the synagogue, he still teaches, officiates at some life-cycle events and conducts High Holy Day services for non-members. He is also working on a book that will be partly autobiographical.

A recipient of numerous honours, he has travelled as far as Johannesburg to serve as a consultant on special needs.

This week's award ceremony, featuring Ontario Lt.-Gov. David Onley as keynote speaker, was scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 26, at the Joseph E. and Minnie Wagman Centre. The first-time awards, the Community Inclusion Awards of Excellence, are part of the federation's broader Community Inclusion Initiative.

Rabbi Kelman's award is for lifetime achievement. Other recipients are Honey and David Levy for hosting an integrated summer camp program and including people with special needs at their Friday night dinners; Chabad Lubavitch's Friendship Circle, which matches teenage volunteers with children and teens who have special needs; and Camp George for its commitment to inclusion.

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She'arim expects to remain at BJCC next year

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Leaders of the Dr. Abraham Shore She'arim Hebrew Day School expect it to remain at the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre for the 2008-2009 school year, now that plans to demolish and rebuild the BJCC have been delayed until 2009.

Two months ago, parents and staff feared that the school, housed in rented premises on the BJCC's second floor, would be shut down because of funding issues and lack of a home for this coming September.

Sidney Braun, co-president of She'arim, which serves 75 students from Grade 1 through Grade 8 with learning disabilities, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and mild forms of autism, told *The C/JN* last week that "there will definitely be a school next year."

However, when contacted Monday morning, Seymour Epstein, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's senior vice-president for the Centre for Enhancement of Jewish Education (known as the Mercaz), said the school's future has yet to be decided.

He expects a decision will be forthcoming next month.

In January, She'arim was notified that the federation's plans to demolish and replace the BJCC have been postponed for a year, a "very significant factor," Epstein said.

Although the school

must work through other issues, "we don't have the added burden of having to relocate," Braun said.

"We've been offered the possibility of an extension on our lease, which we have said yes to," he added.

As of last Friday, a new lease had not been signed, but Braun said he had sent Sherry Kulman, the BJCC's executive director, a confirmation in writing. The school's current lease will expire at the end of June.

Braun noted that the school is the only one of its kind in the community and has the highest tuition, at about \$18,000, of any Jewish day school.

Earlier this year, She'arim experienced a deficit that its executive director, Faigie Davids, attributed to a decreased number of students because of a large graduating class last year, which resulted in a loss of tuition.

The school approached the Mercaz to ask for cash advances on the annual amount it receives (under \$200,000, based on the number of subsidized students) so that it could pay its staff. School fundraising events last year netted about \$500,000 toward She'arim's annual \$1.5 million budget.

So far, the school hasn't asked the Mercaz for money beyond the amount that has been allotted to it for the current school year.

"We're putting together a whole new budget so that we don't have a repeat situation in the future," Braun said.

He added that there would be no economies of scale if the student population were to increase. Because of the high ratio of teachers to students that's necessary to

address the latter's special needs, "the more students you have, the more teachers you need. That's the nature of a special education school."

In addition to its usual fundraising this year, additional fundraising is planned in order to "eliminate the accumulated deficit the school has had, and to ensure that going forward we don't have an accumulated deficit," Braun said.

He said that She'arim is working with a joint management committee consisting of both school and federation representatives, and will be implementing changes in areas such as the curriculum and teaching materials, which were recommended by independent consultants.

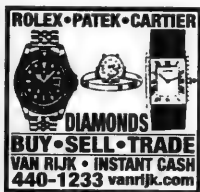
"We want to meet the needs of the community, the children and the parent body," Braun said.

Epstein said it's up to the joint management committee to decide the future of the school. Two months ago, Epstein told *The C/JN*, without being specific, that She'arim was not in compliance with Mercaz funding requirements.

He said this week that he "misspoke" at the time, and clarified that the school "has problems with compliance, but it has not been taken off the list [of funded schools]. They are still in compliance."

Said Braun: "Federation is working with us to make sure we finish this year without any hiccups to ensure that we have a stable financial structure. We are well down the path."

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Greater Toronto Area

Synagogues join forces for Mitzvah Day

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

The six synagogues that form the Bayview Corridor Group are planning their first joint mitzvah day on April 6. To gear up for the project – and as organizers put it, to whet participants' appetites for it – a Mitzvah Day Kickoff Event is planned for next week.

The first event, to be held March 6 at 8 p.m. at Beth Tikvah Synagogue, will feature Amir Gissin, Israel's consul general in Toronto, as well as entertainment by the Beth Tikvah Choir and Yitzhak Argaman. Other speakers will include Rabbi David Eligberg of Beit Rayim Synagogue; Dan Mendelsohn Aviv, director of the Centre for Jewish Living and Learning at Temple Emanu-El; cancer coach Isa Nevsky; and educator Channa Sargon.

In addition to Beth Tikvah, Beit Rayim and Temple Emanu-El, the Bayview corridor synagogues include Kehillat Shaarei Torah, Temple Har Zion and Shaar Shalom Synagogue, representing a total of about 4,000 families in the northern part of Toronto and southern reaches of Thornhill. The area is a few kilometres east of what is sometimes referred to as the Bathurst Street corridor, home to the majority of Toronto's Jewish population.

Mitzvah Day Activities will include car washes; writing postcards to Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan and families of Israeli soldiers who are missing in action; yardwork and painting at the Toronto Community Hostel, which serves homeless people; sorting clothing donations; singing at seniors residences; and building homes for Habitat for Humanity.

The event is the group's main project for this year, but other joint projects have been "quietly" taking place, sometimes with just a couple of congregations, said spokesperson Seymour Hersh. He mentioned a project of Beth Tikvah and Shaar Shalom that involved knitting for Project Linus, an organization that provides blankets to children who are ill or traumatized.

Such projects do not need formal co-ordinating any more, "because the connections have been made," he added.

Formal links date back about four years, when the social action committee of Temple Emanu-El contacted the social action group at Beth Tikvah with the idea of joining forces for a blood donor clinic. The idea was promoted at all the area synagogues and took place in October 2004.

It can be difficult for one synagogue to enlist enough volunteers for a "major" program, Hersh noted.

"I think the essential message, and the heart, is for us to be partners with everyone in tikkun olam," he said, noting that the group, which is run "strictly on a lay level," spans the Jewish denominational spectrum from Reform to Orthodox.

The group has had inquiries from area churches, and Hersh said participants hope that, over time, all religious institutions in the area "can use the concept as a basis to encourage their communities to go out and do good deeds.

"Our hope is that by starting this, this will... create some ripples and will encourage other people to do this."

For further information or to register for Mitzvah Day, go online to bayviewcorridor.org.



OUR PROMISE • OUR CHILDREN • OUR FUTURE

*It is with great sadness that Associated Hebrew Schools of Toronto
mourns the loss of our supporter, major benefactor,
Life Member of our Board of Directors, alumnus and dear friend*

Nathan O. Hurwich ז"ל

Only once in a generation are we privileged to witness the great commitment, generosity and dedication of a man like Nathan Hurwich. Nathan's almost lifelong involvement with Associated began 90 years ago when, at the age of eight, he began attending the Simcoe Street Talmud Torah. He was in fact Associated's oldest living alumnus.

Without children of their own, Nathan and his wife Roey "adopted" the children of Associated as their extended family. With the caring and dedication of a true parent, he provided guidance and support to Associated. Nat was a passionate and active board member but he also understood that without financial resources, Associated could not grow. He was a contributor to every Associated capital campaign and in 1979, he and his wife made a landmark gift and became the benefactors of the Nathan O. and Roey Hurwich Education Centre.

עמרת וקנים בני בנים ותפארת בנים אבותם משל יז:

*The crown of our elders is the children of their children
and the splendour of children is their fathers. Proverbs 17:6*

While we gratefully acknowledge Mr. Hurwich's tremendous contributions to Associated, we recognize that it is the Jewish generations secured by his generosity that will be his crowning achievement. His true legacy will be the Jewish children and grandchildren of his "Associated children."

To the students of Associated, Nathan Hurwich is a towering role model. He was a man of and for the community and supported countless Jewish causes. More than that, Nathan was a leader, founding organizations, chairing committees and inspiring others. He was an ardent Zionist and lover of Hebrew language who made dozens of trips to Israel. To truly understand the difference that one person can make, our children need look no further than the tremendous *Mesirat nefesh* - self-sacrifice and magnificent accomplishments of Nathan Hurwich.

As we at Associated mark our Centennial year, we are proud of Nathan's almost 100-year association with the school. It is with great awe and admiration that we salute his legendary contributions to Associated and the community. He was a legendary figure in our history. For the hundreds of Jewish children that are educated in the Hurwich Education Centre, he is very much a part of the present. And as guarantor of Jewish generations to follow, he will be very much a part of our future.

May his memory be for a blessing.

Sheldon Carr
Chairman of the Board

David Wm. Brown
President

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Eerie, appalling echo

For the last decade-and-a-half, at least, when writing about threats to Israel and to Jews, this newspaper has refrained in its editorials from invoking comparisons to Adolf Hitler and his horrific, racist, genocidal ideology. In the history of nations and of political movements, the ghoulis, murderous obsession of the Nazis and Nazism stands alone. To compare others to Nazis is, in effect, to diminish the singular evil of Nazism.

Nazi pathology, we know, was laden with perverse beliefs about Jews. The *Encyclopedia Judaica* notes that among his many vile views, Hitler "identified the Jews with microbial infection. He believed that the Jews were 'propagators of infection,' that they 'spread the plague.'" Thus he desired to exterminate the propagators of infection and mobilized his entire military-industrial effort, not to mention virtually an entire society, to that disturbed end.

Hitler's lurid language was the flame by which he first lit the fiery inferno of his genocidal plans. He dehumanized and delegitimized the Jews as human beings. For Hitler and his henchmen, killing Jews was decidedly not about killing human beings, because they considered Jews to be sub-human.

Thus, it is reluctantly, but, nevertheless, with a sense of rising urgency that we point out the appalling echoes of Hitler's fevered voice in the words spoken more calmly last week by the leaders of Iran.

In a televised speech to the nation, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad called Israel a "filthy germ" and a "savage beast." Just days before, the commander of Iran's Revolutionary Guards, Muhammad Ali Jafari, referred to Israel as "cancerous germ" and promised that it would "soon be destroyed by the hands of Hezbollah." That same day, Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said that even after 60 years, Israel still has "no legitimacy" in the region.

We are not unused to the vilification of Israel, though it remains an offence to conscience and decency. It is, alas, part of the ongoing assault on the right of the Jews to their own sovereign state in the Middle East. As many scholars have pointed out, it is the modern discourse of the anti-Semite, for whom Israel is the surrogate, the Jew among nations.

But the latest verbal salvo against Israel by the Iranians leaders is of a different order of offence. They are repeating the rhetoric of the leaders who ruled Germany from 1933 to 1945. Like the Nazis, they have expressed the desire to wipe the Jews — as embodied in the Jewish state — off the map. And, also like the Nazis, they are developing the weapons by which to try to achieve their desire.

The Supreme Court of Canada has observed that the Holocaust began with words. These latest hateful words of the Iranian leaders must awaken the world to Iran's true intentions regarding Israel and to the vast danger the Iranian regime poses to international peace.

We call on the United Nations to censure Iran and to intervene with every necessary measure to prevent Ahmadinejad from acquiring the weapons he so fervently seeks to implement his Hitlerian scheme.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Israel rejected U.S. president Ronald Reagan's offer to guarantee the security of Israel's northern border, once it had withdrawn from Lebanon. He was vague as to how the guarantee would be accomplished, and in the same statement, he asserted for the first time his support for a Palestinian state.

Editorials & Letters

Dry Bones
AN ISRAELI EDUCATION

OLMERT JUST PROMISED TO PROVIDE BOMB SHELTERS FOR HOMES IN SDEROT!

WOW!!

JUST ONE YEAR AFTER THE LAST TIME THE GOV'T PROMISED SHELTERS FOR HOMES IN SDEROT!!

BOOM!! BOOM!!

AND SO THE CHILDREN OF SDEROT ARE LEARNING JUST WHY WE CALL THIS PLACE

BOOM!! HELP!!

THE PROMISED LAND!

BOOM!! BOOM!!

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Canadians who fell in 1948 war

The article "They fought for the nascent Jewish state" (Israel @ 60, *CJN*, Feb. 21) did not include the Canadian Machal members (Mithadvei Chutz La'aretz) who made the ultimate sacrifice. It is unfortunate that the Machal, who were a significant bond between Israel and the Diaspora, are often not remembered and their sacrifice unappreciated. Here are the names of the 11 Canadian Machal members who fell in the 1948 War of Independence:

• **George (Buzz) Beurling** of Verdun, Que. — Canada's top World War II fighter pilot. He was killed near Rome on May 20, 1948, in the crash of a plane that was being readied for its ferry flight to Israel. He was buried in the Haifa Military Cemetery, non-Jewish section.

• **Harvey Cohen and Ed Lugech**, first cousins, of Toronto, who served in the Palmach Yiftach Brigade. They participated in battles of Nebi Yusha and Malkiyeh. Missing, Cohen and Lugech were believed waylaid by Arab irregulars near Sarafand in late June 1948.

• **Reuben Schiff** of Toronto, who served on Aliya-Bet ship Paducah. He was killed on July 11, 1948, near Abu J'Ab while looking for his shipmate and Palmach comrade Lou Ball. Schiff was buried in Nachlat Itzhak.

• **Sidney Rubinoff**, of Toronto, served with the Palmach in battles of Nebi Yusha, Malkiyeh and Operation Danny, and the capture of Lydda and Ramleh. Wounded at Latrun on July 17, 1948, he died en route to hospital. He was buried at Nachlat Itzhak.

• **Sidney Leisure**, of Toronto, served in 7th Brigade, 72nd Battalion. Killed on Sept. 7, 1948, during Operation Hiram in the battle for Tamra hill in the Galilee, he was buried at Nahariya.

• **Leonard Fitchett**, of Vancouver, ex-RCAF pilot, served in 103 Squadron. Downed in his Beaufighter by anti-aircraft fire on Oct. 20, 1948, while attacking Egyptian-held Iraq el Suedin police fortress, Fitchett was buried in Haifa Military Cemetery, non-Jewish section.

• **Wilfred Canter** (pilot) of Toronto; **Willy Fisher** (navigator) of Winnipeg; and **Fred Stevenson** (co-pilot) of Vancouver. The three RCAF veterans served in 103 Squadron. During a night supply run to Sdom, on Oct. 24, 1948, their C-47 exploded in the air after an engine caught fire. Canter and Fisher were buried in Rehovot, and Stevenson was buried in Haifa Military Cemetery, non-Jewish section.

• **Ralph Mosier** (pilot), of Vancouver, was killed Dec. 7, 1948, with three others when their Grumman Widgeon crashed into the Sea of Galilee during a training flight. Mosier was buried at Nachlat Itzhak.

Willy Mandel
Nephew of Willy Fisher
Thornhill, Ont.



Dangers of chiropractic treatment

I read the article "Kids and chiropractic" (To Your Health, *CJN*, Feb. 7) with dismay. The article does not address the serious dangers involved in chiropractic neck manipulation, especially in children. More than 60 Canadian neurologists and the Canadian Stroke Consortium have warned that chiropractic neck manipulation can cause stroke and death, and called for a complete ban on neck manipulations in infants and children. Warning signs that include neck pain, visual impairment, nausea, dizziness and numbness, which often don't appear until one to two weeks after the visit, require medical attention. The Canadian Medical Association Journal also indicates that the association between chiropractic neck

manipulation and stroke is often under-reported, since the link is often not made by questioning the patient. Your article ignores these important facts and does a disservice to your readers. See the website www.fact.com for comments by families whose members have died as a result of chiropractic neck manipulation. More information can be found on the Internet by Googling "chiropractic" and "stroke."

Linda Fingerote
Clinical Pharmacist
Thornhill, Ont.

Regrets that comments offended

I have been reminded, and I concur, that people of position and power have an obligation to educate themselves if their efforts to welcome our growing, diverse population are genuine ("Deputy mayor offended by handshake snub," *CJN*, Feb. 14).

In my heart, I am genuine about caring for each other; about sharing our opportunities to live well. A misunderstood tradition, a perceived slight, a feeling of rejection or disrespect on either side can lead to continued ignorance and distance. That would be the greater loss.

I regret that my comments offended some people. I know what it is like to feel offended without understanding all of the circumstances.

I look forward to working with Rabbi Mendel Kaplan and leaders of other faith groups to overcome any misunderstandings that we both have regarding our values, traditions, and beliefs.

Brenda Hogg
Deputy Mayor
Richmond Hill, Ont.

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman,
Ehud Goldwasser, Guy Hever,
Yehuda Katz, Eldad Regev, Gilad Shalit

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Letters are welcome if they are brief, in English or French, typewritten with lines double spaced, and of interest to our reading public. Readers are cautioned not to make sweeping claims against persons or institutions which they cannot verify, as libel laws are very stringent. We reserve the right to edit and condense letters, which must bear the sender's address, phone number and both handwritten and typed signatures. Letters sent by e-mail must also include the sender's municipal address.

info@cjnews.com

'France will always stand by Israel'

The following are excerpts from the speech given Feb. 13 at the annual dinner of the Conseil Représentatif des Institutions Juives de France, the umbrella organization for Jewish communal life in France.

By NIKOLAS SARKOZY

Memory has always been a fundamental characteristic of your identity. Because your entire culture and history are rooted in memory – the memory of God's alliance with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob. For believers, this is first and foremost the memory of a promise, the memory of a hope, the memory of a Law, handed down from generation to generation, despite the adversity, despite the relegation, despite the pogroms, despite the deportation, despite the persecution.

For each and every one of you, believers and non-believers, practising and non-practising, it is also today the memory of an exceptional and tragic destiny whose most recent chapters have scattered your families, wounded your hearts and sometimes even shaken your beliefs.

Judaism has made a major contribution to the history of humanity. The Jews were not only the first to show how steadfastly a people can stand by their God. They were also the first to show how a God can stand by His people. For the Jewish religion, memory is a trait of God before it is a trait of men.

This revelation changed humanity's perception of religion, since a God who remembers is a God who loves. Never again, after the Torah, did men speak of God as they spoke before...

I want to emphasize this point. France will always stand by Israel because Israel's existence is a major political decision of the 20th century. And this existence is non-negotiable. And as regards Israel's concerns about Hamas' contentions and about the Iranian president's insane assertions, Israel is justified when she is shocked by words we no longer wish to hear in the 21st century. France condemns these statements. And for myself, I will not meet and will not shake the hand of anyone who refuses to recognize the existence of Israel.

Regarding Iran, France's policy is simple and, I feel, easily understood by all: proliferation is a serious threat to international security; we cannot stand by while Iran develops such technologies in breach of international law; it is up to Iran to provide evidence of her intentions and to respect the United Nations resolutions. What purpose does uranium enrichment serve in Iran, a country that has no civilian use for it?

We are proposing a path to Iran, and it is in that country's interest. This path is to renounce military nuclear capacity, and I say this because I think it is right. It would be a serious mistake to consider that civilian nuclear power is reserved for the West and to say to all the Arab countries of the world: the energy of the future isn't for you, it's for us.

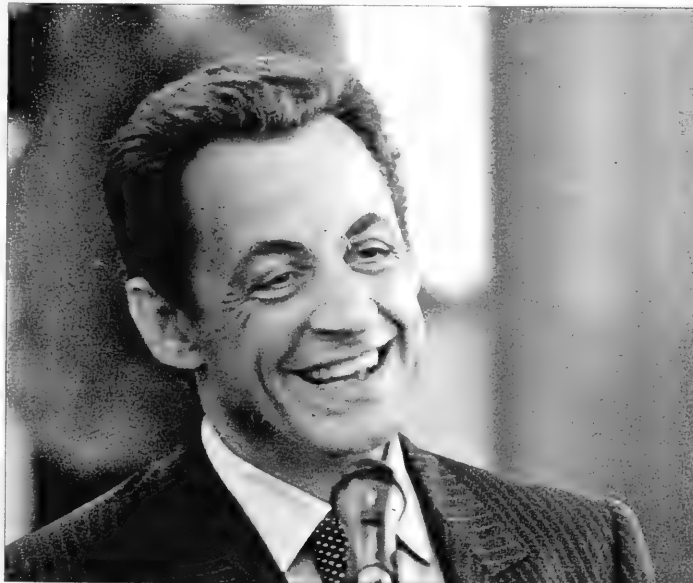
May all those who do not want a clash of

civilizations between East and West remember this. Wanting to keep the energy of the future to ourselves is tantamount to condemning a certain number of countries to poverty and destitution. And it is in these countries racked by poverty and destitution that terrorism and fanaticism flourish. All the peoples who want to develop it in peace have a right to the energy of the future. It is a serious mistake to postulate that you have to be western to have the right to the energy of the future.

In any case, I will not associate with those who irresponsibly make preparations for a clash of civilizations. Think about it. I know exactly what I'm doing, what I want to do to break these countries out of underdevelop-

ment in economic and financial relations with this country. The prime minister and minister for the economy and finance have said this. I have said it to the businesses of France, and may all the European countries do what France has done.

I don't want any doublespeak. There are sanctions against Iran. And I do not accept, even for economic reasons that I can understand, that our firms should do business with a country we are obliged to keep on the fringes of the international community. It's quite straightforward, Mr. President, companies doing so will be in breach of the rules set down by the government of the French Republic. No doublespeak, no double standards, just one...



Nikolas Sarkozy

ment, because underdevelopment means poverty, and poverty means that hatred grows.

When I offer it to Algeria, you know that I don't want us to find ourselves one day with a Taliban government in Algeria. When I offer development to North Africa, it's because I don't want the same causes to produce the same effects. I say it for Iran: let Iran renounce the nuclear weapon, let Iran accept the controls, let Iran keep her word, and then Iran will have the right, like all the other countries, to the energy of the future. Believe me, as a great people and a great civilization, they are perfectly capable of hearing this message. It is a great misfortune for them to have a president who leads them into an impasse...

So from the moment that Iran isn't listening because her leaders aren't listening, we have no other choice than to step up our measures: this means new Security Council and European Union sanctions and, indeed Mr. President, the necessary restraint by business

You spoke about the Durban conference. I'll tell you: the 2001 Durban Conference gave rise to unacceptable outbursts by certain states and numerous non-governmental organizations, which turned the conference into a platform against the State of Israel. No one has forgotten this.

A follow-up conference is planned for 2009. Mr. President, you asked me a question. I'll be very frank with you. France will not accept a repeat of the excesses and extremes of 2001. Our European partners share France's concerns. France will be holding the presidency of the council of the European Union in the last months leading up to the follow-up conference. I tell you, we will withdraw from the process if our legitimate demands are not taken into account. I believe my answer is clear...

Since 2002... we have done a great deal to combat and curb the rise in anti-Semitic acts committed on our soil... I do indeed con-

sider that when a synagogue is set on fire, it is not merely a public building that has been burnt, it is not merely an anti-social behaviour. It is more serious than that, it is an act of racism, of anti-Semitism. I remember stirring up a great hullabaloo when I said that our country had underestimated the existence of anti-Semitism for too long. I said it because I think it is true. I wasn't pointing a finger, but simply stating a reality.

I must say I've always been fascinated by this tendency of ours to explain anti-Semitism. There's extreme right-wing anti-Semitism, then there's anti-Semitism from certain left-wing quarters, and then there's middle-class anti-Semitism, and then anti-Semitism associated with Zionism. But, at the end of the day, what are we talking about? We're talking about madness. We're talking about stupidity. We're talking about hatred. I've always thought that so many debates to explain the different paths that lead to anti-Semitism would come to a conclusion one day, that we would see that some paths are less serious than others, and that explaining this was somehow to trivialize it.

We have stepped up the actions. We have freed up millions of euros to guarantee the security, with the Unified Jewish Social Fund, of a certain number of places particularly at risk, especially schools and synagogues. The government has just renewed the annual agreement that associates it with the community's solidarity fund. Here, by the way, is an action for which a great deal of obstinate opposition had to be overcome, not all of which had anything to do with a narrow conception of secularism. The argument ran that it was totally justified for a local or regional government authority to contribute to the security of a sports club and totally unjustified to contribute to the security of a place of worship. Quite honestly, I fail to see why.

We have obtained results. Acts of anti-Semitism are decreasing in our country. Our international image has significantly improved. Yet I confess that my greatest regret remains the fact that I was unable to prevent, when I was minister of the interior, the brutal murder of Ilan Halimi.

We found him, but it was too late. I assure you that, for me, this remains a deep regret and sorrow. I don't know whether we could have saved his life before. But what happened must not be forgotten. I would add that the struggle against anti-Semitism – I'm sorry to say – is not the business of the Jewish community of France. The struggle against anti-Semitism is the business of the Republic as a whole.

Every time a Jew is struck or insulted, it is not the community that should feel insulted or struck, it is the flag of the Republic that is stained. Every time a Jew of France dies, it is not the Jewish community of France's problem, it is the problem of the entire national community...

I hope, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends, that you have understood that my presence here, as head of state, was important, as I had things to say to you. Thank you.

Nikolas Sarkozy is president of the Republic of France.

Opinions

Hannah can teach us all

Recently, friends chose the name Hannah for their daughter after reading about the character of Hannah in the Rosh Hashanah Torah service.

They thought the name itself was lovely – perhaps the root comes from the word *chen*, meaning grace. But they were also moved by the biblical Hannah's strength of character, as well as her faith and her presence.

The story highlights

Hannah's ability to stand up for herself. A woman whom many might dismiss as typical in a patriarchal world, Hannah suggests a model of independence and commitment that may have resonance today.

Hannah was the prophet Samuel's mother. That's how most of us know her, if we know her at all.

She wanted a baby but couldn't conceive, a rather common biblical theme. We might discount her conventional desire for motherhood or acknowledge the Bible's clear presentation of a woman with an independent will and a forceful voice.

As she was immersed in despondency, her husband tries to please her. He declares his love for her as being "more than ten sons." This is a mighty declaration from a biblical patriarch, even given the fact he had another wife with sons.

But Hannah was not to be diverted. She went to God's holy place and spoke her mind, and she entered our tradition beyond the mere story of motherhood or Samuel's importance.

Hannah prayed to God. Out of the depths of misery, but immersed in faith, she called to God, and in that moment, she established the pattern of proper prayer for all Jews for all time.

What an accomplishment for a woman!

The priest, Eli, tries to stop her, thinking that she's drunk. Incredibly, she doesn't shrink back in apologies but respectfully stands her ground.

He then blesses her, accepting that he erred. Hannah gives birth and dedicates her son's life to God's work. She also composes a song to God's greatness that's an eloquent part of the Sephardi holiday prayer book.

The Talmud tells us that, among other things, we learn to pray from Hannah. She stood silently with her lips moving. That becomes the authoritative format for the main prayer of every service, the *Amidah*. She also taught us to pray to God through our needs.

Three biblical women offer songs of praise and thankfulness to God: Miriam, Deborah and Hannah. Many other biblical luminaries offer inspiring prayers to God, but only Hannah becomes the model for prayer.

Hannah freely approaches the holy place of God and speaks to God on her own. A priest acknowledges her rightful place there, a beloved woman standing independently with her own sense of self. She's a woman with strength of faith, self-reliance and determination.

What a wonderful combination of traits and what a wonderful model for today's religious and non-religious world.



Norma Baumelet Joseph
in Montreal

'As a community, we can reach heaven'

Ari Goldman, former religion editor for the *New York Times* and now a professor of journalism at Columbia University, is the antithesis of the gonzo journalist. In an interview, he is thoughtful and insightful, just as in his reporting he sought to get into the skin of the people and events he was reporting on.

To sit with him in discussion is to have hope for the future of the profession of journalism – something that's often in short supply when the airwaves are full of CNN and Fox trivialities.

Goldman was a scholar-in-residence at my synagogue in Vancouver, giving me the chance to interview him about his books, *The Search for God at Harvard*, *Living a Year of Kaddish*, and *Being Jewish: The Spiritual and Cultural Practice of Judaism Today*.

Search for God was written while he was on a sabbatical from the *Times* at Harvard Divinity School in 1985. His goal was "to understand how people practise religion, in order to be a better journalist."

Did he fulfil that ambition? Yes, "it made me a better journalist" he replied. "It helped me search beyond the familiar, to understand others. That is true for any journalist telling other peoples' stories. To do that, you have to let your ego go. I wrote 1,000 articles before I used the word 'I,' after 15 years."

He added: "Maybe we should wait till we're over 40 to start blogs, like waiting to

study Kabbalah. You need experience – maturity behind the voice."

Did it make him a better Jew? "Can't answer that. I did see my Judaism in light of other world religions."

Is the Harvard Divinity School – which in the 1980s was more an academic institute than a theological seminary – relevant in today's religious tumult? "Today it is more a practical place for training pastors, more of a professional school."

In *Kaddish*, Goldman writes about the year he spent saying *Kaddish* for his father.

"Do good things come out of death?" I asked. "Yes – when we can take a loss and give it meaning in a positive way."

The year after his father's death healed a breach in his life that his parents' divorce had created. In the process of mourning his father, he no longer mourned his parents' estrangement from each other. "*Kaddish*," he affirmed, "makes you grow up."

He's currently writing a followup book based on *Kaddish* stories that he's collected on his travels around the continent.

In *Being Jewish*, Goldman describes the wide variety of Jewish practices he has encountered in North America over the years. How, I asked, does he react to the oft-made assertion that the many personal choices individual Jews are making will lead to the downfall of American Jewry?

"I think it shows just the opposite," he



Jean M. Gerber
in Vancouver

Jewish issues are Canadian issues

The columns that appear on this page are intended to present the opinions of various writers from across Canada on issues that they consider to be important to the Jewish community. Sometimes we are inspired, angered or occasionally amused by matters of local, national or even international interest.

But on a typical day, it's not difficult to find issues that should be of concern to members of the Canadian Jewish community. The news media daily report on events relating to our heritage, institutions, religious practice and social conscience. Some days, it can be overwhelming.

Essentially, we face three kinds of issues: those of parochial impact on particular facets of community life, those that should be of concern to all Canadian Jews, and, even further, those that go beyond our day-to-day experience.

In the first category, there are many topics of interest to particular members of our community. For example, we have experienced circumstances in Canada in which our secular society has been asked to reasonably accommodate differences and practices in order to protect religious minorities. This addresses concerns recently raised by some chassidic Jews in Quebec.

Issues that should concern all of us include the prosecution and/or deportation of war criminals in our midst. And as part of our efforts to eradicate anti-Semitism, we must

continue to take measures against those who propagate hate. We support the constitutionally entrenched value of preserving and enhancing the multicultural heritage of Canadians. And of course, we must continue to seek safety and security for Jews throughout the world, as well as a vibrant and healthy future for the State of Israel.

Our collective social conscience encourages us to get involved in matters that don't affect our everyday lives, but, if left unattended, serve as an affront to Jewish values, traditions and sensitivities. These include poverty, the plight of the disabled, the recurrence of genocide and other humanitarian issues that are currently unfolding in Sudan's Darfur region and elsewhere in the



Gerald L. Gall
in Edmonton

world.

Since it's impossible for individuals to champion all of these issues at once, we have community organizations to address these challenges. Jewish federations across Canada deal with local issues. Canadian Jewish Congress is an organization that is described in terms of its two modifying adjectives: Canadian and Jewish. Congress deals with Canadian issues, Jewish issues and Canadian Jewish issues, and it does so in an admirable and effective way. Other Canadian organizations, such as B'nai Brith, also do their share in addressing these matters. To an extent, we can derive some comfort from knowing that such organizations are mandated with the ongoing responsibility of addressing concerns

responded. "It shows the vibrancy and endurance of Judaism. It's not strange to say, 'Do what you can.' Chabad has been saying for years, 'Just do one thing,' and 12 years after the Rebbe's death, they're still out there saying it. I say, 'Do what you can.' Make that one connection to Judaism."

What about the current United States presidential campaign, which insists that contestants for the office reveal their inner religious convictions?

"It is fascinating. Everyone thought the Republicans had a lock on the religious right and the Democrats were the party of Satan. Is it harming American political discourse? No, it demonstrates that the issues are not so easy. The Democrats have raised gender and race as issues. The Republicans are still mired in religious issues."

Goldman is a third-generation American Orthodox Jew. How does he feel about Orthodoxy in North America?

"I love [the Orthodox] world, but worry about the move to the right. It is almost a competition. More things are not kosher. To find where the law allows is much harder than just saying no – it takes a great scholar to say yes," he said.

"Take Orthodox feminism. What was once beyond the pale is now normative. Orthodoxy is still healthy. In religion in general, there is a move to the right. No trend is in isolation. There is a healthy debate in the country about religion."

What is the future of Judaism?

"Alone we are great, but as a community we can reach the gates of heaven."

of importance to our community.

But it's not enough to leave all the work to these larger organizations. While it's true that some issues capture our interest more than others, each of us must take a stand and address the issues that we feel strongly about.

For some, it's combating anti-Semitism and bringing to justice those who have violated international norms, including those who perpetrate genocide. Others work to discredit those who try to re-write history and deny the Holocaust. Some individuals give priority to the protection of minority religious rights. Others may, however, approach this issue with caution in order to ensure that the preservation of minority rights does not have the deleterious effect of offending gender equality. Some courageous individuals are actively countering events at our universities that condemn Israel for so-called "apartheid" policies.

Whether it's through education, fundraising, lobbying or other forms of community activism, there is much work for all of us to do.

We bring our Jewish perspective to issues that face us in our daily life, as well as to issues of broader concern. Confronted by a barrage of contemporary issues, we each must identify the issues that have the most personal significance. Although we have to be selective as to how we confront the many challenges that we face, through our commitment to *tikkun olam*, we must get involved and make a difference in the lives of others.

The Kirshner File

Israel is considering an invasion of the Gaza Strip

Israel's foreign minister, Tzipi Livni, recently invited 70 ambassadors posted to Israel for a tour of its volatile border area opposite the Gaza Strip. Her aim was to warn them that Israel can no longer tolerate the "unbearable" fusillade of Qassam rocket and mortar barrages. Sderot, a town about one kilometre from Gaza, has borne the brunt of these attacks, but the neighbouring city of Ashkelon, as well as kibbutzim in the vicinity, have also been struck. These bombardments, which have escalated in frequency and lethality since Israel's unilateral withdrawal from Gaza in 2005, have been launched by a loose coalition of radical Palestinian organizations from Islamic Jihad to Hamas in the face of official opposition from the Palestinian Authority. Since 2001, the second year of the current Palestinian uprising, these groups have fired thousands of projectiles into Israel, killing 13 civilians and wounding hundreds more.

During the visit, Livni told the envoys that Israel has no choice but "to act in order to reduce these threats." Her message was clear: Israel is seeking understanding, if not actual support, for a major ground offensive into Gaza to obliterate this reign of terror.

Whether Israel unleashes the full might of its armed forces in an attempt to crush this form of terrorism is an open question, since this problem is probably outside the realm of a cut-and-dried military solution.

But in the meantime, the Israeli army is on the offensive, conducting shallow-penetration raids into Gaza on almost a daily basis. These raids are designed to push the Qassam and mortar launching teams further away from the frontier, to prevent Palestinian militants from crossing into Israel and attacking settlements and laying roadside bombs, to uncover and destroy arms smuggling tunnels, and to disrupt attempts to abduct Israeli soldiers. In these operations, Israel has killed some 200 Palestinian fighters in the past few months.

Israel has been here before. Two years ago, after Palestinian gunmen stormed an Israeli border outpost and killed several troops and

kidnapped a soldier named Gilad Shalit, Israel launched a series of incursions into Gaza that resulted in the deaths of more than 100 Palestinian militants. These raids had no lasting effect. The bombardments continued and Shalit remains imprisoned in Gaza.



Sheldon Kirshner
in Toronto

Today, confounded by its failure to staunch the incessant attacks, Israel has stepped up the pace of targeted assassinations against key Palestinian figures involved in the design, manufacture, transport and firing of Qassams and mortars. Israel has also gone after key Hamas commanders. Last September, Israeli commandos captured Mahawesh el-Qadi, who is believed to have played a role in Shalit's abduction. More recently, Israel has again threatened

to kill the Hamas political leadership. In 2004, Israel killed Hamas' founder and spiritual leader, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, and his deputy, Abdel Aziz Rantisi. Three weeks ago, Israeli Transportation Minister Shaul Mofaz, the former defence minister, called for the assassination of Mahmoud Zahar, Hamas' former foreign minister, prompting Hamas leaders to adopt a low profile and go into hiding.

In addition, Israel has arrested 41 Hamas parliamentarians, who acquired their seats in free and fair Palestinian national elections in January 2006. (Hamas won 74 of 132 seats, due in large part to the perception that its chief adversary, Fatah, was hopelessly mired in corruption and cronyism, that its economic policies had failed, and that it was incapable of

forming a Palestinian state.)

Having made no secret of its intention to weaken Hamas since its takeover of Gaza last June, Israel has imposed a blockade, closed border crossings, branded Gaza as an "enemy entity," cut off the flow of virtually all goods except food and medical supplies, and curtailed the sale of fuel and electricity. The Israeli government intends to keep Hamas off balance until it ceases attacks and, in line with international demands, recognizes Israel's existence, renounces terrorism and accepts agreements signed by Israel and the Palestinian Authority

since the 1993 Oslo peace process.

Israel's policies, which have been described as a "declaration of war" by Hamas and denounced by the Palestinian Authority, have aroused the ire of the United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, who has said that the cutoff of vital services is contrary to international law. Ban contends that, since Israel is still in charge of Gaza's border crossings, air space and coast, Israel is responsible for the well-being of its besieged population.

Ban's deputy, John Holmes, who visited the region two weeks ago, has said that life in Gaza is "grim and miserable" and has urged Israel to lift the closure. Israel is unlikely to comply, given the fact that there has been no letup in Palestinian rocket and mortar attacks and attempted border infiltrations, and that Ismail Haniyeh, the Hamas prime minister, has reiterated his belief that his movement should never recognize Israel. In light of this situation, Israel is moving closer to invading Gaza.

For the past few months, top Israeli officials have issued unmistakable warnings that an invasion is drawing near. Last October, Defence Minister Ehud Barak said, "Every day that passes brings us closer to a broad operation in Gaza." On Feb. 5, after Hamas, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades took joint credit for a suicide bombing in Dimona — the first such attack in a year — Barak promised that he would crush terrorism. On Feb. 12, he said, "We will be forced to strengthen our military efforts." Yet Barak — whose dire warnings have been echoed by Minister of Public Security Avi Dichter — says that he will not order an invasion unless Israel defines its goals, receives broad support and has an exit strategy. These considerations do not seem to bother Israel's deputy prime minister, Haim Ramon, who has vowed to escalate the war with Hamas and observed that "a combination of

steps will bring an end to the Hamas regime in Gaza" within a year. The chief of staff, Gen. Gabi Ashkenazi, has weighed in, too, saying that he is "prepared and ready to deepen and expand operations in Gaza as much as necessary." Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, however, has been circumspect, saying "there is no way to put an absolute end to the terrorism in a single blow" and pointedly arguing that "rage is not a plan."

An invasion of Gaza would presumably be modeled after Operation Defensive Shield, during which Israel reoccupied the West Bank in March and April 2002. Israel's reoccupation of Gaza would be costly for both sides. Hamas,

having taken a page out of Hezbollah's textbook for waging guerrilla warfare, has constructed a web of fortifications throughout Gaza. These positions would be manned by 50,000 men and hundreds of suicide bombers, says Nizar Rayyan, a senior Hamas official. Thanks to a network of tunnels, Hamas has managed to smuggle ad-



Spent Qassams are stored at police headquarters in the town of Sderot, hit by rocket and mortar barrages since 2001. [Sheldon Kirshner photo]

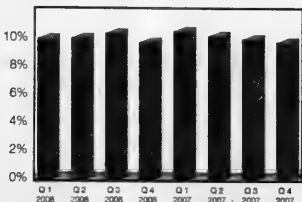
vanced weapons — long-range rockets, anti-tank missiles and anti-aircraft missiles — into Gaza, according to Yuval Diskin, the director of Israel's internal security service. Last month, Hamas allegedly smuggled in yet more arms — and Iranian-trained personnel — into Gaza by blowing up parts of the separation wall that cuts off Gaza from Egypt.

Israel does not have to invade Gaza to pacify its southern border. A long-term truce with Hamas might be sufficient. Hamas has generally expressed interest in a ceasefire, but Israel does not want to negotiate with Hamas. In the interim, Israel is working on alternative methods to enhance its security. Israel is fortifying homes in Sderot and developing the Iron Dome, an anti-missile system that may yet neutralize Qassams and mortars. Israel is also building a separation fence along the Egyptian border. But until then, Israel will have to endure a rain of rockets and mortars.

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"They are
our teachers..."

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

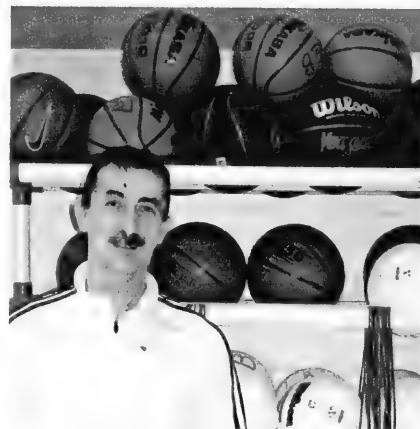
Zlatko Sarcevic says that, in the gym classes he teaches at Leo Baeck Day School's Thornhill campus, he can "figure out who a kid is" more easily than if his students were sitting at desks in a classroom.

The way in which children take part in gym activities and organized games reveals traits such as whether or not they are helpful, their degree

A lesson from the teacher:
*"If challenges come up, you don't cry,
you do what you have to do."*

of confidence, and how they treat others, he said in an interview in his small office that also serves as a gym-equipment storage room.

Sarcevic — who has a black belt in judo and enjoys camping and horseback riding — showed his own mettle last June, when he rushed his Grade 4 class of 18 students into the school building after a gunman robbed a jewelry store in the nearby Prom-



Zlatko Sarcevic (Frances Kraft photo)

enade Mall and fled on foot through school grounds. The school went into lockdown, police helicopters were overhead, and shots were fired in the course of the incident.

Sarcevic received a police citation for his bravery.

Downplaying his actions on that day, he told *The CJA* in a recent interview that any of the staff would have done what he did.

Last fall, the 56-year-old teacher was deeply touched to learn that school parents had honoured him for protecting their children by planting 10 trees in a Jerusalem garden in his name.

Now in his 14th year at the school, Sarcevic — a Serb who grew up in Sisak, Croatia — joined the school on a temporary basis at first, filling in for a teacher on maternity leave.

A graduate of the University of Zagreb, Sarcevic specialized in martial arts at university, earning his teaching credentials at the same time. A former member of the Yugoslavian national kickboxing team, he went on to work as a kick-boxing coach and a self-defence instructor in the army.

Coaching was his original goal as a student; he considered teaching something he could do "on the side." He still coaches outside of school hours.

Parents of three children — two of whom were born after he came to Canada — Sarcevic and his wife initially planned to spend a year here.

He sees himself as a strict teacher. "That's not a secret. I have high expectations from myself and from my students as well, but I always try to be fair."

He said he does not judge students on their ability. "We're all different."

"I tell them, 'You don't have to be the fastest runner or the best soccer player in the school, but you can always show respect and try your best. That's the main focus for me — trying hard.'"

He sees the gym activities that students take part in as "a vehicle for moulding character."

In recent years, Sarcevic noted, there has been an increased emphasis on fitness. The school recently acquired a set of electronic heart rate monitors, and he hopes to begin using them in classes this spring.

The concept of "fun" is not something that drives Sarcevic's classes per se. "I think [students] have fun," he mused. "This is a question parents always ask, because I'm very structured. The class is very structured."

"I like to see that fun is organized," he explained, citing safety and educational considerations. He added that "fun" means different things to different people. "It's not just, 'Throw the ball and go crazy.'"

With a full complement of classes ranging from junior kindergarten to Grade 8 and about two dozen school competitions and tournaments a year, Sarcevic said his biggest challenge is time.

"That's a big challenge," he said, his face serious. "But," he said, brightening, "I like challenges."

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Two-state solution out of reach, ex-CIA head says

By **SHELDON KIRSHNER**
Staff Reporter

The former director of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, R. James Woolsey, Jr., says a two-state solution to resolve Israel's conflict with the Palestinians is out of reach for now.

Visiting Toronto recently as a guest of the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies, he said that Iran, contrary to a recent report, has not halted its nuclear weapons program.

Woolsey, as well, declared that a precipitous American withdrawal from Iraq would be disastrous for the United States and Israel.

At a press conference, Woolsey — the CIA's director from 1993 to 1995 — said that a two-state solution will be unattainable until the Palestinian school system in the West Bank and Gaza is reformed and overhauled.

He charged that Palestinian educators, having fallen under the sway of a radical strain of Saudi Arabian Islam known as Wahhabism, demonize Israel, oppose coexistence and churn out suicide bombers.

Later, in an interview, Woolsey cited this factor as one of the reasons why the current talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority will not yield a peace treaty by the end of 2008, as envisaged by U.S. President George W. Bush at last November's U.S.-sponsored Annapolis summit.

"The chances that Israel and the Palestinians will reach an agreement are close to nil," he said, adding that a Palestinian state can only emerge if "a bunch of things change."

Woolsey, a conservative Democrat who supports the presidential ambitions of Republican Senator John McCain and advises him on energy issues, said the Palestinians won't achieve statehood unless they satisfy a number of conditions.

First, they must grant the Jewish inhabitants of Israeli settlements in the West Bank the right to live there as equal citizens and in a state of security.

Second, Fatah — the party of Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas — must fully recognize Israel's existence and sovereignty as a Jewish state.

Third, the Palestinians must accept that Israel's demand for border adjustments is perfectly understandable.

Turning to Iran, he suggested that the Na-

tional Intelligence Estimate, issued by 16 U.S. spy agencies last December, is misleading.

In a startling assessment, these agencies concluded that Iran froze its nuclear weapons program in 2003, but that Iran is nevertheless continuing to produce enriched uranium, the prerequisite component of an atomic bomb.

Woolsey — currently a board member of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy — said that Iran has merely halted the design and fabrication of warheads on ballistic missiles, the least difficult aspect of building a nuclear arsenal.

He said that Iran is still working on the hardest part, the enrichment of uranium.

Advising the United States to ramp up economic pressure on Iran, Woolsey said that Washington should consider cutting off Iranian oil exports and imposing tough sanctions on its Revolutionary Guards.

Claiming that Iran is bent on dominating the Middle East and is suppressing its own population, he urged the United States to leave all options open, including the use of military force.

Woolsey came out against a move by the United States to engage Iran in talks to defuse tensions. "We should weaken Iran and extend sanctions."

He said that McCain, the presumptive Republican candidate in this year's presidential election, would not tolerate Iran's acquisition of nuclear arms.

Woolsey expressed sharp opposition to a fast U.S. pullout from Iraq. "We should only withdraw when Al Qaeda in Iraq is defeated."

He said that the "surge" — the positioning of more American troops in strategic areas of Iraq — is proving useful in dealing blows to the insurgency.

"We have a chance of turning the war around," said Woolsey, who in 1998 signed a letter sent to then-U.S. president Bill Clinton calling for the removal of Iraq's president, Saddam Hussein.

Saying that the United States fought the war "very badly" for the first three years after its 2003 invasion, Woolsey noted that its outmoded, Vietnam-era search-and-destroy methods were a failure. The present clear-and-hold policy can defeat the insurgents, he said.

Warning that an immediate U.S. withdrawal would be an "absolute disaster," Woolsey said it would embolden Islamic radicals and thus

damage American and Israeli interests.

On the day Woolsey spoke, the leader of the Iraqi branch of Al Qaeda proposed that Iraq should be used as a launching pad to "liberate Palestine."

Likening the U.S. presence in Iraq to its post-war occupations of Germany and Japan, he said that the United States will most likely maintain a garrison in Iraq for many years to come.

He said the decision to invade Iraq and depose Saddam was sound.

In an analysis of Israel's border war with Hezbollah in 2006, Woolsey said that Israel gained very little from it, and that a second round is possible due to the support Hezbollah receives from Syria and Iran.

He added that Israel should have bombed Syrian military sites in retaliation for Syria's supply of short-range and long-range missiles to Hezbollah.

Woolsey advised Israel neither to resume direct peace talks with Syria nor to relinquish

the Golan Heights.

"There is no advantage for Israel to reopen talks. If Israel had deeply wounded Syria in 2006, negotiations would have been a good idea. Now, Israel would be bargaining from a position of weakness. Israel should not give up the Golan. The Syrian government wouldn't abide by any agreement."

On the day he made these comments, Bush ordered new sanctions to punish Syria for allegedly trying to undermine Iraq's stability and undercut Lebanon's independence.

Woolsey applauded the assassination of a top Hezbollah commander, Imad Mugniyah, in Damascus this month.

"Whoever killed him is on my side. He was one of the most rotten bastards in the Middle East."

Woolsey called on the United States to free itself of its dependence on Arab oil, hunt for more oil on its own soil and look for alternative energy sources.

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Greater Toronto Area

NCJW gets ready for Passover food drive

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Karen Fenwick and Debbie Wasserman have been preparing for Passover since last May.

The two are co-chairs of National Council of Jewish Women of Canada (NCJW) Toronto section's 2008 Passover Food Drive, which runs this year from March 26 to April 13.

They've asked agencies, synagogues, schools and community groups to submit recipients' names, and on the April 13 delivery day, they expect to send out about 3,000 boxes to about 2,600 families.

Last year, said Wasserman, about 10,000 people benefited from the drive, and they expect that this year the list will grow.

Recipients include individuals living in poverty, recent immigrants in need, and individuals with disabilities and inadequate financial resources.

The community can help by donating kosher for Passover food – brown shopping bags will be inserted in the March 27 edition of *The CJN* – at participating grocery stores, schools, community centres and synagogues, “but we desperately need money, because we can purchase food at wholesale costs, so the money goes further,” Fenwick said.

“We also know what we need, so if we're short of a specific item, we can purchase it,” she added.

As well, NCJW needs volunteer drivers to help deliver boxes on April 13.

Boxes include many of the essentials needed for a seder and the week of

Passover, including matzah, soup, tea and apple juice, gefilte fish, canned fruit, Passover wine or grape juice, macaroons, tuna, jam, apple sauce and candles.

She said boxes are packed

by about 750 students beginning March 26.

“One girl who

packed boxes

while she was a

student at Asso-

ciated Hebrew

Schools is

now in social

work school

and has come

to us for her

placement.

The remem-

bered the good

work we do. It

has a lasting effect

on people. Once

you're exposed to the

drive, you want to be part

of it.”

On delivery day, said Wasserman, volunteers get a “snapshot” into Jewish diversity in the city. “Boxes are delivered to people living in basements or above stores, and most kids have not been exposed to this. Some don't appear poor, but they may be shut-in or ill. All recipients have been

referred. No one can call in that they need a box.

“Delivery day is certainly special. It is the highlight of the drive. Volunteers meet people they would never ordinarily meet.”

Running the drive is like running a business, Fenwick said.

“We created a letter and the brown bag, we put together a distribution list, and we organize all the volunteers. We're here two days a week, but we think about it all week. It is an organizational feat.”

The two women have been on the drive committee for a number of years, but this is their first as chairs, “and it has been a learning curve,” Wasserman said.

Volunteer drivers should show up at Council House, 4700 Bathurst St., with a driver and helper at 8:30 a.m., April 13. For information, call NCJW at 416-633-5100.



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Miles Nadal JCC

Saturday, March 1
Yeshivat Or Chaim

8:30 pm
Interpreting the Bible:
The Relationship between Peshat and Derash

Rabbi Nati Helfgot
Chair, Department of Tanach and Jewish Thought,
Yeshivat Chovevei Torah

Dr. Eric Lawee
Professor of Humanities,
York University

Rabbi Menachem Leibtag
Founder, Tanach Study Center, Israel

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Tanach in Our Time

In conjunction with Yeshivat Chovevei Torah Rabbinical School
Sponsored in honour of the Bat Mitzvah of Rebecca Lax

Saturday, March 1, 2008
8:30 pm - 10:30 pm
Yeshivat Or Chaim, 159 Almore Avenue

Sunday, March 2, 2008
9:00 am - 1:15 pm
Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, 470 Glencairn Avenue

Sunday, March 2
Shaarei Shomayim Congregation

9:00 am
Triggers for Tehillim: Tools to Help their Understanding
Rabbi Menachem Leibtag
Or
Biblical Criticism and Orthodoxy
Rabbi Nati Helfgot

10:10 am
Yehuda and Yosef: Two Tribes, Two Archetypes, Two Moshachs
Rabbi Yehoshua Engelmann, Rabbi and Educational Director, Yakar Study Center, Tel Aviv

Or
Understanding Tanach through the Prism of the Sephardic Commentaries
Rabbi Nati Helfgot
Or
On the Use of Metaphor in Tanach
Rabbi Eric Levy, Menahel, Yeshivat Or Chaim

11:15 am
Saul and Macbeth: The Men who would be King
Dr. Rachel Adelman, Ray D. Wolfe post-doctoral fellow, University of Toronto

Or
The Apparent Contradictions between Shmot & Devarim and their Thematic Purpose
Rabbi Menachem Leibtag

12:30 pm
False Prophets: How Can We Know whom to Believe?
Esther Friedman, Department of Tanach, CHAT

Or
Esther: A Story of Trauma
Rabbi Yehoshua Engelmann

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Chabad Markham plans fashion show fundraiser

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Chabad Lubavitch of Markham, in partnership with The Bay at Yorkdale, will host a mother-daughter fashion show fundraiser on March 30.

The event, which will be held at the store – the Canadian chain's largest suburban outlet – is being hosted by television personality Erica Ehm and will feature guest speaker Miryam Swerdlow. Her talk is titled, "If Mama ain't happy, ain't nobody happy."

A portion of the evening's proceeds will support the L'Chaim Cancer Support Group for Jewish Women. Women at Chabad Markham have been meeting weekly for the past three or four months to say tehillim (psalms) for a woman who was diagnosed with breast cancer.

The girls' and women's clothing – which will include the spring line of Lauren by Ralph Lauren – will all be "modest," in accordance with

Jewish law followed by many Orthodox women. Models – "real" women from the community – will wear skirts that cover the knee and sleeves that cover the elbow, said Goldie Plotkin, rebbetzin of the synagogue.

There is no contradiction between beauty and modesty

They are "very sophisticated, smart, stylish, classic looks," said Richard Montgomery, The Bay at Yorkdale's store manager.

There is no contradiction between beauty and modesty, said Plotkin. "You can live by Torah and still enjoy the physical things that God has given us."

"It's important to take care of our inner selves and our outer selves," she added.

Plotkin is one of 25 Chabad rebbetzins in the GTA who will be honoured at the fashion show.

"The women did not want to be honoured, but we're doing this because this is honouring the Rebbe's work," she said, referring to the late Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson. Under his leadership Chabad became an international movement as he sent emissaries – husband-and-wife teams of rabbis and rebbetzins – all over the world.

The fashion show is in its 20th year, but this is the first time The Bay has been part of it. In past years, the event has attracted more than 400 people, according to a news release from the synagogue.

The event is "a great opportunity for us to connect with the community... It will be a very special, very enjoyable evening," said Montgomery.

Tickets are \$36, or \$54 for premium seating and exclusive gifts. For tickets, contact the synagogue at 905-886-0420, ext. 111.

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Danbury

Aliyah centre becomes part of federation

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

The Israel Aliyah Centre of Toronto, which is affiliated with the Jewish Agency for Israel, has become the second such centre in North America after Chicago to come under the auspices of a Jewish federation.

Ted Sokolsky, president of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, said that when he became president of the federation in 2004 and saw that the aliyah office was not in the Lipa Green Building – it was on Dufferin Street near Finch Avenue until about two years ago – he thought that it was a strange and unnatural separation.

"Now it is where it should be, and

we are synergizing our work."

Federation and the Diaspora have often had a "schizophrenic attitude about aliyah," and "people get uncomfortable when prominent community members [make the move]. We all want a strong Israel, but it is almost taboo for mainstream agencies to promote aliyah," he said.

"Aliyah is not a threat. It is part of our fabric. It has to be part of everything we do."

Susan Steinberg, chair of the federation's new aliyah committee, said that the vision of the six-member committee is to have people see aliyah as an obligation and understand that there are many ways to live in Israel.

"It does not have to be a perma-

nent move – it doesn't have to be black and white. People can go back and forth. They can work in Canada while their wife and family live in Israel. They can keep their business here. They need to be creative."

Liane Sela, director and shlichah of the Israel Aliyah Centre in Toronto, said that aliyah is something that has to be discussed.

"Israel is getting better in every aspect, and it has more to offer [than ever before]. The aliyah centre can help make the move," she said.

"Being part of federation means that aliyah is part of the community. We want to increase awareness about who we are, and we want to acknowledge those who are making aliyah."



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Greater Toronto Area

ROM displays Mideast religious articles

By SHERRY SMITHER
Special to The C.J.N.

A new gallery featuring more than 1,000 objects from the Middle East, including a Sephardi Torah donated by the late Ed Mirvish, opened recently at the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM).

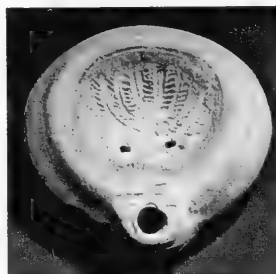
The Wirth Gallery of the Middle East, named in honour of philanthropist, financier and longtime ROM supporter Alfred Wirth, features objects from Afghanistan, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, the West Bank, Syria, Turkey and Yemen, dating from the Paleolithic Age to 1900.

On Level 3 of the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal are clusters of artifacts arranged by themes: Arms and Armour, Arts in Life, Documents and Writing, Technology, and Ancient Spirituality and Religion. The last is an exploration of religious practices of the Jewish, Christian and Islamic religions seen through burial items and religious objects.

"The Middle East collection used to be on the third floor Centre block in a rather dark area, in the catacombs almost," said William Thorsell, the ROM's director and CEO. "We opened it up and increased the diversity and volume of the collections. Many pieces were largely stranded in the ROM's storage rooms in the 1920s without a permanent home, so it was quite moving to see the cars coming up with artifacts from core religions."



A Torah scroll and cover



A menorah lamp



One of the ossuaries

Entering the Middle East Gallery you'll find burial objects: three Jewish ossuaries (stone boxes) from the Herodian period, circa 100 BCE-100 CE, with gabled lids made of limestone, painted and inscribed with six pointed rosette decorations.

"The circular markings [rosettes] on the ossuaries made with a compass are the simplest way of decorating – the symmetry is visible and the esthetics have continuity," said Krzysztof Ciuk, assistant curator of Islamic history and

archeology at the ROM. "Some scholars interpret it as a religious symbol suggesting the [rosettes] predate the star, but the star is not exclusive to Judaism. It is a very common decorative element in Islamic religion as well."

Ossuaries containing the bones of the dead, dating back to the first century BCE in Jerusalem, reflected the belief held by some at the time that the dead will be resurrected when the Messiah comes.

Also on exhibit is a small Syrian ceramic lamp from the fourth century CE, which has a menorah on it representing the one that stood in the Temple in Jerusalem – a seven-branched candlestick. Since Palestine was multicultural, lamps for Jews and Christians were made in the same factory, but with different symbols.

Rounding out the Wirth Gallery's impressive display is a Torah scroll with a beautiful Iraqi embossed silver case. According to the inscriptions, the case was made in 1907 to honour the memory of Ruhama, daughter of Katon, by her son, Rabbi Abraham. The scroll came from an older Torah case of the 17th-18th century.

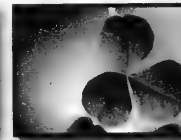
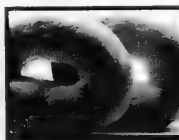
While at the ROM, visit the Bishop White Gallery of Chinese artifacts tucked behind the central Currelly Gallery on Level 1. When the Kaifeng synagogue was destroyed by the flooding of the Yellow River in 1851, a few stone bowls and architectural pieces were salvaged. The collection includes a lovely Torah case of wood and gold lacquer dating back to the 17th century from the Qing Dynasty, a rare ink rubbing of a stone tablet engraved with the history of the synagogue from 1489 and a stone drain mouth for washing hands carved with monkeys and vines.

The Sir Christopher Ondaajee South Asian Gallery opened in the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal at the same time as the Wirth Gallery. The final two permanent galleries – the Patricia Harris Gallery of Textiles and Costume and the Shreyas and Mina Ajmera Gallery of Africa, the Americas and Asia-Pacific are set to open April 5. For more information, visit www.rom.on.ca.



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All essays must be submitted by March 14, 2008.

*The Scholarship is non-transferable and is eligible for up to three years. It has no cash value.
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‘KOSHER’ LABEL IN ADVERTISING

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency
Guide to Food Labelling and Advertising

reads as follows:

"In the labelling, packaging and advertising of a food, the Food and Drug Regulations prohibits the use of the word kosher or any letter of the Hebrew alphabet, or any other word, expression, depiction, sign, symbol, mark, device or other representation that indicates or that is likely to create an impression that the food is kosher, if the food does not meet the requirements of the Kashruth applicable to it.

The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

Rationale: "Kosher style" is considered to create the impression that the food is kosher, and therefore the food must meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish style" food may not necessarily create this impression."

The CJN makes no representation as to the kashruth of food products in advertisements.

Making a meaningful contribution

By RABBI MEIR ROSENBERG

At one time or another, we have all contributed to a financial campaign. Projects, buildings and institutions call upon us to join with them in their endeavours.

Imagine, if you will, a scene where all of our campaign contributors have been called upon, pledges have been made, but there is still a shortfall. The last name on your list is a well-known philanthropist, and when asked for a pledge, he says: "Let me know how much your campaign is short and I will make up the difference."

What would your reaction be? You would probably thank and applaud him for this most magnanimous offer.

A similar scene can be found in this week's Torah portion of Vayakhel, although with quite a different ending. At the outset of the construction of the Mishkan – the Tabernacle – the *nesiim*, the heads of each tribe, wait until the completion of construction before volunteering their wealth.

Even though this may seem commendable, the Torah, in rebuke of their attitude, removes the letter "yud" from the word *nesiim*, which is normally spelled with

two "yudin." (see Exodus 35:27).

The obvious question is why? Most probably, what the leadership donated was worth more than the total of all the other donations.

In a related story in the Talmud, in Kiddushin 31a, we see that the sages were willing to pay great sums for the precious stones that adorned the priestly garments. Why then were the *nesiim* punished?

Perhaps by looking at the rebuke, we can understand the reasoning. When the letter "yud" is added to a Hebrew word, it creates a plural. The *nesiim* did not share with the multitude of the Nation of Israel in the building of the Mishkan. They hesitated in their fulfilment of this mitzvah and thereby missed it completely.

In a few weeks, we will celebrate a Shabbat known as Shabbat Shekalim. It was given this name, because a special Torah portion concerning the commandment that everyone must give a half-shekel for atonement is read publicly. This obligation was incumbent equally on both affluent and underprivileged during the month of Adar. The prosperous could not give more and the unfortunate could not give less. The commentators explain that

this mandatory donation was collected for the benefit of the entire nation since it was used for the purchase of the daily sacrifices of atonement. The shekel was the great equalizer – it had to be given, by everyone, on time, for the benefit of the nation.

The *nesiim* should have anticipated the possibility that, in their enthusiasm and devotion to HaShem, the people might contribute everything themselves – which, in fact, is what happened in the case of the Mishkan.

Covering a deficit is a wonderful offer if one is concerned about the recipient. But in the case of the Mishkan, the recipient was the Creator of the universe. He did not need the assistance of the *nesiim* or anyone else. The commandment to donate to the Mishkan was a singular privilege granted to the Jewish people for their own benefit.

Tzedakah is a great mitzvah, but like all other commandments, it is based upon Godly principles and ethics. Perhaps the underlying message is that when it comes to mitzvot that embody kindness and empathy, like tzedakah, we may be receiving more than we are giving.

Rabbi Meir Rosenberg is executive director of Mitzvah Canada and the rav of Congregation Ayin L'Tzion in Thornhill, Ont.

Judaism doesn't offer easy answers

The folks who brought you the thin, double-spaced best-selling book called *The Secret* are coming to town.

Written by a television commercial producer with a team of "experts" (a feng shui counsellor, a personal coach and a metaphysician – which medical school does one attend to become a metaphysician?) it has a powerfully positive message with a quasi-religious feel, all in a package designed to look like an ancient scroll.

The message of the book – I can have everything I've ever wanted if I just focus on it – comes complete with miracle stories of wealth and finding the partner of your dreams if you just send out the right vibes.

The talk by a member of *The Secret* team is part of a series by several other "you can get rich by just doing X" speakers, including some of the famous and never-ending series of Chicken Soup for the You-Name-It Soul authors. The series is being touted on the radio and in the news as being able to help you become "a phenomenal you."

These speakers remind me of an old-fashioned tent revival meeting. Selling miracles without religion, guilt or obligation (except buying their books, of course), they promise to grant my every wish.

It's so un-Jewish.

What I really love about Judaism is that it isn't about me fulfilling all my desires, and it's supposed to make me less self-centred and more aware of my responsibility to others. Judaism comes to conquer that selfishness and to constantly remind us that it's not all and always about us.

We matter, Judaism says, because we pull our weight. We matter because we are part of a system, a wheel that turns slowly and surely, and moves toward progress and tikkun olam. We make this world a better one because we are in it – not because we think certain thoughts and get certain things, but because we do things that actively change the world.

We devour books like *The Secret* in the millions – self-help books are the fastest selling books on the market – not so much because we want to escape who we are, but because we

desperately want to be in control of who we will become. We want to believe that we can control our lives as easily as we control our TV remotes. The sad secret of these kinds of books is that when we believe only in ourselves, we will believe in just about anything.

Judaism's secrets go against the popular culture. They aren't easy or self-serving. How I wish Judaism could promise you unending health and happiness, fewer worries and a way to bring you everything you need and want. How I wish Judaism could make you healthy, wealthy and wise (and thin, but not too thin), and could replace all your fears and sorrows with nothing but unlimited simchah and security.

But the Judaism I practise is not that simplistic, and it doesn't have a genie-in-the-bottle God who grants you three wishes and then goes away.

So let's ask ourselves: why does our society encourage this kind of self-aggrandizement, self-conceit and self-centredness? And why have these kinds of books become our new bibles and these TV gurus our new rabbis?

If you can figure out an answer that challenges you, you may have discovered a real secret.



By Rabbi
Elyse
Goldstein

IDEAS ON IDENTITY

Jewish Life

Many people find it demeaning that monetary considerations should play a role in religious teachings. They think religious issues shouldn't be "tainted" by the almighty dollar, by the intrusion of the secular into the holy.

Such an argument is foreign to Judaism on both practical and ideological grounds. Like it or not, most of life's key decisions are affected greatly by financial considerations. We spend most of our waking hours engaged in the pursuit of money – a pursuit that can have much religious value. It should not be surprising that there are more mitzvot related to the economic sphere than to any other. We need much guidance in this crucial area of life.

By examining a person's relationship to money – how they earn it, how they spend it and with whom they share it – we gain insight into a person's true character. And with character development being, arguably, the fundamental goal of Judaism, and considering the role of money in such development, we can readily understand the talmudic assertion that God's judgment begins with an examination of our monetary dealings.

All this should come as no surprise to the religious thinker.

What may be surprising to some is that the way Jewish law is applied varies according to the financial status of the questioner. This "flexibility" covers not only

Torah regulates our relation to money

charity obligations or the money that a person should spend to beautify our mitzvot. It also includes such areas as what foods we may eat or even aspects of Shabbat observance.

Money Matters



By Rabbi Jay Kelman CA

An accidental mixing of meat and milk might be permissible for one person, yet forbidden to another, the determining factor being each one's financial means.

"The Torah takes mercy on the money of the Jewish people" is a hallowed principle of Jewish law. It highlights the fact that Jewish law is both an art and a science.

While technical data and proficiency are the basic building blocks of any legal ruling, socioeconomic, cultural and communal factors refine the ruling so that it's properly applied to the questioner, given that person's particular set of circumstances.

Despite its importance, the aforementioned principle should not be misunderstood. Its applicability is limited to rabbinic law and to cases of biblical law in which a generally rejected interpretation is accepted due to extreme financial hardship.

As well, financial considerations play no role when an explicit biblical law is being violated. Only a potential danger to life can serve as a mandate to override the law.

One should also not be critical of those

who, due to financial considerations, give up much of Jewish law – we can't be certain how we might act in a similarly desperate situation. However, the heroic efforts of those immigrants to North America whose refusal to work on Shabbat forced them to look for new jobs every Monday must inspire those of us who, thankfully, can, with ease, take off work for "religious reasons."

Monetary considerations play an even greater role in decisions affecting the people of Israel. Thus many rabbinic authorities have authorized the "selling of the land" of Israel during the sabbatical year (which we are currently in).

Initially, such a sale enabled 19th-century Zionist settlers to remain in Israel, since ceasing to work on the land for a year would have forced them to emigrate. Today, it serves to prevent the loss of hundreds of millions of dollars to the Israeli economy.

Additionally, there is a political factor that must not be overlooked in questions affecting the State of Israel. Without the use of this legal loophole, which allows farmers to work the land and sell the produce that they grow, food would have to be imported from Gaza, thereby providing funds to those who continue to terrorize our people.

Send comments to rabbijay@torahinmotion.org.



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By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

In May, Israel celebrates 60 years of independence. But one of the country's most famous symbols is more than twice as old.

Little did Naftali Herz Imber realize that the poem he began working on 130 years ago would resonate around the world and become a defining expression of the aspiration to live in a Jewish homeland.

Imber, a Galician Jew, wrote a poem titled *Tikvatuenu (Our Hope)* in 1878 to commemorate the founding of the Jewish settlement of Petach Tikvah (Gateway of Hope). Imber moved to Palestine and visited the city in 1882 where a resident, Samuel Cohen, put the poem to music based on a traditional Moldavian-Romanian folk song. Bedrich Smetana used a similar melody as the basis for the classical work *Moldau*. [tinyurl.com/zyybx9]

Actually, Imber's original poem wasn't quite as succinct as today's anthem. His version had nine stanzas with a refrain that originally went: "Our hope is not yet lost/ Our ancient hope/ To return to the land of our fathers/ The city where David encamped." I came across a fascinating recording of the original lyrics sung by Al Jolson. [www.lookstein.org/resources/al_jolson_hatikvah.mp3] Jolson's Hebrew was quite good and his performance a bit less schmaltzy than the Jolson who I know from "Mammy" or "Swanee." [tinyurl.com/yw0az6]

When the Zionist movement began to look for an anthem, *Hatikvah* wasn't a shoo-in. During the Fourth Zionist Con-

gress in London in 1900, delegates were asked to consider both *Hatikvah* and Psalm 126, better known as *Shir Hama'alat (Song of Ascents)*, which is chanted before *Birkat Hamazon* on Shabbat and on other festive days. [tinyurl.com/2mv6r3] *Hatikvah* was officially confirmed as the Zionist anthem at the 18th conference in Prague in 1933. [tinyurl.com/33e5oa] Surprisingly, it would have to wait until

November 2004 to be proclaimed Israel's official anthem! [tinyurl.com/34ma52]

Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, the first chief rabbi of Palestine in the early 20th century, had misgivings about some of the lyrics of *Hatikvah* and wrote his own alternative anthem, *Ha Emunah (The Faith)*. Zev Rosenfield has put together a comparison of the two poems. As well, he examines what relationship anthems, flags and similar symbols have to traditional Judaism. Rosenfield points out, for example, that flags are mentioned in the Torah and that each of the 12 tribes had its own banner and precious stone. [tinyurl.com/357tkr]

One of the most moving versions of the anthem was sung three years before the establishment of Israel. In April 1945, British forces liberated the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. BBC reporter Patrick Gordon Walker arrived in the camp on the fifth day after liberation as survivors were planning to usher in their first Sabbath in freedom. Walker said: "During the service,

the few hundred people gathered together were sobbing openly, with joy of their liberation and with sorrow of the memory of their parents and brothers and sisters that had been taken from them and gassed and burned. These people knew they were being recorded. They wanted the world to hear their voice." Thanks to Patrick Walker, you can. [tinyurl.com/2kq2qf]

You can find contemporary arrangements at NationalAnthems.us. [tinyurl.com/2k98f5] and at YouTube. [tinyurl.com/2o3wvv] One of them is from 1978 when Barbra Streisand appeared on a TV show, *The Stars Salute Israel* at 30. Streisand performs *Hatikvah* after she schmoozes with Israel's then-prime minister, Golda Meir. [tinyurl.com/y7hyll]

Do you have a version of *Hatikvah* you want the world to hear? This May 7, on Israeli's 60th Independence Day, you'll have a chance to sing out simultaneously with groups around the world as part of the LiveHatikva project. The website has info about how yours can chime in. [livehatikva.org]

My favourite online version of *Hatikvah*, however, was unexpected and very emotional. It took place at the 2004 Summer Olympics in Athens when windsurfer Gal Fridman captured the first gold medal in Israel's history. Nothing beats the pride on Fridman's face as the first notes of his country's anthem were played. [tinyurl.com/26tc35]

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

Hatikvah, Part 1



Greater Toronto Area

Art show to focus on the Israeli-Canadian experience

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Nineteen young Israelis who live in Ontario will display their artwork this coming Saturday night as part of Artsy, an arts and culture event in Toronto.

"We have 19 artists from various backgrounds, but what they all have in common is the fact that they lived in Israel and now reside in Canada. Their art reflects that," said Orly Cohen, Hillel of Greater Toronto's program associate, who organized the event through Fanan, a group affiliated with Hillel that works to foster a community for young Israeli-Canadians.

"It is a multimedia art show. A majority of the work is... photography and painting, but there are some audio installations, pottery and sculptures," she said, adding that the theme of the artwork is the Israeli-Canadian experience.

She said the event, which is being held March 1 at Designers Walk, will also feature a DJ, a live drummer, and kosher Israeli-style food.

Artsy, a play on the Hebrew word that means "my homeland,"



This piece, by Oranit Kedmy, will be on display at the Artsy arts and culture event.

features artists ranging widely both in age and experience.

Some are high school and university students who have never dabbled in the arts before, and others are "consummate artists" who are well into their 30s, Cohen said.

One of the artists, Oranit Kedmy, will present works that feature mermaids.

"It's quite interesting. She has tied in the theme to her strong female identity and feeling like a fish out of water," Cohen said.

In a written description of her art, Kedmy said that most of her painting is a tribute to a deep connection she shares with her mother.

"The women I paint are also a homage to all women, especially Israeli ones, who are equal to Israeli men in every way, including service in the army," she wrote.

She added that her artwork depicts "the heartbreak of leaving Israel and knowing that there is no place in the world quite like it, embedded with struggle and loss and endless beauty," and also represents "the courage of the Israeli people, who live life to the fullest, with passion and an unbreakable spirit."

Kedmy wrote that as a Canadian citizen, she does her best to present people with a different side of Israel through her work and to show others "how similar we are to every woman out there who has to find beauty amidst adversity, light through darkness."

Although the event is free to attend, Cohen said she hopes that people will "pay what they can" so that the proceeds can go toward a Hillel initiative to raise money to buy computers for impoverished schools in Bat Yam, a suburb of Tel Aviv.

"This is our most exciting initiative this year for Fanan, in that it is really allowing people from the Israeli community to actively participate in both a Hillel initiative and a community initiative that is not exclusive to the Israeli community," Cohen said.

"It's allowing us to create a dialogue between Israelis and non-Israelis, and we hope to see that reflected in the crowd."

For more information, call Cohen at 416-629-8867.

YIDDISH CORNER

Edited by: ALEK SILVER

יידיש - ווינקל

רעדאגירט פון: אלעק סילבער

וואס מוז פארגעסן ווערן

WHAT MUST BE FORGOTTEN

The Survival of Yiddish In Zionist Palestine

By Yael Chaver - Syracuse University Press

א בוך-רעצענציע פון מרים בעקערמאן (מאראנא)

ווען דער יידישער יישוב האט זיך אנגעהויבן בויען אין פאלעסטינע - היינטיקע מדינת ישראל - איז העברעיש געווארן די דאמינירענדע שפראך אין לאנד. א קאמפליצירטע באציונג האט זיך אנגעהויבן צווישן קולטורעלער פאליטיק און יידישע שרייבונגען, וואס האט דערמיט צו דער מאדערנער ישראלדיקער קולטור. אין אן אנטדעקט יעל חבאר א ליטעראטור, וואס איז לאנג נישט געווען אנערקענט אין לאנד, אבער איז גע-ווען צעבליט אין דער אנערקענט.

די דיסטערס הייבט ארויס די יידישע ליטעראטור אין דער קולטור פון יישוב - אין דער ציוניסטישער קהילה פון ארץ-ישראל נאך איידער די מדינה איז אויס-געקומען. די אנאליזירט ווי אזוי ערבייט איז עטאבליט געווארן ווי די מוטער-שפראך פון גרעסערע צאלן יידן אין יישוב. די גוט אונדז אן איבערבליק וועגן היסטאריע-פון געשעענישן און דאס נעמט ארץ אריין די באציונג פון דער שפראך צו נאציאנאליזם און ציוניסטישע אס-פיראציעס. אין די יארן פון 1930-1920 זיינען אנגע-גאנגען פאלעמיקס אין לאנד וועגן די שפראכן.

אין דער קורצער צייט זיינען דערשינען יידישע ליטערארישע זשורנאלן; עס איז געווען א יידישע פרע-סע און יידיש איז בכלל גענוצט געווארן ווי א טעגלעכע שפראך. א סך יארן איז יידיש גענוצט געווארן אין גע-שפרעך. אין דער פרעסע און אין לידער אויף יידישע פארשטעלונגען. ווייל יידיש איז אזוי בייגעווארדיק האבן יידישע ליטעראטור-שרייבער אין ארץ-ישראל געקענט געבן א שטימע צו א מינאריטעט איינוווינער אין יישוב. חבאר ברענגט ארויס די ליטעראטור, געשאפענע אין יידיש. זי באקענט אונדז מיט דער פארמאדערטער בעלעטריסטיק פון וילם ברוכט (בראכעס), די מאדערנע עטימן פון אברהם ירוועס און מיט דער קולטורעלער פלוראליסטישער פאנעזיע פון ריקווא פאטאש.

די דאזיקע איינשטעלונג פון די יידישע שרייבער און די באציונג צו דער דאמינירענדער פאזיציע פון דער העברעישער קולטור, צוזאמען מיט דער עקסטרע-סיווער לעבעדיקייט פון יידיש, האט געפירט צו א פארייניקטער קאנצעפציע פון ציוניסטישע אונטערנע-מונגען אין דעם יישוב. די פאליטיק פון איבערנעצן רוטס ארויס א שטארקן ארגומענט, ווען מען זעט ווי די ליטערארישע שאפונגען פון ברוכט איז געווארן מא-דערניזירט און געמאכט געווארן נוצלעך צו באפעסטיקן די ציוניסטישע אידעען.

What Must Be Forgotten

אנטפלעקט זעל-טענע ארכיוועס מאטעריאלן. דאס צוזאמען מיט פער-זענלעכע אינטערוויוס שאפט פארן ליינער דעמנ-סיעס, וואס זיינען צום מערסטן פארנאכלעסיק געווארן אין הויפט ביכער, וואס ווערן גענוצט אין יידישע און העברעישע שטודיעס. און דאס איז א גרויסער שאד, ווייל דאס איז א געשיכטע פון קאמפליקט נאך ביזן היינטיקן טאג און דארף אויסגעדעקט ווערן פארן ליינער. וועלכער האט ליב און באנוצט זיך נאך מיט דער יידישע שפראך.

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On Campus

RCMP probes U of T student for Web postings

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Despite being monitored by the RCMP's counter-terrorism unit since September, a student at the University of Toronto's Mississauga campus continued to post online messages that promote the murder of Zionists, as well as Canadian soldiers in Canada.

Although he has yet to be charged, Salman Hossain, a political science student, is being watched for Internet chatroom and blog postings that included calling the killing of Canadian troops on Canadian soil "legitimate" and "well deserved," the RCMP said.

Spokesperson Cathy McCrory told *The C/N* that "as soon as he began posting, we received calls, because it is not something that would go unnoticed. [The postings are] pretty graphic."

When three Islamic militants were arrested in September for planning to bomb the Ramstein Air Base and Frankfurt International Airport in Germany, Hossain posted the following on an anti-Zionist blog: "I hope the German brothers were gonna blow up U.S.-German bases in their country. We should do that here in Canada as well. Kill as many western soldiers as well so that they think twice before entering foreign countries on behalf of their Jew masters."

Although the postings have since been removed, the *National Post* reported late last month that Hossain posted other messages targeting Jews and referring to Zionist conspiracy theories about the World Trade Center attacks.

In one, Hossain asked: "When do I get to shoot a few Jews down for attempting to blow up dozens of mosques in America right after 9-11... why f---ing target the Americans when the Jews are better?"

Hossain, a Bangladeshi-Canadian, added that he hoped for "many more merry 9-11s" and said "Jews are literally the most treacherous nation on the face of the Earth," and he claimed that "the filthy Jews carried out 9-11," the *Post* reported.

McCrory couldn't say if other contributors to the blogs and chatrooms where Hossain posted his messages are also being monitored, or if he is being monitored as part of a group.

When the story broke in January, students at U of T's Mississauga campus (UTM) — which Hillel of Greater Toronto estimates has about 60 to 70 Jewish students — created a Facebook group called "Expel or Suspend Salman Hossain."

More than 700 people have joined the group, with most condemning Hossain's comments and calling for his expulsion based on U of T's student code of conduct, which states that "no person shall engage in a course of vexatious conduct that is directed at one or more specific individuals, and that is based on the race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, sex, sexual orientation, creed, age [etc.]."

Despite word that the RCMP was monitoring his postings, Hossain continued to attack Canadian soldiers and Jews on the Facebook group's wall on Jan. 31 and Feb. 1, and he provided links to some of his blog

postings, which have since been removed from the Internet.

"The Zionists are the problem. And we have to root them outta society," he wrote in one posting.

Hossain also made outrageous claims such as "Hitler and top Nazis were Jews," and warned that "if you get seduced to killing others for your masters, then I wish death upon those who do."

UTM spokesperson Jane Stirling said the university can't disclose private information about a student, but she stressed that it "takes matters of this nature very seriously and is co-operating fully with the appropriate police authorities."

Tilly Shames, associate director of Hillel of Greater Toronto, said that as soon as she learned that the RCMP was monitoring Hossain, she contacted U of T's anti-racism and cultural diversity office and the director of the vice-provost, students' office to find out how the case was progressing.

"They both informed me that they are complying with police on all matters regarding the investigation. They will inform us at Hillel as the case progresses."

Hillel's director of emerging campuses, Daniel Abramson, said that he first found out that the RCMP was monitoring Hossain's postings two weeks after the *Post* story appeared.

He said he was at UTM for its Unity Through Diversity Week when student union president Walied Khogali approached him and some Jewish students who were taking part in the event.

Abramson said Khogali told him that "it was stuff that [Hossain] said in class that alerted [the student union] to him. It was students and teachers in his classes that were freaked out by it."

Khogali didn't respond to interview requests from *The C/N*, but he posted a message on the Facebook group that said "there is a difference between free speech demonstrating disapproval and free speech inciting the killing of others. As a union, we cannot support anyone suggesting the murder of others."

The external affairs officer for UTM's Muslim Students' Association (MSA), Yusuf Bhatia, also distanced his group from Hossain by noting that he is "not a member of UTM MSA... and all its members do not endorse his comments explicitly or implicitly."

Abramson said he's unaware whether U of T is looking into expelling Hossain, but said he's pleased with the responses of the school and the student union. He added he was glad to see the student union took action before being prompted by Hillel.

McCrory said the RCMP can't do much more right now than monitor Hossain.

"The criminal code offence says specifically that you have to publicly incite hatred against an identifiable group where it is likely to lead to a breach of the peace... I don't think he's got that kind of clout at the moment... but I think in this case we have a responsibility to monitor this because we really don't know what markets he's targeting here."

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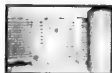
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of Jerusalem. She currently
holds the Ray D. Wolfe post-
doctoral fellowship at the
University of Toronto.

Coast to Coast

Kosovo declaration draws Mideast comparisons

Last week, while other world events took the media spotlight off Israel, Kosovo's declaration of independence found its way into the discourse about Israel-Palestinian peace talks.

In a Feb. 20 report, "Palestinian aide suggests Kosovo a model," Mohammed Daraghmech of Associated Press wrote that Yasser Abed Rabbo, a senior Palestinian official, suggested that if negotiations with Israel don't produce results, "[t]he Palestinians should follow Kosovo's example and unilaterally declare independence."

Rabbo was quoted as saying, "Kosovo is not better than Palestine. If the whole world, the United States, the European Union, the majority of its states, have embraced the independence of Kosovo, why shouldn't this happen with Palestine as well?"

According to AP, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas "reacted coolly to the idea, saying in a statement that he remained committed to reaching a negotiated peace agreement this year."

Similarly, "chief Palestinian negotiator, Ahmed Qureia, quickly quashed the idea of a unilateral decision and said such a proposal was never discussed by the Palestinian leadership."

In the Feb. 21 *Globe and Mail* ("Kosovo has set a precedent, Palestinians say"), Mark MacKinnon noted (in contrast to the AP report) that Abbas was more qualified about the Kosovo model.

MacKinnon wrote: "While other Palestinian officials distanced themselves from the remarks, Mr. Abbas himself appeared to leave the door open for such a move, though not before the Annapolis talks have run their course... Abbas said he was committed to pursuing those talks and ending the conflict at the negotiating table, 'but if we cannot achieve that and we reach a deadlock, we will go back to our Arab nation to take the necessary decision at the highest level.'"

MacKinnon also remarked that the "parallels between the Kosovars and the Palestinians are actually quite thin. Where Serbian troops were driven out of Kosovo by a NATO bombing campaign nine years ago, the Israeli military is still spread throughout the West Bank."

It's also important to note that Israel's military presence is sanctioned by the

United Nations itself, in the form of UN Security Council resolution 242, which allows that presence pending peace and security agreements between Israel and its Arab neighbours – precisely what the current negotiating process is meant to achieve.

In any event, since the Kosovo model is likely to crop up in other discussions about Palestinian independence, it's worth taking a closer look at the actual declaration of independence.

For instance, Timothy Garton Ash in "This dependent independence is the least worst situation for Kosovo"

(*Guardian*, Feb. 21) wrote: "Amid all the kaffuffle around Kosovo's declaration of independence, few have paused to note what an extraordinary document it is. It is so hedged about with conditions, obligations and reservations, many of them concerning protection for the remaining Serbian minorities, so replete with commitments to consult, honour and obey the province's

international patrons, that it is also a declaration of dependence."

This raises an interesting question: If the Palestinians did follow the Kosovo model and declare independence, would they build in such guaranteed minority rights for Jewish settlers

who want to remain in the West Bank on land they claim adherence to historically and religiously?

Worth noting: the Foreign Press Association (FPA) represents the interests of more than 450 members of the foreign media from 32 countries who cover stories

in Israel and in areas under Palestinian control. It has issued repeated warnings about Hamas and other Islamist groups' harassment of journalists trying to report stories from Gaza.

On Feb. 18, the FPA issued an urgent warning: "In recent days the FPA has received a

number of separate reports from colleagues in Gaza suggesting a renewed threat to foreign journalists. These threats come from the Army of Islam and there have been reports of gunmen entering hotels and checking for the presence of foreign journalists... we urge all members to be extra vigilant and to consider their profile and exposure while working in Gaza."

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

According to Reports

By
PAUL MICHAELS

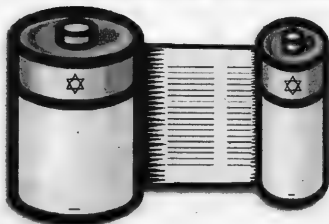


The national flag of Kosovo

The national flag of the Palestinians, many of whom wish to follow the Kosovo example to independence.



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Lawyer vows to press Ottawa in Jerusalem passport case

By **SHELDON KIRSHNER**

Staff Reporter

A lawyer who lost a two-year battle to list a client's birthplace as "Jerusalem, Israel" in his Canadian passport will pursue the case despite the fact the Supreme Court recently refused to hear his appeal.

"The issue of 'winning' is not finally decided," David Matas said in an interview last week. "The ultimate decision rests with the [federal] government."

He added, "All the [Federal Court] decided was that the government policy was legal, not that it was proper. The litigation made clear, at least to me, that the present policy is unjustifiable. All reasons given for the present policy are flimsy and untenable, verging on the outrageous."

Matas, a Winnipeg-based lawyer, is convinced that the case is far from closed. "I still believe that we can win, in the sense of persuading the government to change its policy."

He represents Eliyahu Veffor, an Orthodox Israeli man from Toronto who immigrated to Canada with his family about 12 years ago and claimed he had a right to add "Israel" after "Jerusalem" in his passport.

Gordon Wiseman, Veffor's lawyer in Toronto, suggested that while Veffor has run out of legal remedies, Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Conservative government may yet come to his rescue.

"It's the end of the present road," Wiseman conceded in a reference to Veffor's appeal. "But Canada's new government is very supportive of Israel. In the political realm, we may see changes. The court decision is definitely not the last word on the issue."

Canada does not recognize Israel's claim to and control of Jerusalem, believing that its status can be resolved only as part of a negotiated settlement with the Palestinians.

In line with this position, Canada's embassy in Israel is located in Tel Aviv rather than in Jerusalem.

In contesting the current policy, Veffor argued that his rights had been violated.

"I feel that the government is rejecting and denying my religious belief in the significance of Jerusalem to the Jewish religion," he wrote in a court affidavit when he launched his case two years ago in April. "My religion teaches me that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel."

Matas failed to convince the Federal Court that Canada permits Canadians to choose which country appears in their passport as their place of birth.

"The general Canadian passport policy is to allow persons born in territories whose sovereignty is not settled at international law to choose the country of birth in their passports," he explained.

"So, for example, as I understand it, persons born in Kashmir

can choose either Pakistan or India. Persons born in north Cyprus can choose either Cyprus or Turkey. Persons born in the western Sahara can choose Algeria or Mauritania. And so on.

"The only exception to this policy is Jerusalem. This exception discriminated against Veffor and also, because of his religious beliefs about Israel, frustrated his freedom of religion."

Matas intends to submit a letter to the Canadian government setting out his arguments.

"I [feel] that our position was and is correct," he noted.

Matas described the Federal Court's verdict as "a case-management decision, not a correctness decision. It does not even address the merits of the case. All the court did is say what is legal, not what is wise or sound policy."

Veffor is currently completing his military service in Israel, Wiseman said.

Gov't considering security funding

Continued from page 1

SIP documentation states it was established "to help enhance the security infrastructure of communities targeted by hate-motivated crime." Funding is available for non-profit organizations associated with a community, to protect places of worship, educational institutions and community centres.

"As far as we're concerned, the program is necessary" and should be made permanent, Rudner said.

"This is not the first time such threats have been directed at the Jewish community. By this time, the Jewish community is aware of the protocols."

American Jewish organizations were also told to be vigilant, particularly after a Los Angeles-area Jewish Community Centre (JCC) was firebombed last week.

The JCC in West Hills, Calif., in suburban Los Angeles,

was hit with two Molotov cocktails. No one was hurt.

Israel, meanwhile, put its embassies on alert following warnings from Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and Mohammad Ali Jafari, the commander of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards who threatened to strike Israeli facilities and Jews abroad.

In recent years, Congress has issued other security advisory as events in the Middle East heightened tensions. Security measures have been implemented at schools, synagogues and community buildings, where guards patrol and electronic monitoring devices have been added.

Congress has maintained close relations with law enforcement officials, and Rudner said that when tensions increase, police in Toronto and York Region are asked to step up their patrols around community buildings. Police have been sensitive to the community's security concerns, he added.



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And now for something completely different:

HEEBONICS

Young Israeli fights to protect endangered species in Africa

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

When Ofir Drori began researching the illegal bushmeat trade in Cameroon six years ago for an article he was writing, he had no idea that what he learned would move him to found the Last Great Ape (LAGA), the only wildlife law enforcement NGO in Africa.

Throughout his investigation, which was inspired by a quote from primatologist Jane Goodall who said that gorillas and apes could be extinct within 15 years, Drori witnessed the accessibility of gorilla meat in the market, the corruption within the Cameroonian legal system and the ineffectiveness of organizations, including the World Wildlife Fund.

Drori volunteered at an ape shelter and even made connections with people who took him directly to ape-meat dealers, but nothing prepared him for an encounter with dealers who were holding a live baby chimpanzee they were trying to sell as a pet.

He said that when he saw the baby chimp, near death, and chained in a dark, dirty room, he felt that he had to do something.

He went to the local authorities in hopes that it would be confiscated and integrated into a family of chimps, but they weren't interested. In fact, although wildlife laws had been in place since 1994, not a single arrest had been made nearly nine years later.

Drori decided to take the matter into his own hands. Armed with nothing but a book on Cameroonian law, he went back to the hunters, opened the book and told them that if prosecuted, they'd face up to three years in prison.

He told them that he knew as well as they did, that the law didn't hold much water, and that to get out of it, it would cost them no more than a \$5 bribe. "But this is my new job," he said, bluffing. "This is my work. And my work is to get this law applied and my work is to make sure that you don't bribe your way out, and you're going to court to be judged and face imprisonment."

The dealers bought his story and released the chimp to Drori, who acted as its mother for five months before it was integrated into a chimpanzee family.

He said that this event transformed him, and rather than continue to write a piece criticizing the existing organizations, he felt that he needed to fill the void himself.

In 2002, Israeli-born Drori, 31, established LAGA, an organization that works to prosecute violators of Cameroon's wildlife laws that protect endangered species, including apes, lions and elephants, and combat corruption within the legal system.

Although Drori said he has had a love affair with Africa since he was a child, he had no idea years ago that his future was in Cameroon.

"When I was 18, all my friends went on small trips before going to the army, maybe spending a week in France, or something like this, before we'd have to spend all our time in the army. I just wanted to go to Africa, and of course, no one wanted to go with me."

After spending only a few days in Kenya on his own, he knew that going on safaris wouldn't scratch his itch

to experience Africa.

"I took my backpack and started walking into the bush... I met some tribes and lived with the tribes, and it was a fantastic wonderful experience for me."

He said that after spending six weeks living in the bush, he knew that he couldn't just go through the motions and "continue life in Israel in a way that was expected of me."

After serving four years in the Israeli army as an officer, thinking about what he was going to do with his life after the army, he returned to Africa.

"At this point, I was on the lookout for an adventure, so I looked for the most remote villages, and the most remote cultures out there. I spent months crossing the wilderness... It was amazing. I got a lot from Africa, a lot of love and a lot of beauty."

He said that he was living the life of a nomad, moving from city to city, country to country, volunteering, writing, taking pictures and even teaching.

When Drori started writing about human rights abuses in Nigeria six years ago, he decided he needed a break and travelled to Cameroon to focus his energy on another issue.

When he began to research the illegal bushmeat trade, instead of finding activists who were dedicating their lives to ending the illegal trade, he found staff who were working for organizations that were receiving public funding and living in "a rich man's quarter, with huge villas and SUVs."

"I realized that there was something fundamental-



Drori assists law enforcement in Cameroon to investigate and arrest a lion skin dealer.

ly wrong with the way the system is managed. I was full of criticism against a system that is supposed to change something."

He said that when he discovered that there had not been a single prosecution since a law against the trade passed nearly a decade earlier, he felt something needed to be done.

"The trade of endangered species is the largest illegal trade in the world after drug and arms trafficking, stated by the last UN congress on crime," Drori said.

"I opened LAGA with a lot of criticism against an



Last Great Ape (LAGA) founder Ofir Drori with a chimpanzee he rescued from illegal bushmeat dealers.

existing system that doesn't work... [that uses] public money - millions and millions of dollars... I wanted to open an NGO... that would not only take the role of an adviser or lobbyist, but would really go down and do the work, and get the law applied."

In just five years, LAGA has helped move Cameroon from a baseline of zero wildlife prosecutions in 2003 to a prosecution once a week against major wildlife dealers mostly engaged in cross-border trafficking.

He said LAGA, which has received awards for its accomplishments, consists of four departments made up of only 13 staff.

The intelligence department consists of undercover agents who carry hidden cameras and audio recorders in an attempt to gather concrete evidence against the traders.

"Their job is to try to find the biggest fish in this illegal trade - the big ivory dealers, the big ape traffickers."

The staff of the LAGA operations department assists law enforcement to arrest violators and to channel complaint reports to the courts.

LAGA also formed a legal team to assist in the administrative procedures of prosecuting dealers. The biggest obstacle, Drori said, is fighting corruption in the legal system.

"In a place where you have corruption, even when the person is [sentenced to] three years, he may be out of jail after a week because he bribed the prison commissioner. We do jail visits both to examine the human rights conditions and to see that the people who are convicted are behind bars. We had many cases in which they weren't and many cases in which we had to arrest them again and bring them back to prison."

The fourth LAGA department works to show the community through the media that violators of the wildlife laws are now taken seriously.

"The idea is not to put everyone in Cameroon behind bars, but to create a deterrent to entering this illegal trade."

Although dealing with criminals can be dangerous, Drori feels privileged to be in this line of work.

"Every time we have an operation where we fight corruption, where we manage to do justice and get the laws applied, it is very satisfying," he said.

"The whole idea is to show the world that we can do things differently... The message we are trying to push into the existing system is that it is not about money. It is about values. We don't need millions to get things achieved."

For more information, visit www.laga-enforcement.org.

Quebecers' view of Jews sets them apart, poll finds

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — A recent nationwide poll commissioned in the aftermath of Quebec's "reasonable accommodation" commission hearings on minorities reveals a striking disparity between Quebecers' attitudes toward Jews and those of other Canadians.

The poll, commissioned by the Association for Canadian Studies (ACS) and conducted by Léger Marketing between Jan. 31 and Feb. 4, asked 1,500 Canadians whether they agreed with, disagreed with, or didn't know/had no opinion on a series of statements regarding Jews and anti-Semitism.

According to the poll results, 41 per cent of Quebecers agreed, and another 41 per cent disagreed, with the idea that "Jews want to impose their customs and traditions on others." By comparison, only 11 per cent agreed and 74 per cent disagreed in the rest of Canada. The average nationwide was 19 per cent agreeing and 64 per cent disagreeing.

To another statement — "Jews want to participate fully in society" — 41 per cent of Quebecers disagreed and 31 per cent agreed, compared with a mere eight per cent disagreeing and 72 per cent agreeing among other Canadians. The national average was 16 per cent disagreeing and 63 per cent agreeing.

On the idea that "Jews have made an important contribution to society," 35 per cent of Quebecers disagreed and 41 per cent agreed, compared with only 10 per cent disagreeing and 74 per cent agreeing in the rest of Canada. The Canadian average was 16 per cent disagreeing and 65 per cent agreeing.

The poll sample of 1,500 included 500 Quebecers, and had a margin of error of no more than plus or minus 3.5 per cent 19 times out of 20.

"This is a snapshot of a problem, but it is a problem," said ACS executive director Jack Jedwab. "I have to say, I wasn't jumping to release these results. But it is symptomatic of an

issue that has to be addressed."

Jedwab said the reasonable accommodation debates — and some of the intolerant comments about Jews and Muslims that found public voice there — have apparently resonated among a not insignificant number of Quebecers. "Some of the [poll] questions," Jedwab said, "did come out of the hearings."

Jedwab said, however, that even though the Quebec figures represent only a "snapshot" of public opinion in the wake of the hearings, the results still reflect the reality of the day. The poll results, he ventured, could become a "self-fulfilling prophecy" over the long term if the provincial government does not begin to put some "real money" into rapprochement initiatives instead of perpetuating the idea that Quebec has been a model for intercultural and inter-ethnic understanding and coexistence.

"We need to rethink the intercultural approach," he said. "There are four previous polls that do not support the idea that

Quebec has had successful intercultural programming. Are we really investing in it?"

Jedwab acknowledged that one possible factor in the disparity between Quebec and the rest of Canada in the question about Jews imposing their customs might be that among francophone Quebecers, the word "imposer" is not necessarily taken to mean "forced upon," but rather has the sense that something has been excessively "in your face."

Still, Jedwab said this does not minimize the overall implication of the Quebec numbers in the three questions he felt reflect the sensibility of average Quebecers in the wake of the hearings.

"It resonated in the public domain," he said.

Among the poll's other results was that 21 per cent of Canadians agreed and 49 per cent disagreed with the notion that "anti-Semitism is on the rise in Canada" (30 per cent of Quebecers agreed, and 38 per cent disagreed).

Montreal institutions increase vigilance

MONTREAL — Local Jewish community institutions received no specific threats in the wake of top Hezbollah terrorist Imad Mughniyah's assassination Feb. 12 in a car bombing in Damascus.

Nevertheless, within a day, Montreal synagogues and educational institutions were advised to step up their vigilance and watchfulness after Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah threatened to fight Israel anywhere in the world.

"We just advised them in the aftermath to be more careful, to update lists, to make sure that all mechanisms are in

place," Rabbi Reuben Poupko, co-chair of the Montreal Jewish Community Security Coordinating Committee, told *The C/JN*.

According to a "community security advisory" sent out to local institutions by Federation CJA and released to *The C/JN*, the community has been "monitoring the situation" and been in "constant contact" with intelligence and law enforcement agencies.

"At this time we have no specific information relating to any threats to Jewish establishments in Montreal," the

advisory said. "Given the general threat of retaliation announced by the Hezbollah, and the call from the Israeli prime minister's office to increase vigilance in Israeli and Jewish establishments throughout the world, we urge you to take the time to review your security measures, emergency response procedures and calls lists."

The memo also asked that institutions remain "extremely vigilant and prepared," and that staff "be briefed and instructed to report any suspicious behaviour, person, package or vehicle." —D.L.

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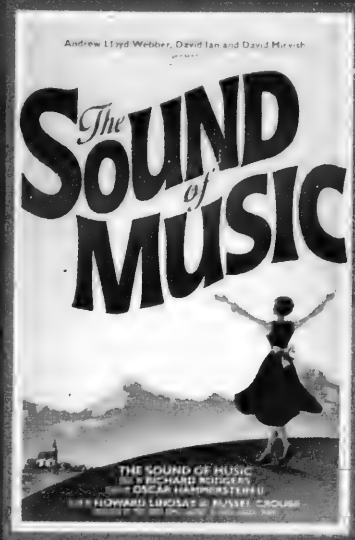
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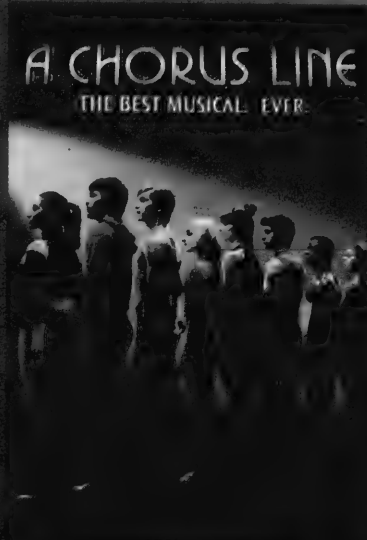
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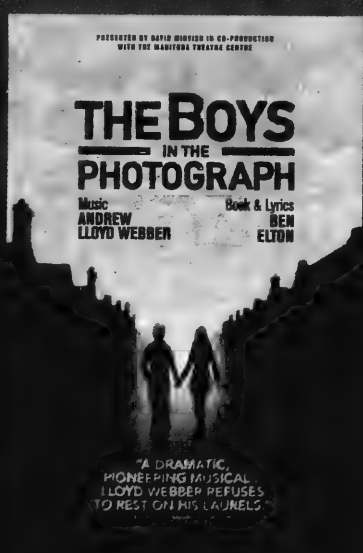
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Coast to Coast

Pioneer synagogue to be moved to a Calgary park

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Special to the CJN

Calgary's Heritage Park is soon to be the only historical park in Canada that will have a restored pioneer synagogue on display.

"The only other synagogue I know of that exists in a historic park in North America is in San Diego," says Irena Karshenbaum, who proposed the idea to the board of directors of Heritage Park.

"The proposal was to build a replica of a synagogue that we knew had existed in the Montefiore colony of Jewish immigrants who had settled in Alberta in 1910. We had a photo of the Montefiore synagogue, but assumed the building itself no longer actually existed," says Karshenbaum, who is the president of a volunteer group she founded, The Little Synagogue on the Prairie Project Society.

"After the project was approved by Heritage Park, one of our board members, Emanuel Cohen, who was born on a ranch in eastern Alberta, did a lot of research and actually found the Montefiore synagogue that we were proposing to replicate," says Karshenbaum.

The Montefiore synagogue, which is approximately 800 square feet, was built in 1913 by Jewish immigrants from Russia and eastern Europe. It served about 30 Jewish families, not only as a synagogue but also as a school and community centre, and was built

near the present-day village of Sibbald, just west of the Alberta-Saskatchewan border.

Due to harsh farming conditions, most of the Jewish settlers abandoned the Montefiore colony by the 1920s. Some settlers moved to Calgary and Edmonton, but most of them went to southern California, where they became chicken farmers.

"The synagogue was abandoned, and during the Great Depression, the government sold it around 1937 to a family for \$200," Karshenbaum says. "It was moved to a small town in eastern Alberta and lived in as a house and kept in the same family for almost 70 years. It remained there until Emanuel Cohen tracked it down last year."

"Our society bought it for \$55,000. The non-Jewish family living in it didn't know it had once been a synagogue."

Cohen, a 77-year-old real estate appraiser, says that in order to find the synagogue he searched through local school maps, museums, provincial archives and spoke to many local residents.

"I had been on the trail of that



Irena Karshenbaum with a model of the synagogue



Montefiore synagogue

ty in Canada will support this unique project, which is such a positive way to educate people about the beauty of Judaism," Karshenbaum says.

Trudy Cowan, a heritage and museum consultant, will oversee the synagogue's restoration.

"The building has an impressive amount of original historical content intact," she says. "We have been able to access the original ceiling behind the drop ceiling that was added. The tops of the original windows are still there. We can even see they had a separate little library, and we have two books stamped 'Montefiore Hebrew Free Public Library.'"

Cohen says that the "front of the synagogue had a Magen David, which is gone, but the amazing thing is that the nail holes for it are still there."

The restored synagogue will have the capacity to host small weddings and bar and bat mitzvah ceremonies. Tour guides in costume will explain Jewish religion and culture to visitors to the synagogue.

The synagogue opens in the spring of 2009, the 120th anniversary of the first Jewish family, headed by Rachel and Jacob Diamond, settling in Calgary. Their great-grandson, Bobby Libin, is the chair of the historical society's fundraising committee.

For more information, e-mail littlestynagogue@shaw.ca or visit www.littlesynagogue.ca

synagogue for the last 15 years, ever since I wrote my first paper on the Montefiore colony for the Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta," he says.

Karshenbaum says there "were lots of little synagogues on the prairies similar to this one, but they have been lost."

"Calgary is a city of a million people and has only about 8,000 Jews. Heritage Park has approximately half a million visitors a year. Most of the people who will go inside this synagogue will be non-Jewish, and for many it will be their first time ever setting foot inside a synagogue."

The Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta, which Karshenbaum founded, has launched a fundraising campaign, with the goal of raising a million dollars, to move, restore and equip the Montefiore synagogue. About \$400,000 has already been raised.

"We are hoping that the Jewish communi-

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In Our Schools



GETTING CREATIVE: Grade 9 students at Yeshivat Or Chaim celebrated Israel @ 60 through Hebrew calligraphy, talmudic texts and "off the wall" images. From left are Daniel Gofine, Yoni Sotto and Shua Teperman. [Rebecca Ansel photo]



SCRIBAL ARTS AT THE DJCS: Rabbi Rachel Schoenfeld, a graduate of the Downtown Jewish Community School, now a scribal arts instructor and rabbi of Shirat Hayam Congregation in Marshfield, Mass., recently returned to the school to lead scribal arts workshops, using traditional feather pens, ink and parchment. From left are Madelaine Potechin, Emily Steen (standing), Hannah Feldman, Rabbi Schoenfeld, Jeremy Steen and Sidney Millrad.

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FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish News



Happy 90th birthday Papa. With love, Jean, Ben, Henry and the entire family - wives, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and of course Cesia, wife of 64 years.



Jack Stopper: Mazel tov on your 100th birthday. Lots of love and best wishes for continued good health from your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



Mazel tov to Veronica Mercedes Grad for donating 12 inches of her hair to Angel Hair for Kids. Love, Mommy, Daddy and Stephanie Marissa.



Randy & Tara Starr were recently married at Temple Sinai. Proud parents are Jerry & Patti Starr, and Leslie & Jack Frampton.



Romy, Paul and Andrew Burns, welcome Allison Carly born Nov. 19, 2007. Allie's ecstatic grandparents are Evelyn & Harvey Gardner and Pauline & Sidney Burns.



Brandy & Lee Katz announce the birth of Presley Eden on Nov 3. Sister of the big birthday boy Ryder Max who turned two on Feb 20.



Happy first birthday Joshua, son of Merita & Daniel Kligerman. Grandparents Anne & Robert Kligerman, Mazie & Nick Shemovskii. Great-grandparents Paula & Irving Goldhar, Selma Kligerman.



Jessica & Jason Cohn welcomed their gorgeous twins, Jeremy Harrison & Tamara Liat, on Nov 28. Grandparents Marlene & Arni Cohn and Carol & Sol Silverberg.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!
Label the back of all photos and keep wording to 25 words or less.
Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return.
Mail to: The CJN, Family Moments,
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or email: cblackman@cjnews.com

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**What's
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By REBECCA NADLER



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What's New deadlines: Monday, March 3, is the deadline for the March 13 issue and Monday, March 10, is the deadline for the March 20 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Friday, Feb. 29

KABALAT SHABBAT

Join Beit Rayim Synagogue for snack and shmooze at 6 p.m., then welcome Shabbat with a song-filled service and story at 6:30-7:15 p.m. with **Rabbi David Eligberg** and **Jodi Eligberg**. 927 Clark Ave. W. RSVP, 905-889-0276, ext. 32, or school@beitrayim.org.

TOT SHABBAT

Temple Har Zion invites parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles to bring children ages 2-4 and siblings for a child-friendly Shabbat celebration.

6 p.m. Adult service 8:30 p.m. 905-889-2252

Saturday, March 1

SHABBAT SERVICES

Congregation Shir Libeynu holds monthly Shabbat services 10:30 a.m. at the Miles Nadal JCC. Read and discuss the weekly Torah portion. Kiddush after service. Free child care. 416-465-5488 or shirlibeynu@yahoo.ca

FILM & PIZZA NIGHT

Watch the film *Live and Become* and enjoy pizza with Oraynu Con-

gregation for Humanistic Judaism. 7:30 p.m. Non-members \$15. 18 Wynford Dr. RSVP, 416-385-3910 or roby@oraynu.org

WINE & COFFEE BAR

Join *Saturday Night Live* alumnus **Marc Weiner** for a comedy show offering an insightful look at the trials and tribulations of Jewish life. 8:30 p.m. at Kehillat Shaarei Torah. \$25. Reserve, 416-229-2600, ext. 3.

SPARKLE, SIZZLE & SONG

Regesh Family and Child Services hosts Sparkle, Sizzle & Song, an evening, dedicated to the memory of **Rabbi Yitzhak Witzy**, featuring an auction and a musical tribute at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. The event supports Chezi's Corner, a transition house in Jerusalem for youths at risk who are 16-24. \$125. 416-495-8832

Sunday, March 2

PURIM FESTIVAL

Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism hosts a "Family/School Purim Festival" with carnival games, music, Purim spiel and refreshments. 10 a.m. 131 Fenn Ave. Adults \$8, children \$5. All welcome. 416-385-3910 or roby@oraynu.org

MINI GOLF

Join Beit Rayim Youth at Putting Edge, 9625 Yonge St., for glow-in-the-dark mini golf. 1-3 p.m. Snacks provided. \$15. RSVP, admin@beitrayim.org or 905-889-0276, ext 31.

BOOK DISCUSSION

Temple Kol Ami presents **David Kreuter** talking about *A Writer's Life* by **Philip Roth**. 7:30 p.m. at

Indigo Book Store, Hwy. #7 and Yonge St. 905-709-2620 or www.templekolami.ca

Monday, March 3

CHW TORONTO ONE

Canadian Hadassah Wizo Toronto One campaign launch takes place tonight at the CNIB Centre with **Ari Sandel**, Academy Award winner for his film *West Bank Story*. 8 p.m. \$36, \$125, patron. Reserve, 416-630-8373.

Tuesday, March 4

LUNCH AND LEARN

Beth Tikvah Synagogue's four-part series begins today with "An Exploration of Yiddish Broadway," with **Mitch Smolkin** accompanied

Continued on page 31

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What's New

Continued from page 30

by pianist **Nina Shapilsky**. Lunch noon, program 12:45 p.m. Series continues through March 25. \$50, non-members \$60, \$20/each. 416-221-3434, ext. 352.

PAPER CLIPS

Holy Blossom Temple presents **Mitchell Belman**, director of the film *Paper Clips: A Ride to Remember*, speaking about making the film about 400 Jewish motorcyclists who rode to Whitwell, Tenn., a small community that created a paper clip memorial to the six million victims of the Holocaust. 7:30 p.m. 789-3291 ext. 235.

CHRISTIAN-JEWISH TALKS

The Christian-Jewish Dialogue of Toronto presents "Common Texts, Different Scriptures," Christian and Jews in candid conversation. 7:30 p.m. at Beth Tzedec Synagogue. 416-781-3511

THE GLASS CEILING

Shaarei Shomayim Congregation presents a panel discussion on "The Glass Ceiling: Is It Still There?" with **Charlene Arje**, president, Honeywell Canada; **Dinah Kutner**, general manager, El Al Canada; and **Corinne Lissos**, president, Solemates. 7:40 p.m. Non-members \$2. 416-789-3213

Wednesday, March 5

WOMEN ON WOMEN

Beth Tzedec Congregation presents "What Does the Midrash Say About Women's Issues?" with **Rachel Adelman**. Tonight, "Re-Creating Eve"; March 12, "Serah bat Asher: Songstress, Poet and Woman of Wisdom"; March 19, "Women on the Edge: The Call for Divine Intervention." 7:30 p.m. 416-781-3511

JEWISH VIEW OF ART

Darcei Noam Congregation presents **Rabbi Tina Grimbarg** on "Ken Anachnu B'Yadcha: Seeing Art Through Jewish Eyes." 7:30-9:30 p.m. 864 Sheppard Ave. W. 416-638-4783, www.darceinoam.on.ca

Other News

TANACH TODAY

Torah in Motion hosts "The People and the Book: Tanach in Our Time." March 1 and 2. Features **Rabbi Nati Helfgot**, **Rabbi Menachem Leibtag**, **Rabbi Yehoshua Engelman** and **Rabbi Eric Levy**. Topics include "Interpreting the Bible: The Relationship between Peshat and Derash"; "Triggers for Tehillim: Tools to Help Their Un-

derstanding"; "Yehuda and Yosef: Two Tribes, Two Archetypes, Two Moshiahs"; "Understanding Tanach Through the Prism of the Sephardic Commentaries"; "The Men Who Would Be King"; and "The Apparent Contradictions between Shmot and Devarim and Their Thematic Purpose." \$15, \$10. Info, www.torahinmotion.org or 416-633-5770.

GILA MANOLSON

The Jewish Family Institute and Aish Toronto present **Gila Manolson** Sunday, March 2, 8 p.m., on "Eating Disorders, Body Image and the Fashion Fixation." 949 Clark Ave. W. Pre-registration \$7, \$10 at the door. 905-764-1818. And Monday, March 3, 8 p.m. on "Looking Again: Realistic Expectations of Love and Marriage" at The Village Shul. \$10. 416-785-1107, ext. 204

GREASE

CHAT parents and alumni present an amateur production of *Grease* to raise funds for Parents' Association projects. March 4 and 5, 7:30 p.m. at the Leah Posluns Theatre. Tickets, 416-636-5984, ext. 504. www.chatpresentsgrease.nice-topic.com.

SHABBAT ACROSS CANADA

Celebrate a Shabbat evening with Jews across the country with services and Shabbat dinner, Friday, March 7. Participating locations include Beth Emeth Synagogue, 416-633-3838; Hillel of Greater Toronto, 416-785-1465; Beth Torah Congregation, 416-782-4495; Temple Kol Ami, 905-709-2620; Am Shalom Synagogue, Barrie, 705-792-3949; Shaarei Beth El Congregation, Oakville, 905-849-6000; Congregation Iyr Hamelech, Kingston, 905-762-0566. www.njop.org

LUNCH AND LEARN

Emunah Women of Toronto hosts a lunch and learn about Purim, Monday, March 10, at noon at the B'nai Brith apartments, 4300 Bathurst St. \$10, \$18 non-members. Preregistration required, emunah@kwik.net, 416-636-0036.

ISRAEL & HEBREW

The Westmount Shul & Learning Centre offers two courses, Israel: The Land of Judaism: A Historical Perspective with **Rabbi Mayer Michalowicz**, beginning Tuesday, March 11, 8:30 p.m., and Learn to Read Hebrew, a free six-week course, beginning Wednesday, March 12, women only, 10 a.m., men and women, 8 p.m. Pre-register, 905-482-9488.

SUPPORT GROUP

Are you caring for an elderly parent with dementia or do you know someone who is? Baycrest Centre offers the "Caring For Your Loved One" support group, Wednesdays, March 12-April 16, 6-7:30 p.m. Info and registration, **Nira Rittenberg**, 416-785-2500, ext. 3587, or **Elaine Kohn**, 416-785-2500, ext. 2998.

WINE TASTING

She'arim Hebrew Day School hosts an evening of wine tasting with prizes and boutiques. Thursday, March 13, 7:30-10 p.m. at the Borochoy Cultural Centre. \$18 in advance, \$25 at the door. Tickets, 416-633-4783 or Na'amat, 416-636-5425.

VENDORS WANTED

Bnei Akiva Schools Spring Fashion and Boutique Afternoon with fashions, accessories, gift and children's items seeks vendors. Tables, \$75. Sunday, March 30, 12-4 p.m. Contact **Ellise Gasnerbunch** @sympatico.ca or 905-709-7499.

BAYT Sisterhood seeks vendors for its Spring Craft & Gift Show on Victoria Day, Monday, May 19. Tables, \$120, \$100 if booked by March 19. Contact **Lynda Lyndahg**@rogers.com, 905-731-0351.

JIAS TORONTO

Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, 4600 Bathurst St. #325. www.jias.toronto.org. To register, volunteer, or for more information on these programs, call **Joanna**, 416-630-6481, ext. 30.

Conversation Cafés: Newcomers to Canada practise speaking English in a casual, friendly environment with JIAS volunteers. Interested participants or volunteers call above number.

Youth Groups: Programs for newcomer children and teens. Both Canadians and newcomers get community service hours for participation in our teen group.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. Information/registration 416-638-7800 or www.jfandcs.com. Call **Shawna**, ext. 215, for info and registration.

• **High Conflict Divorce:** A workshop for parents. Requires active participation and not for individuals in abusive situations. Tuesday, March 4, 6:30-9 p.m., Promenade Mall, #313.

• **Developing a Successful Parenting Relationship with Your Ex:** A workshop for parents who want to develop a business-like relationship with their "ex" partners by negotiating the day-to-day details of their children's lives. Tuesday, March 18, 7-9 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

• **Living With Teens:** A six-session group about setting limits, letting go, parents' rights and responsibilities, keeping the lines of communication open, realistic expectations, and the pressures of drugs, alcohol, dating and sexuality. Begins Wednesday, March 19, 7:30-9 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

FOR SENIORS

55+ Forward at the MJCC hosts Museum and Gallery Adventures, a visit to the Gardiner Museum with a guided tour. Wednesday, March 5, 1:45 p.m. Pre-register by Feb. 28. Info, 416-944-6211, ext. 155.

Beth Tzedec Congregation Haverim Program presents "The Humorous Side of Being a Cantor" with **Cantor Simon Spiro**, Monday, March 3, 1:30 p.m. \$2. 416-781-3511

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE 1003 Steeles Ave. W. 416-225-2112.

"The Next Generation" with **Susan Jackson**, Tuesday, March 4, 10 a.m. \$2, \$4 non-members.

"Ask the Panel" of health professionals, Wednesday, March 5, 1-2:30 p.m.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

Chronic disease self-management workshop begins Wednesday, March 5. Register, ext. 259.

JCC Maccabi Spin-a-thon to support Maccabi athletes. Sunday, March 30, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Free Tax Return Clinic, to qualify income below \$17,000 no dependents; \$25,000 with dependents, Call ext. 0 for appointment.

School and day-care registration is open for the 2008-09 school year. Morning and full-day options. Info, ext. 248.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www.mnjcc.org.

Jacobs Lounge Visual Arts Space presents "Neighbours Who Disappeared," a project of the Jewish Museum in Prague supported by the Forgotten Ones Civic Association. Feb. 28-March 28.

Film Talk with **Shlomo**: "1980s: Uneasy Portraits." Sunday, March 2, 11:30 a.m.-12 p.m. \$9, includes coffee and bagels. Info, ext. 606.

2008 Canadian Jewish Playwriting Competition submission deadline, May 31, 2008. For info and guidelines, contact **Esther Arbeid**, ext. 606, or esthera@mnjcc.org.

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SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 36

OBITUARIES and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Einstoss, Ian	Feb. 4/08	198 Brighton Ave
Martin, Sylvia	Feb. 9/08	Private
Kamiel, Frances	Feb. 5/08	170 Red Maple Rd
Yosopov, Hatira	Feb. 6/08	180 Steeles Ave. E
Seigel, Reeve Joan	Feb. 6/08	Private
Saltzberg, Izzy	Feb. 7/08	Private
Kurzrock, Eduard	Feb. 7/08	Private
Fisher, Sylvia	Feb. 8/08	Private
Rosen, Helen	Feb. 9/08	1131 Steeles Ave. W
Resina, Galina	Feb. 10/08	6250 Bathurst St
Kozloff, Esther	Feb. 9/08	3560 Bathurst St
Bobrowsky, Norman	Feb. 9/08	541 Finch Ave. W
Eliahou, Isaacov	Feb. 10/08	Private
Klugman, Wladyslawa	Feb. 10/08	Private
Kuritski, Izhak	Feb. 11/08	5935 Bathurst St

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Hanna Hertz	Feb 9/08	6 Baytree Cres
Beverly Minuk	Feb 8/08	8 Doncrest Dr
Philip Bloom	Feb 9/08	65 Springarden Ave
Hy Rykiss	Feb 9/08	77 Swindon Way
David Goldberg	Feb 10/08	19 Lower Village Gate
Lorraine Levine	Feb 11/08	65 Magpie Crescent
Moishe Waksbaum	Feb 12/08	137 Searle Avenue

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Obituaries

Temple Sinai's first rabbi remembered for his intellect

By FRANCES KRAFT

Staff Reporter

Rabbi Jordan Pearlson, founding rabbi of Temple Sinai, died Feb. 19. He was 83.

At his funeral last Thursday, an estimated 700 people heard the temple's three rabbis praise their colleague and mentor for his insights, eloquence and ability to connect with people.

"He would touch us not only with guidance and wisdom, but with wit and humour," Rabbi Michael Dolgin, the temple's senior rabbi, said in a eulogy.

A native of Somerville, Mass., Rabbi Pearlson was raised in a home of modest means, with two parents and four children living in a two-bedroom apartment.

His intellect was apparent at an early age, and his brothers found it "a challenge" to follow him in school, Rabbi Dolgin said.

He added that an early bout with rheumatic fever affected Rabbi Pearlson's health throughout his life, but it also afforded him the opportunity to join every book club he could and "sharpen his love of fine music that he would listen to on the radio, hour after hour."

"Learning was part of his life from the very beginning... He had a powerful mind, and a unique character."

A former religion columnist for the *Toronto Star*, Rabbi Pearlson also pioneered a daily religious interfaith dialogue on CBC Radio. He was a Canadian member of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations, and a board member of the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews, which awarded him its national humanitarian award.

With a background in communication, engineering, psychology and law, Rabbi Pearlson began working as a lawyer before he turned his sights elsewhere.

"The behaviour he witnessed [as a lawyer] was not in the highest traditions of the legal profession," Rabbi Dolgin said. "He had learned from his father that you had nothing if you didn't have morality and standards."

Rabbi Pearlson first came to Toronto as a 29-year-old Hebrew Union College rabbinical student, working with Temple Sinai's 14 founding families. In the years since, the congregation has grown to

become Canada's second-largest Reform congregation, with 6,000 individual members.

Rabbi Lori Cohen said that Rabbi Pearlson shared "a treasure" with her every day in the form of a story or insight, opening "windows into the rabbinic and into the souls of people in need."

Rabbi Erin Polonsky, whose family joined the temple when she was four years old, said Rabbi Pearlson set an example by dedicating his life to the welfare of the congregation, the Jewish community and the greater community.

Leo Marcus, executive vice-president of Canadian Associates of Ben-Gurion University, spoke of Rabbi Pearlson's love for Israel and his work as president of the organization over a 10-year period. During that time, he said, they spoke every workday.

Rabbi Pearlson travelled across Canada to garner support for a BGU distance education program that made it possible for young people who had to work for a living to acquire a university degree, Marcus said.

He travelled the world for BGU and also travelled to take part in high-level interfaith discussions, meeting the late Pope John Paul II on two occasions, Rabbi Dolgin said.

Rabbi Aaron Flanzraich, president of the Toronto Board of Rabbis, told *The C/N* that Rabbi Pearlson had "vision and perseverance" as founding rabbi of Temple Sinai.

The synagogue is "known as a 'heimish' congregation, and he set that tone," Rabbi Sharon Sobel, executive director of executive director of the Canadian Council for Reform Judaism & ARZA Canada, said in an interview.

Rabbi Pearlson "wasn't just an intellectual," she added. "He was a people person... He was extremely beloved by his congregation and his community."

Rabbi Michael Stroh, rabbi emeritus of Temple Har Zion, said that Rabbi Pearlson, whom he knew for more than 40 years, had "a very good sense of people, an insight into human situations, and good political sense in terms of the situation of Jews in the world."

Rabbi Pearlson is survived by his brothers Melvin of Boston and Stanley of Connecticut; his children Joshua, Nessa, and Abigail Pearlson-Olyan, and two grandchildren.



Rabbi Jordan Pearlson

Obituaries

AHS benefactor and oldest alumnus dies at 98

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Nathan Hurwich, a benefactor of Associated Hebrew Schools and many other Jewish causes, died Feb. 14. He was 98 years old.

A native of Toronto, Hurwich attended cheder at Toronto Hebrew Free School, a predecessor of Associated. He was Associated's oldest living alumnus.

Its campus on Finch Avenue just east of Bathurst Street was named the Nathan O. and Roey Hurwich Education Centre after he and his wife – who predeceased him in 2005 after 73 years of marriage – became its benefactors in 1979.

The son of Russian immigrants who ran a grocery store, Hurwich, who was one of nine children, dropped out of Harbord Collegiate

Institute at age 14 so that he could help support his family after his father became ill.

He began working at Tip Top Tailors and completed high school at night.

Later, Hurwich opened a small automotive jobbing business, which he sold before founding Mobile Automotive Products, a manufacturers' distributor that he sold some three decades ago.

Hurwich's grandfather, a scholar and ritual slaughterer, imbued him with a love of Judaism and Israel, Rabbi Roy Tanenbaum of Beth Tzedec Congregation said in a eulogy.

A fundraiser for many Jewish causes, Hurwich received more than 100 awards and honours. He was tireless in raising funds for Israel and travelled there frequently, the rabbi said.

Hurwich co-chaired Canadian Jewish Con-

gress' Soviet Jewry committee and travelled to Russia in the 1970s to learn about the situation first-hand and deliver Hebrew books that he had hidden in his luggage. He was also a founding member of Beth Tzedec, where he held almost every major office.

"I don't know if there was an organization in Toronto that Nat was not involved in," said his niece, Miriam Cohen Freilich, in a eulogy.

Explaining his involvement with Associated in a 2003 C/JN interview, Hurwich, who had no children, said that "without the



Nathan Hurwich

Jewish schools, we have no future."

Jane Cooper-Eade, a niece of Roey Hurwich, said in a eulogy that her aunt and uncle acted as surrogate grandparents to her children, buying them treats and taking them to synagogue on some of the Jewish holidays. "Uncle Nat truly loved children," she recalled.

Hurwich leaves two sisters, Anne Cohen Himmel of Toronto, and Ada Altman of Washington, D.C. He was predeceased by his brothers, Reuben, Samuel, Dave and Sydney.

Max Goody was Canadian Zionist stalwart

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

Max Goody, a dedicated and committed Zionist, died last week, after a long illness. He was 90.

Goody was a two-time president of the Canadian Zionist Federation, a founding member and twice president of Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue, and a longtime member of the fraternal Zionist Ajalon Lodge.

His son, Ira, said that together with good friends and fellow Zionists such as Julius Hayman, Goody was a key Canadian advocate for the State of Israel at the time of its creation in 1948. He also made many trips to Israel

and raised funds for the nascent Jewish state, and he helped develop Zionism in Canada.

"He was a legacy of days gone by. You can't recreate that," Ira said.

Max Goody was born in Wadena, Sask., to Yitzchok and Rachel Goody, immigrants from Russia. The family moved first to Winnipeg, and later, when Max was in his late teens, to Toronto, so the children could get a good Jewish education.

Ira said his father was proud to be a Jewish war veteran and had served as a wireless operator in the Royal Air Force during World War II.

Rabbi Philip Scheim, spiritual leader of Beth David, said that Goody was "a good guy.

He was a respected leader who spoke and lectured extensively on Israel and Jewish interests."

He even gave sermons sometimes, Rabbi Scheim recalled.

"He spoke without a note – he had organized everything in his head."

Goody came every morning to daven and to attend study groups, Rabbi Scheim said.

"He always asked questions, and presented what he called a joke de jour."

Goody is survived by Ruby, his wife of 66 years, children Ravia and Haggat Eventhal, Debra and Meir Malki, and Ira; sister Shirley Vernon, sister-in-law Marilyn, four grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. He was predeceased by brothers Nate and Henry, and brother-in-law Murray Vernon.



Max Goody

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Feature

Conference on Jewish Material

It has failed to fulfill its mandate

By ELI PFEFFERKORN

Founded in 1952, the Conference on Jewish Materials Claims Against Germany – its official name – was mandated to negotiate with the federal government of Germany reparation payments for Holocaust survivors, and transfer the money to them. While successfully fulfilling the negotiation part of the mandate, the conference has failed in the transfer part.

Accusation

This failure of the conference to fulfil its mandate has affected many thousands of survivors in the waning years of their lives. I might have stood on the roll call *platz* with some of these survivors, or trod the sun-lit asphalt on the Death March with them. I therefore feel morally bound to expose the conference's breaches.

In 2002, I published an article in *The Canadian Jewish News* documenting the money allocation policy and practice of the Claims Conference. The assertions in the article were based on internal documents generated by the conference. As a result of the article, I was invited, courtesy of the Canadian Jewish Congress, to the conference's office.

Two top officers greeted me.

Gracious, articulate and computer literate, they laid out before me the good deeds performed by the conference. At lunch, Gideon Taylor, the CEO and vice-president, joined us and reinforced his lieutenants' claims. To lend credence to their activities, there was a survivor on hand who nodded in agreement with Taylor's assertions. Through the entire session, a weird feeling came over me that I was being led down the primrose path.

A year later, I went to Israel, on my own initiative, to follow the trail of monies said to have been allocated by the Claims Conference to survivors' organizations.

I chose two organizations out of hundreds that were reportedly recipients of money earmarked for specific enterprises. From 1995 to 1999, the Glianski Home was reported to have received \$5,840,000; and Irgun Olej Mercas Europa (The Organization of Immigrants from Central Europe), known as flight refugees to Palestine, to have received \$19,307,910.

Danny, a former student of mine and a grandson of a sur-



File photo of Holocaust survivors in Israel receiving food supplies for the Pesach [Israelnet photo]

vivor, drove me to the Glianski Home early in the evening. The seven-storey edifice built in 1966 was situated in a rundown neighbourhood south of Jaffa. The ground level accommodates a series of stores. The intent of my visit was to get shelter for the night so that I could gather first-hand information from my fellow survivors.

Hobbling on crutches, dressed fittingly for the occasion and wearing a two-day stubble, I introduced myself as a survivor who needed lodgings for a few nights. The lady who let me in said she had no authority to admit people without the approval of Keshet, the non-governmental organization that administered the "home."

The following day, we went to the Keshet offices. Our attire

exuding affluence, we introduced ourselves as donors to Holocaust-related causes. What we heard at this meeting belied Taylor's claims.

Originally built as a hotel and later sold to Amidar, a building company owned by the Jewish Agency, the "home" was converted to affordable housing in the earlier '60s. Its residents pay rent from their welfare checks. Amidar invested about NIS 50,000 (\$14,076 Cdn) to build air raid shelters, and another NIS 100,000 (\$28,150) for light repairs. The social worker was not sure whether any of the residents were survivors, except for one Belgian woman. The Keshet people knew nothing about money transfers from the Claims Conference, nor did the people of Amidar know. So where has all the money gone?

Next, I visited the offices of Irgun Olej Mercas Europa in Haifa. A luxurious building on the eastern Carmel was in the planning stage, allegedly with funds given by the

Claims Conference to the Mercas. Since the money came from the Claims Conference, I assumed that the facility was intended for survivors.

I presented my survivor's credentials and asked how to apply for residency there. The cheapest entrance fee was between \$75,000 and \$90,000, and the fees went up to \$155,000; monthly maintenance fees ranged from NIS 7,300 to 7,800.

My question to them – how could an average survivor afford such expenses? – was met with a shrug of the shoulders. Again, the office had no information about money transfers from the conference.

On the advice of the office staff, I called Yossef Gush-Halav, the former president of the Mercas, and presented my case to him. Yes, during his tenure the Claims Conference transferred \$2.6, but not \$19 million. He was sorry he could not help me.

So where did the money go? He did not know.

I asked a lawyer whether one could trace the money flow from the Conference through the banks and the tax authority. I was told it could be done – through the courts, but that it was extremely expensive to do so.

A year ago, a majority of the board of directors decided to allocate 20 per cent of the restitution money for education and research. This is a further example of blind allocation. It demonstrates the rubber-stamp character of this institution.

Education aside, I would like to put the following question to the conference's board of directors: had you lived in a tenement in Brooklyn or Jaffa or Toronto, having to carve up your monthly income between buying adult diapers, paying rent and buying food, would you be willing to have funds spent so that your suffering could be recorded in the annals of history at the cost of your well-being? Or would you rather say that you have already made history by staying alive, and it is for others to pay for the recording your history?

Eli Wiesel was enlisted by the Claims Conference to persuade the hesitant board of directors to vote in support of the 20 per cent education proposal. By now a retired spokesperson for the survivors but still having an independent mind, Wiesel stated that we must remember the dead and not forget the living. *Touché.*

Eli Pfefferkorn, a survivor, lives in Toronto.



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Claims against Germany

Criticisms are misguided

By JULIUS BERMAN

Eli Pfefferkorn raises issues of crucial importance to Holocaust survivors in his piece on the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference). Unfortunately, he misses the mark because the "facts" upon which he bases his charges are either insufficient or incorrect.

While acknowledging our successes in negotiation, Pfefferkorn claims that we have not distributed the funds to survivors, saying,

Defence

"While successfully fulfilling the negotiation part of the mandate, the conference has failed in the transfer part." Not mentioned anywhere in the article is the fact that in the last few years alone, the Claims Conference has transferred directly to Holocaust survivors more than \$360 million (all figures US) each year.

We are in full agreement with Mr. Pfefferkorn that Holocaust survivors, an aging population, have increasing medical and social services needs. But to understand how the Claims Conference successfully helps to meet those needs, one must know some of the history of the conference.

As a direct result of negotiations in the early 1990s by the Claims Conference, Nazi-confiscated Jewish property in the former East Germany that went unclaimed by the rightful owners or their heirs has been returned to the Jewish community. Under the governing German law, the Claims Conference is the legal successor to these properties.

If not for the Claims Conference, any Jewish assets that remained unclaimed would eventually have remained with the German owners at the time or would have reverted to the German government.

Therefore, due to the efforts of the Claims Conference, we are able to sell or receive compensation for this real estate. The proceeds – more than \$700 million to date – are allocated overwhelmingly to social welfare agencies that assist the neediest and most vulnerable Jewish victims of Nazi persecution.

Mr. Pfefferkorn's criticism of organizations we help to fund in Israel are misguided on several levels.

One of the charges made by Pfefferkorn against the Claims Conference relates to the Galiany Home in Jaffa. Here are the facts: More than 10 years ago, we allocated funds for the renovation of the facility and establish-

ment of a seniors day centre. (That the night-time attendant or social worker at the Galiany Home did not know of the decade-old contribution toward its renovation is not important to us – what we care about is that the poor residents are housed in a proper facility.) And, contrary to what Mr. Pfefferkorn states, many of those poor residents are, in fact, Nazi victims.

Another "fact" cited by Mr. Pfefferkorn relates to the Galiany Home, but needs correction. The seniors day centre at the Galiany Home is run by Keshet, an organization that provides programs for people with special needs. Thus, our allocation goes to Keshet; from 1989 to 2006, the Claims Conference allocated \$3.9 million to Keshet for nursing homes, day care centres, medical equipment, psychiatric hospitals, etc., throughout Israel, all of which serve victims of the Nazis.

As with all the previous misconceptions, Mr. Pfefferkorn is wrong again when it comes to the Irgun Olej Mercaz Europa. First, as noted above, the funds allocated come from the sale of unclaimed property of Jews of East Germany; yet, they are overwhelmingly used to assist Holocaust survivors worldwide. And unlike many other restitution agreements, these specific proceeds, with the support of the organization of Jews originating in Germany, are used to assist Holocaust survivors in need wherever they may live.

It stands to reason, therefore, that we hold German Jewish housing institutions and organizations such as Irgun Olej Mercaz Europa (a largely German Jewish group) in special regard.

More specifically, Mr. Pfefferkorn is also totally mistaken in stating that the Claims Conference funds the planned luxury residences in Haifa. We do not fund housing for the wealthy, neither in Haifa nor in any other place in the world. Rather, the Claims Conference allocates monies to Mercaz Europa's nursing facilities across Israel – in Haifa, Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. And, contrary to the comment by Pfefferkorn, there is no entry fee at any of these nursing facilities. Over an 18-year period, we have allocated a total of \$13.8 million for these facilities, which have housed hundreds of survivors. Further, over the past decade, we have allocated an additional \$4.5 million to Mercaz Europa's social welfare fund, which makes individual grants to low-income survivors.

The Claims Conference's reach in Israel extends well beyond the survivors we help in

these two institutions. We have worked closely with government ministries and national agencies to develop a strategic plan providing a wide range of services for Holocaust survivors in the Jewish state. Because approximately one-third of elderly individuals in Israel are victims of the Nazis, the development of infrastructure to support geriatric services such as old age homes, psycho-geriatric institutions, seniors day centres and geriatric wards in hospitals has been a priority for the Claims Conference. Since 1995, the Claims Conference has allocated about \$500 million for social services for hundreds of thousands of victims of the Nazis across Israel.

In addition, the Claims Conference has provided home care for the poorest and sickest victims in Israel for a decade. In 2007 alone, the Claims Conference spent more than \$40 million to provide home care to nearly 14,000

Nazi victims throughout Israel.

Despite Mr. Pfefferkorn's accusation that he can't "trace the money flow from the Conference," all our financial activities are audited by the international accounting firm of Ernst and Young and then included in our annual financial report, which is available on our website (www.claimscon.org), as is a list of every allocation that we make: organization, amount and purpose.

Mr. Pfefferkorn is welcome to contact our offices in Israel the next time he visits. We would be delighted to answer any additional questions and show him first-hand how the Claims Conference has helped Jewish victims of Nazi persecution live with an added measure of dignity.

Julius Berman is the chair of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany.

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Fast and tasty food ideas from Nigella Lawson

By MARCIE SOMERS

Special to The C.J.N.

She may be the British bestselling author of *Feast: Food to Celebrate Life, Forever Summer, Nigella Bites, How to Be a Domestic Goddess* and *How to Eat* (which have sold in excess of 2.8 million copies worldwide), and she may be television host of a popular cooking series, but whatever you do, don't call her a chef.

"I am not a trained chef," says Nigella Lawson, speaking on the phone from London. "I'm just someone who loves to cook and have been fortunate enough to build a successful career around my two great loves: cooking and writing."

Lawson's plan was to "write a great novel, but

when it became apparent that I wasn't going to write a great novel, I found that I really enjoyed writing about food."

Prior to her current incarnation as cookbook author and television host, Lawson was deputy literary editor of the *Sunday Times*, but in 1989, she left to pursue a freelance career. She wrote for a variety of magazines and newspapers, including the *Sunday Times*, *Evening Standard*, *Guardian*, *Daily Telegraph* and *Observer*, and in the United States, for *Gourmet* and *Bon Appétit* magazines. She originated the restaurant column in the *Spectator* and wrote the food column for *British Vogue* for several years.

However it was with the release of her first cookbook, *How to Eat*, that Lawson was thrust into the spotlight and began to garner her international acclaim.

Like many public figures, Lawson has been the object of criticism. Some have attacked her for presenting very well-resourced cooking as a guileless, amateur pursuit. And far too often, journalists write about her voluptuous body and her looks instead of focusing on her success as a cookbook author.

"I don't take what is written about me personally," Lawson says. "I think that if you believe all the good things that are written about you, you would be a monster, and conversely, if you believed all the bad things that are said, you'd be a wreck, so I find it's much better to not care what is being said about me. It also helps that growing up, my father was a public figure [Her father, Lord Nigel Lawson was chancellor of the exchequer], and so I was somewhat prepared on how to deal with the loss of privacy."

Today, Lawson is keeping busy with the release of her new cookbook, *Nigella Express*, and her Food Network TV show of the same name. *Nigella Express* offers meals one can make quickly and easily, with vital tips

on how to keep your cupboard stocked, and freezer and fridge stacked. *Nigella Express* presents great food that can be prepared in an instant, but cooked slowly in the oven, leaving you time to have a bath, a drink, talk to friends, or do the children's homework.

"However little time or effort I can expend on the day's supper, I have to know it will deliver nothing less than pure pleasure," she says. "The recipes in my new book satisfy that most necessary of edicts."

Our interview is coming to a close, which conveniently happens to be around lunchtime in London. Lawson admits that she's constantly thinking about food and finding new ways to do things.

"I try to remember what I did last time with a certain meal and come up with way to make it different by mixing up small things, such as adding a different herb or adding a new ingredient to a tried and true recipe."

And with that, she's off to — where else? Her kitchen to create herself a fantastic lunch.

Nigella Lawson

NIGELLA'S PASTA

50 g favourite short pasta
1 tomato, chopped
1 cucumber, chopped
1/2 cup fresh corn from the cob or frozen corn
handful of snap peas or snow peas, chopped
few tinned baby beetroots, quartered
handful of fresh herbs of your choice, chopped (flat-leaf parsley, thyme, sage, oregano, marjoram)
handful of baby spinach, shredded
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
lemon olive oil or olive oil if you can't find the lemon
white wine vinegar
6 tbsp. mayonnaise

Basically all you have to do is cook the pasta until al dente, drain it and then while it is still in the colander, rinse under cold water, moving it around with your hands when it is cool enough to touch. Place it in a really big bowl with all of your chopped vegetables and herbs, then stir together with some seasoning, a couple of good lugs of the olive oil, one slosh of the vinegar and the mayonnaise. Taste it when you've finished stirring, because it might need more of one of the dressing ingredients.

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EU calls Iran's remarks on Israel 'unacceptable'

© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

BRUSSELS — The European Union on Monday denounced statements by Iranian leaders about Israel last week as "unacceptable, damaging and uncivilized."

The EU's Slovenian presidency referred to remarks by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki, parliamentary Speaker Gholamali Haddadadel and Revolutionary Guard commander Mohammad Ali Jafari.

"Their comments pointed against Israel are unacceptable, damaging and uncivilized," it said. "The EU calls on Iran to stop hostile rhetoric and refrain from all threats towards other states, members of the international community."

In remarks broadcast Feb. 13 on Iranian television, Ahmadinejad called Israel a "filthy germ" and "savage beast" established by western states in their

bid to dominate Middle East nations.

The comments came just days after a top commander in Iran's Revolutionary Guard called Israel a "cancerous germ" that would be wiped out by Hezbollah, Army Radio reported.

Iran does not recognize Israel and Ahmadinejad has often predicted the imminent demise of the Jewish state.

The EU comments followed last week's promise by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to respond "firmly" to Ahmadinejad's verbal attacks on Israel, which he called "intolerable."

Ban made the pledge to Israel's ambassador to the UN, Dan Gillerman, who requested a meeting with Ban following the Iranian president's televised remarks.

The Revolutionary Guards commander-in-chief, Mohammad Ali Jafari, was quoted by the Pars News Agency as saying: "In the near future, we will witness the destruction of the cancerous germ of Israel by the powerful and competent hands of the

Hezbollah combatants."

Jafari made the comment in a letter to Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, offering condolences after the recent killing of terrorist mastermind Imad Mughniyah, which Iran has blamed on Israel.

Israel's Foreign Ministry sent a letter of protest to the United Nations over Jafari's remarks.

Also last week, Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said that even after 60 years, Israel still has neither legitimacy nor any role in the Middle East, the ISNA news agency reported.

"The West has tried to impose a fabricated regime on the Middle East, but even after 60 years, the Zionist regime has neither gained any legitimacy nor played any role in this region," Mottaki said.

Calling United States policies in the Middle East a failure, he predicted the collapse of Israel.

Iran also urged the UN Security Council to condemn Israel and demand that it stop threatening to use military force against Iran's nuclear program.

In a letter to the council, Iran's UN ambassador, Mohammad Khazaei, referred to Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's Jan. 14 warning that all options are on the table when it comes to keeping Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons.

Khazaei insisted that Iran's nuclear program is peaceful and called Israel's threats unjustifiable. He said they're also a flagrant violation of international law and the UN Charter, which calls on countries to refrain from threatening or using force against other states.

Gillerman called the letter, which was also sent to Ban, "disgusting and dangerous."

"For a country whose leader describes a member state of the United Nations as a dirty microbe and a savage animal, to complain about others' statements is the height of hypocrisy," he said.

Israel called for a diplomatic crackdown on Tehran before it acquires the means to threaten its existence.

—With files from JTA

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Israel & the Jewish World

A time of uncertainty for Kosovo's Jews

By DINAH SPRITZER

JTA

PRIZREN, Kosovo — On a forlorn road dotted with half-built houses, Ines Quono reflects on her struggle in a land so remote to most North Americans it might as well be Oz.

But instead of a yellow brick road, there is crumbling, mud-drenched pavement piled high with garbage.

"The only thing that works in Kosovo is the banks; we all have to borrow money to do something — anything," says Quono, 28.

Quono is among the last Jews of Kosovo, a southern province of Serbia about half the size of New Jersey that declared independence earlier this month.

Unemployment in Kosovo hovers at 50 per cent and the average wage is \$350 a month. "We all worry how we will get by," says Quono, a university student, wife and mother of a toddler.

The future of Quono and her family is uncertain, as they decide whether their destiny is in Israel or in southeastern Europe, where their roots go back to the 15th-century Spanish Inquisition, when thousands of Sephardi Jews fled to the Balkans.

There are some 50 Jews left in Kosovo. Belonging to three families, or clans, they all live in the city of Prizren, a rare gem of ancient architecture amid a landscape devastated by war, poverty and Communist-era concrete.

The United Nations took over the administration of Kosovo in 1999 after a brutal conflict between Kosovo Albanians seeking independence and Serbian troops controlled by strongman Slobodan Milosevic.

Ethnic Albanians account for 90 per cent of Kosovo's population of 2.2 million. The Albanians are Muslim, but largely secular.

Corruption, criminality and a lack of foreign investment have marked life in Kosovo over the last nine years, during which final-status negotiations between a now democratic Serbia and Kosovo's ethnic Albanian leaders failed.

On Sunday, Feb. 17, Kosovo's prime minister declared independence, with support from the United States and most of the European Union, and with fierce opposition from Serbia, whose position is backed by Russia.

Distressed by a war they watched from the sidelines and facing an uncertain future, the Jews of Prizren are gloomy. When the war started, the other Jews in Kosovo — the 50 living in the capital city of Pristina — fled to Serbia, where they spoke the language and felt a part of the culture. But those in Prizren, where Jews speak Albanian and Turkish — there is a large Turkish population there — stayed.

Now, with Kosovo having broken away from Serbia, those like Votim Demiri, Quono's father, who made a decent living under communism, find it hard to leave the homes they built, despite fears of growing tensions with their neighbours.

"There wasn't anti-Semitism in the past, but with the Saudi charities here now, we are seeing a Wahabi influence for the first time," Demiri said, referring to the fundamentalist Islamic ideology Saudi Arabian clerics have tried to export, with little success, into the Balkans. "I think the newspapers these days are not portraying Jews in such a positive light."

The greatest concern for Jews here, however, is the concern shared by all Kosovars: feeding their families. In this regard, they are both at an advantage and a disadvantage.

They are helped by the American Joint Jewish Distribution Committee (JDC), which provides them with social services, hosts celebrations on Jewish holidays and tries to help with employment. On the negative side, Jews are outsiders in a state controlled by ethnic Albanians who mete out the few jobs there are to friends and family, said Robert Djerassi, the JDC official responsible for the organization's activities in Kosovo.

"Ninety per cent of Jews in Prizren are jobless," he said.

Earlier this month, the JDC held a brainstorming session on job opportunities with 25 Prizren Jews aged 40 and under.

"I said, 'If you can think of a shop or service, like giving English lessons, I find some capital to get you started,'" Djerassi told JTA. "They tried to explain to me why it cannot happen; they are very pessimistic."

There are also obstacles in connecting Prizren's Jews to other Jews in the region.

"My idea is to make them part of something bigger, to bring them to events in Skopje or Belgrade. But the small children, 15 and under, they don't speak Serbian and that's a problem," Djerassi said.

"Our spiritual life, like our economic life, is a disaster," Demiri said, pointing to his rotting roof. His children, it seems, are preparing for an eventual move to Israel.

Quono's sister, Teuta Demiri, 22, recently spent a year at a kibbutz, where she studied Hebrew. A bank teller in Prizren, Teuta is thinking about aliyah but is not confident she can find work in Israel. Her brother is studying Hebrew and is also nervous about his job prospects.

"I have been thinking for eight years whether to go or not to go to Israel," their father, Votim Demiri, said.

He shows off a 20-year-old picture of his mother talking to Shimon Peres in Ashdod, Israel, where she moved after World War II while her children opted to build a socialist state in the heart of Europe. But they always knew about their Jewish roots.

Religion, however, was far from their lives.

Votim Demiri is from a generation of Jews who fondly recall life in Yugoslavia, of which Kosovo was a part.

A former textile factory director, Demiri has been mostly out of work for the last two decades, and his prospects of employment are dim. What he does have is a beautiful, 19th-century, three-storey home, albeit one he cannot afford to maintain.

For some of Prizren's Jews, aliyah is complicated by more than employment worries.

Ulvi Zhalta, 59, looks decades older than his cousin Demiri, 62, because of health problems that include heart disease and an eye clouded by blindness.

Like nearly all Jews who stayed in Prizren after World War II, Zhalta's mother married a non-Jew, in her case an ethnic Albanian.

"She was buried in a Muslim cemetery. There are no Jewish cemeteries here, but she was registered as a member of the Jewish community in Belgrade," he said.

Zhalta said he applied for permission to immigrate to Israel in 2000, but has not yet received permission from the Jewish Agency for Israel. He suspects the question of his mother's Jewish identity is the source of the delay.

In response to queries on Zhalta's case, an Israeli representative of the Jewish Agency said the details of individual applications are private.

"Everyone in my family wants to go to Israel," Zhalta said as the lights went off in his cousin's living room during one of the daily power outages that have gone on for so long in Kosovo that few can remember life without them.



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Executive Director

THMP is the largest Jewish cemetery in Ontario, serving a fast growing, multifaceted community in Metropolitan Toronto and Southern Ontario. Two sites, Pardes Shalom and Pardes Chaim are under its mandate.

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Applications, including a letter of introduction, CV, and references should be submitted in confidence, no later than March 10, to: THMP Search Committee c/o E. Paul Yanover, 400 - 620 Wilson Ave, Toronto, ON M3K 1Z3 Or by email to: epy@interlog.com

Proposal still in 'embryonic form'

Continued from page 1

while it may begin with Jews, it does not end with Jews. Anti-Semitism is the canary in the mineshaft of evil."

According to Cotler, the coalition — a combination of scholars, activists and parliamentarians — will fight anti-Semitism in several ways.

It will promote Mann's parliamentary inquiry as a template for other parliaments; develop an inventory of indices of anti-Semitism; and encourage nations to develop their own national coalitions to combat global anti-Semitism and organize task forces "built around the thematic templates" of the Global Forum for Combating Anti-Semitism.

"This proposal is in its embryonic form," Cotler added. "We hope that when this global forum convenes again next year, it will be activated and active."

In related developments at the forum, Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni announced last week that Israel plans to boycott

next year's "Durban II" UN anti-racism conference, and she specifically cited Canada's "courage" in doing the same.

Last month, Canada declared its intention to boycott the conference over concerns of repeated anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic motifs.

The 2009 World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance is slated to take place in the South Africa city where its predecessor was held in 2001.

That event was marked by fierce anti-Zionist and pro-Arab agitation, which led Israel to watch preparations for the upcoming conference with concern.

"Israel will not participate and not give legitimacy to the United Nations follow-up conference on racism... unless it is proven that the conference will not be used as a platform for further anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic activities," Livni told delegates to the forum.

With files from JTA

Israel & the Jewish World

Terror victims hope to win Iran's French assets

By TOBY AXELROD
JTA

BERLIN — In a case that may set a precedent for seizing funds from terrorist sponsors, attorneys are fighting to have Iranian assets in France confiscated and handed over to American victims of terrorism.

A French appellate court was due to consider on Feb. 25 whether to continue holding \$117 million (all figures US) in Iranian funds that have been frozen in France's Natexis Banques Populaire.

At issue is whether these funds, part of the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran, are state funds, which are immune from seizure, or commercial funds, which may be subject to seizure.

The fight to obtain the money follows two U.S. court decisions, on Sept. 16, 2003, and March 24, 2006, in which U.S. district judges in Washington ordered Iran to pay damages and interest of \$87.5 million to 12 U.S. citizens injured in terror attacks in Iran in 1995 and 1997.

The courts in Washington determined that Iran was liable for the damages due to its sponsorship of Hamas, which orchestrated the attacks. The incidents included the 1995 bombing of an Israeli bus in Gaza and a 1997 triple suicide bombing in downtown Jerusalem by Hamas terrorists.

Iran never sent a representative to the court to provide a defense.

The lead plaintiff in the 1997 case is Jenny Rubin, who was injured in that attack. The lead plaintiff in the 1995 case is Seth Klein Ben Haim. His was the same bombing that killed Alisa Flatow, whose father, New Jersey attorney Stephen Flatow, collected about \$26 million of a separate, \$248-million judgment

against Iran for its sponsorship of the Palestinian terrorists who perpetrated the attack.

In the Rubin case, Judge Ricardo Urbina found in favour of the victims, noting that Iran's Ministry of Terrorism "spends between \$50 million and \$100 million a year sponsoring terrorist activities of various organizations such as Hamas."

Unable to find qualifying Iranian assets in the United States from which to collect, the plaintiffs' attorneys turned their sights overseas. The question now is whether they can collect from Iranian assets in France.

"We have been seeking to enforce the judgment in many countries for several years," said attorney David Strachman, a Rhode Island-based lawyer representing plaintiffs in the case.

In the United States, plaintiffs have had some successes collecting on judgments against Iran for sponsoring terrorism. In perhaps the most famous of these cases, Flatow collected the compensatory portion of the judgment against Iran for his daughter's death.

To pursue Iranian assets, attorneys in the cases stemming from the 1995 and 1997 bombings are relying in part on precedent set in the Flatow family's legal fight. One notable development of that fight was the passage in the U.S. Congress of the Flatow Amendment to the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act. That legislation removed sovereign immunity, which protects states from lawsuits in foreign courts, in cases of state-sponsored terrorism.

Iran has responded harshly to efforts to freeze its assets overseas.

Last fall, Iranian Central Bank Governor Tahmasb Mazaheri called such actions "psychological warfare."

He was quoted by Reuters as saying: "The world is big, and having no co-operation with one country does not stop Iran's

banking activities."

In December 2007, Christoph Martin Radtke, the Paris-based lawyer working with Strachman's firm, succeeded in having funds from the Central Bank of Iran frozen at Bank Melli and Natexis Banques Populaire. Today, only the funds at Natexis remain frozen.

Radtke told JTA that banking secrecy laws present a major obstacle in determining the nature of transactions and whether the assets in the bank qualify for seizure. He argues that the Central Bank of Iran's assets qualify because the bank is controlled by Iran's president and regime, does not have a floating currency, and exists merely to collect debts, receive payments and issue letters of credit to Iranian companies.

The bank "is in reality not a central bank or a bank that has normal commercial operations," he said.

Maintaining the current freeze on assets would bring "security for our clients that they will get paid once we have the U.S. judgment enforced in France," Radtke said. "Of course, if the money is unfrozen, it will probably leave France and go back to Iran or somewhere else. And then it will be difficult or even impossible for the victims to get paid."

The Central Bank of Iran has demanded through French attorney Bertrand Moreau that the freeze be lifted. Moreau told JTA in an e-mail that he couldn't comment on the case.

Radtke said this is the first time Iranian funds have been frozen in French banks for as long as several months. The case could become a precedent in Europe for holding a non-EU country accountable for terrorist acts, he said.

In late December 2007, the French Justice Ministry argued on Iran's behalf — the U.S. Justice Department has done the same in cases in which U.S. citizens have tried to seize Iranian assets in the United States — and on Jan. 24 the French court decided to lift the freeze, based on the argument that central bank funds are diplomatic assets and therefore entitled to immunity from civil lawsuits.

But Radtke appealed the decision Jan. 27, and the next hearing in the case was scheduled for Feb. 25.

Please see related story on page 40.

Darfuris get Israeli ID cards and start new lives

By DINA KRAFT
JTA

TEL AVIV — Yassin Musa, a refugee from Darfur, removes his Israeli identity card from his worn leather wallet and holds it like a prize.

Musa is one of more than 600 Sudanese refugees from Darfur who have been granted temporary residency in Israel. He and his fellow Sudanese fled the genocide in Sudan and passed through Egypt on their way to the Jewish state.

Their new status here constitutes a major victory for the small Darfuri community in Israel and the non-governmental organizations that have been lobbying for them.

"I've now started to feel both Israeli and Darfuri," said Musa, 30, who fled Darfur five years ago after his village was attacked by the Janjaweed, Arab militiamen who have killed an estimated 200,000 people in Darfur over the last few years.

During the attack, Musa fled to nearby mountains but was tracked down by the fighters. He was arrested, beaten and eventually released, but the Janjaweed shot his father, brother and a cousin to death.

The Darfuris' path to receiving Israeli temporary residency status — the first were granted last month — has not been easy. Most refugees first spent months in prison for entering Israel illegally and then were released under house arrest to work mostly on kibbutzim, in small towns or at hotels in the Israeli resort city of Eilat.

Now they are newly free and are official residents of the Jewish state, thanks in large part to intense lobbying by NGOs, Knesset members, figures such as Elie Wiesel, and

even Aliza Olmert, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's wife.

The Darfuris already have launched a networking and social welfare organization to help each other find work and places to live. They have also established a soccer league and even started a music group.

Musa, who was an architect in Darfur and hopes to continue in his profession in Israel, is the head of the new group, called the Sons of Darfur.

For now, the group is based in the one-room library of Hotline for Migrant Workers, one of the NGOs most instrumental in assisting them, and is a group that's funded by the New Israel Fund and others. The Sons of Darfur hope soon to find their own space where they can hold workshops, computer classes and meetings. For that, Musa says, they need to raise funds.

The Darfuris in Israel are mostly men, though there are women and children among them. Some are educated, having studied and worked in Sudan's capital, Khartoum, and speak decent English. Others are uneducated farmers from small villages who were never far from home until they were chased out by the Janjaweed.

More than 50 of the refugees already are enrolled in ulpan Hebrew language classes in Tel Aviv, and the children are in Israeli schools in different parts of the country.

Though many Darfuris come to Tel Aviv, the government is considering sending them, and migrants from other African countries to the country's more rural north and south, where the government says there are more jobs suited to them. Many African immigrants already work in the hotel industry in Israel's southernmost city, Eilat.

In Tel Aviv, the Darfuris help each other out, offering to share small apartments with newcomers until they find work and can pay their own rent. They often work nights, in restaurant kitchens or as cleaners. They share work leads and on the weekends gather to play traditional Darfuri music.

Musa has received a scholarship at a local college to study an architecture software program that is the basis for most architectural work in Israel. He says his goal is to return to Darfur one day and rebuild the villages destroyed by the Janjaweed.

But he says he wants to do it in a "smart" way: to use better materials and more modern structures that would withstand possible future attacks and generally be more functional.

At his apartment at night, Musa sketches drawings of these homes and buildings.

"All the time I am thinking about rebuilding Darfur," Musa told JTA. "Villages there still look as they did hundreds of years ago. I think when there is peace we need to sit together and think about how to rebuild the region."

Musa says he and other refugees here are also thinking about ways to bring Israeli refugee relief to Darfur — both to deliver aid to home and to boost Israel's reputation in Sudan, a Muslim country.

He says he's discussed the subject with Aliza Olmert, who has become an advocate on behalf of the refugees.

Musa said he has been moved by the response of the Israeli public to the plight of the Darfuris.

"Here there are really amazing people," he said. "If I wasn't seeing it with my own eyes it would be difficult to believe it."

Synagogue Executive Director

Shaarey Zedek Synagogue, a vibrant Conservative egalitarian congregation with 1100 member families, is searching for a new Executive Director.

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 Closing date: Friday, March 14. Please provide your salary expectations in your cover letter.

We thank all applicants; however only those considered for interview will be contacted.

Israel & the Jewish World

Israel warned Syria: report

Israel reportedly warned Syria last week that it will step up attacks against Hezbollah and Hamas. Defence Minister Ehud Barak, on a recent visit to Ankara, asked his Turkish hosts to urge Syria to scale back ties with Hezbollah, the London-based *Al-Hayat* reported. The newspaper said Barak made clear that Israel had the Lebanese guerrilla group in its



Israel Briefs

sights and also planned to widen military operations in Hamas-ruled Gaza. Barak's trip to Turkey coincided with the assassination in Damascus of Imad Mughniyah, Hezbollah's terror chief. Barak declined comment on the killing. He confirmed speaking of Hezbollah and Hamas with his hosts, but didn't elaborate on what was said.

Lawyer defrauded survivors

An Israeli lawyer got jail time for defrauding Holocaust survivors of \$240 million (US). Tel Aviv District Court sentenced Yisrael Perry to 12 years in jail and another 5½ years suspended sentence. He also was fined \$6 million. Perry was found guilty of defrauding dozens of survivors who he represented in postwar government insurance claims in Germany. Perry has denied wrongdoing and plans to appeal.

No Israel reference in game

Monopoly, the iconic game of capitalism, has been drawn into the dispute over Jerusalem. The game's maker, Hasbro Inc., issued an apology recently after an employee, responding to complaints from pro-Palestinian groups, eliminated the word Israel after the name of the capital in an online contest to select names for a new edition of the game, Monopoly Here and Now: The World Edition. The company also

pulled all country names from other cities on the site when even more people complained because Jerusalem was listed as the only city without a country. The Pawtucket, Rhode Island-based Hasbro is asking people to vote at the Monopoly website on which cities will be included in the new edition. Until two weeks ago, every city on the site listed a country, including Jerusalem, Israel.

—from JTA and Ha'aretz

Authors & Poets

The CJN is pleased to announce its

Annual Passover Literary Supplement

We invite our readers to submit unpublished, original works of fiction or poetry that explore Jewish themes. They should not exceed 2,000 words.

We must receive your submissions no later than Friday, March 14. E-mail submissions are preferred, but works can also be sent by mail or brought to our office.

E-mail: info@cjnnews.com. Mail: 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4.

Submissions will not be returned. The CJN will not enter into any correspondence with participants.

CJN Purim Art Contest

It's time again for our annual Purim Art Contest.

Who can enter: Children in grades 1 to 6 inclusive are eligible. The children of CJN employees are not eligible.

Prizes: The judges will choose one drawing from two different students in each grade. These "winning" drawings will be published in *The CJN's* 2008 Purim Poster. In addition, each of the 12 children whose drawings have been selected will receive a cheque for \$25.

How to enter: You may submit as many drawings as you want. However, they should not be too small nor too large. Please paint or draw bright, bold, colourful pictures. You may use markers, crayons, paint or pencils. Please send us your name, address, phone number, age and grade along with your drawings.

You may mail or deliver your drawings to: CJN Community Contests, The Canadian Jewish News, 1500 Don Mills Road, Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4. If you want us to return the pictures to you, please provide a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Otherwise, we will be unable to do so.

The contest closes at 3 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 29, 2008. We will undoubtedly receive many wonderful submissions from children all across the country. But only 12 of the drawings will be chosen as the "winners." The judges will base their decisions on a number of factors such as: the use of colour, the imaginative quality of the drawing and the way it tells an aspect of the story of Purim. The judges' decisions will be final. The chances of winning depend upon the number and quality of submissions received.

How the winner will be announced: The children whose pictures are chosen will be notified by telephone before the start of Shabbat on Friday, March 7, 2008.

When the prizes will be awarded: The "winning" pictures will be published in *The CJN* of March 20, 2008. Have fun and good luck.

Any litigation respecting the conduct and awarding of a prize in this contest may be submitted to the Régie des Loteries et courses du Québec.

Financial firm sued for aiding Hamas terror

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Toronto native Scott "Chezi" Goldberg was reading one of his favourite books on Egged bus 19 when a suicide bomber stood up behind him, slapped the book out of his hand and detonated the explosives he was carrying.

Goldberg, 41, was killed instantly along with 10 other victims. Fifty were wounded, 13 seriously, in the Jan. 29, 2004, attack for which Hamas and the Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, a Fatah affiliate, claimed responsibility.

Now Goldberg's widow and seven children are suing UBS AG, a Swiss wealth management firm, for indirectly contributing to the attack.

In documents filed recently in United States District Court in eastern New York, Goldberg's family claims that UBS AG provided financial services that benefited Hamas, contrary to U.S. law.

UBS AG has rejected the claim. Corporate spokesperson Karina Byrne said, "UBS believes the claims made in this case are without merit and we intend to defend ourselves vigorously in this matter."

The court documents allege that UBS AG provided financial services to the Association de Secours Palestinien (ASP), "a Hamas fundraising entity" that was proclaimed a "specially designated global terrorist organization" by U.S. executive order in August 2003.

Masquerading as a charity, ASP collects funds in Switzerland at mosques and Islamic centres and transfers them to Hamas-affiliated agencies, the documents allege.

U.S. President George W. Bush and the Treasury Department "publicly linked ASP's activities... with attacks carried out by Hamas," the court documents allege. "The bombing that injured the plaintiffs [the Goldberg family] is attributable to Hamas."

The court documents state, "UBS transferred funds to institutions that belong to Hamas' financial infrastructure in the (Palestinian territories), including many entities declared unlawful by the government of Israel."

U.S. law permits victims to sue sponsors of terrorist groups. There are several cases in the U.S. Eastern District similar to the Goldberg case, the *New York Post* reported.

Goldberg's wife, Karen (Shifra), and children are all American citizens, as well as citizens of Israel.

Their claim asks for unspecified damages, as well as an order declaring that UBS AG violated the U.S. Antiterrorism Act.

Carrie Devorah, one of Goldberg's sisters, said "no amount of money is going to bring him back. No amount at all... If anything is collected, it will go to the kids."

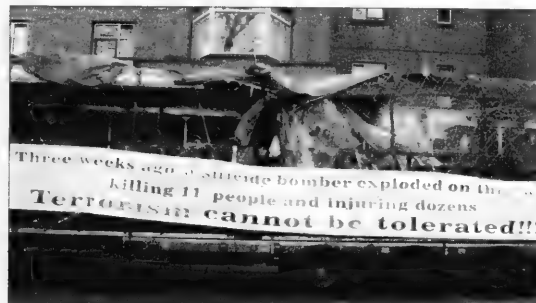
The Goldberg family is doing its best to support Shifra in raising her children, but they have been hit hard by the loss of their husband and father. "You have a widow left with seven children, from infancy to teenager. She relied on her husband to do everything for her," Devorah said

A well-known psychotherapist who worked with at-risk teens, Chezi Goldberg worked at three jobs to make ends meet.

He met Shifra at a "Purim mixer" in Israel and "he immediately wanted to marry her," Devorah said. "They were perfect. The loss of her one and only love broke and devastated all of us."

The Goldberg family is entitled to compensation payments from the government of Israel for terrorism victims, but that doesn't compensate for the trauma they have suffered, Devorah continued.

Her nephew is afraid to sleep alone, and he and the other children gather in the living room, where they sleep on sofas "because they just miss their dad tremendously. My brother was larger than life."



The bus in which Chezi Goldberg was killed was taken to The Hague to show onlookers the horror of a bus bombing.

Prior to the suicide attack that claimed his life, Goldberg had narrowly escaped three other bombings. On the morning of his murder, he was running late, as a special bus serving the Orthodox community — notorious for its unreliability — hadn't arrived. He decided to take the public Egged bus instead.

Devorah said her brother was sitting near the back of the bus, directly behind the bomber. He was reading a book when the bomber stood up and slapped it out of his hand. A flash of light then engulfed the bus.

"On the day he was murdered, he had back-to-back clients all day. Shifra found out when clients began calling. She remembers talking to him on the bus seconds before it happened."

The wrecked bus, meanwhile, has had something of a second life. It was put on display in The Hague when the International Court of Justice held hearings about Israel's West Bank barrier, which is designed to prevent terrorist bombings like the one that tore apart bus 19.

The bus was later put on display at various American universities where it was used to raise money for ZAKA, an Israeli organization that removes human remains from terrorist sites, and for Christians for Israel.

It is currently located permanently at Camp Shores in Adamstown, Md.

When Canadian writing was young

Robert Weaver: Godfather of Canadian Literature by Elaine Kalman Naves, Véhicule Press.

By **NORMAN RAVVIN**
Special to The CJN

It's easy to forget that English Canadian literature – as a major industry, based on local publishing venues and styles – is just over half a century old. Before World War II much of what was read in this country came from the United Kingdom or the United States, and there was little publishing, printing or editorial culture of any real note.



Norman Ravvin

The influential Massey Commission Report, the result of a federally appointed committee, tabled proposals in 1951, which foresaw the creation of a range of cultural institutions that included CBC Television, the Canada Council and the National Library in Ottawa. The report took account, as well, of the meagreness of Canadian

literary output in the immediate postwar years. While U.S. and U.K. fiction publications in 1948 each numbered over 1,000, their Canadian counterparts numbered only 14. Included in this small offering was Henry Kreisel's young man's novel *The Rich Man*, notable for its direct and sensitive treatment of Jewish themes in Canada and Europe.

If the venues for Canadian mainstream writers were this slight, imagine how unlikely – or outright miraculous – was the appearance of a book on Jewish themes in the immediate postwar years. It's difficult to regain a sense of how a Jewish Canadian literature in English came into being in this context. But the recent publication of Elaine Kalman Naves' *Robert Weaver: Godfather of Canadian Literature* contributes to our understanding of these developments.

Robert Weaver's unparalleled importance for Canadian literature included his creation at CBC Radio, in 1954, of the literary program *Anthology*, which became a key venue for Canadian writing. In 1956, he founded and became the longtime editor of the *The Tamarack Review*, which remained, into the early 1980s, an influential "little magazine" supporting Canadian writers.

Later in his career he created the still-influential CBC literary competition, which Kalman Naves herself won for her memoir of postwar Hungarian and Canadian Jewish lives.

Remarkable for their earliness and regularity are the appearances in these venues of key figures from what would become the first generation of English-language Jewish Canadian writers. In 1954, Weaver paid a 23-year-old Mordecai Richler \$75 for the broadcast rights to a story titled *The Secret of the Kugel*. In his letter of thanks to Weaver, Richler announced his marriage plans to "a French-Canadian, and my family – a sternly Orthodox bunch – are taking it pretty hard. I've been cut off, in fact."

Weaver's *Tamarack Review* published Léonard Cohen's early poems, but the most noteworthy encounter between the two followed a letter from Cohen, mailed from his mother's Westmount address in 1957. Covering a selection of poems Cohen submitted to Weaver, the letter includes

this pitch: "I've put a few of these poems to music and accompany myself with guitar. Perhaps you are interested in putting them on the air in this way. I'm coming to Toronto this week around Thursday with Irving Layton and if you have a minute we can discuss it."

Weaver took Cohen up on this offer, and as Weaver's recent obituaries have noted, Cohen's performance of his poetry on *Anthology* in 1958 was among the first public venues for the art that would make him world famous a decade later. In talking about these two offers of early recognition to writers who would become central to the Canadian scene, Weaver was notably modest.

Richler "discovered me," he told a Victoria paper in 2002. "He walked into the CBC studio in Montreal and there was a woman there whose area was current affairs and she got in touch with me and said: 'A

Robert Weaver
Godfather of Canadian Literature
Elaine Kalman Naves



young man named Mordecai Richler was in because he had an idea the CBC paid money for stories, so I told him to contact you."

It may be that writers and performers are best placed to recognize how crucial such opportunities are.

Kalman Naves, herself a journalist and writer of memoir and fiction, is perfectly placed to tell this peculiarly Canadian story. Through excellent interviews with Janice Kulyk Keefer, Alice Munro, Margaret Atwood, Weaver and others, she makes it clear how a singular personality like Weaver, along with the influential venues he created, transformed the country's literary culture.

Norman Ravvin chairs the Concordia Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies.

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Arts & Travel

Singer-songwriter optimistic despite cut-throat industry

By JOSEPH SERGE

Arts Editor

Mark Feldman brimmed with self-confidence in 2004 when I interviewed him to promote his first CD.

"I think I'm a very talented writer," he said then. "Recognition on a global scale is my ultimate goal."

Now, at 27, he's still as confident, but his edge has been dimmed a bit by the reality of the cut-throat industry he's in.

"I realized that magic isn't going to happen without working for it," he said recently, while promoting his second indie-released CD *Extended Play*. "I was under the illusion that my manager would break me by signing me up with a major label. But the industry has changed and I realized that I've neglected the grassroots level, and that's not a good thing."

In the four years since then, he's been travelling around Japan and Australia where he wrote lots of new songs. He recorded *Extended Play* in Nashville with a complement of seasoned musicians, including two-time Grammy Award-winner Rebecca Lynn Howard on backing vocals and with top producer Elisha Hoffman (Dixie Chicks, Shania Twain).

Feldman was introduced to Hoffman through Hoffman's



Mark Feldman's confidence is a bit more grounded these days.

father, Baruch, chazzan sheni and ritual administrator at Adath Israel Congregation in Toronto, Feldman's former bar mitzvah teacher.

"Elisha came up to Toronto and saw me play and loved *Cabin* (the third track on his new album). So I went to Nashville and cut some songs with him."

Disillusioned with pursuing a major label and realizing that the industry is no longer dominated by corporate deals, he decided to save his pennies and finance his own CD. "It's a huge dent in my pockets, but I would be the sole beneficiary if it works out."

Extended Play has a much more full sound than his Dylan-inspired acoustic/folk debut. It begins with *Save Yourself*, a bluesy rocker in a Spin Doctors/Blues Traveller style and is followed up with a radio-friendly catchy number, *I Propose*,

which shows hints of Red Hot Chili Peppers.

Despite Feldman's prolific writing capacity, the CD only contains six songs due to budget restraints. However, they all mark a mature improvement in his singing and songwriting abilities. There's certainly some radio potential here.

On his first album, Feldman says, he almost pigeon-holed himself and has been consciously looking to be more versatile.

"I discovered another element to my voice. I can be a rock 'n' roll singer, too." He recently got inspiration from a Neil Young concert he went to. "I see myself having the capacity to do what he does — start out playing with just an acoustic guitar and then getting the band behind me and make people dance."

Feldman's confidence is a bit more grounded these days. If his performing skills don't pan out, he's got a Plan B — songwriting. In Nashville, he hooked up with writers in Hoffman's production company, Murrah Colton Entertainment (a *Billboard* Top 10 publisher), and refined his songwriting skills with some of the industry's best.

He points out that American alt-country/rock singer-songwriter Ryan Adams recently made half a million dollars in the last quarter of 2006 through royalties. "Songwriting is the gift that keeps giving. If you write one hit song, it can put your kids in college. Royalties never stop. One song — one moment — can change your life. It's exciting that one big break can change my life. That's what keeps me going."

Feldman is also going to take an innovative approach to selling his CD — one that follows the Radiohead model. "I will sell my CDs for whatever they want to pay me. If I sell 20 CDs for \$1, that's 20 people who go to hear my music. I think it's a brilliant marketing technique."

For now, Feldman gigs frequently with a full band in and around the Greater Toronto Area but is in the process of searching for a new manager and tour agency with a plan to tour extensively in Canada and the United States.

Plans are underway to get his album up on iTunes shortly. You can sample and download some of his songs, check out his gig calendar on his MySpace page: myspace.com/markfeldman1. You can contact him at Markfeldman@hotmail.com

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Arts & Travel



Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

CANADIAN FILMMAKER ATOM EGOYAN SHARES \$1-MILLION ISRAELI PRIZE WITH AMOS OZ, TOM STOPPARD

Israel's Dan David Prize Foundation will soon bestow a lucrative prize upon Canadian filmmaker **Atom Egoyan** "for his superb modernist filmmaking which explores Armenian history and culture."

Egoyan, who was singled out in part because his 2002 film *Ararat* "was the first motion picture to deal directly with the Armenian genocide," shares the annual \$1-million prize (all funds U.S.) with Israeli novelist **Amos Oz** and British playwright **Tom Stoppard**.

The trio of cultural artists are being honoured for their "creative rendering of the past" in literature, theatre and film. The foundation is also awarding two other \$1-million prizes, one to former U.S. vice-president **Al Gore** for his work with global warming, another to a trio of scientists (one British, two American) for their scientific research.

Israel's president, **Shimon Peres**, is slated to attend the awards ceremony at Tel Aviv University on May 19.

Established in 2001 by international businessman and philanthropist **Dan David**, the foundation annually awards three \$1-million prizes for achievements that have an outstanding scientific, technological, cultural or social impact. The prize winners or laureates, in turn, annually donate 20 scholarships of \$15,000 each.

In 1961, as a young immigrant to Israel from Romania, David developed a new instant photography technology. He subsequently created the prize "to devote some of my fortune to rewarding and furthering the work of the eminent figures who have increased our knowledge of our past, im-

proved our present, and helped us forge a better future."

Jewish Playwriting Competition: The cultural arts department at Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre and the Toronto Jewish Theatre Committee (chaired by **Ralph Wintrob**) invite submissions for the 2008 Canadian Jewish Playwriting Competition. The winner receives a professionally acted and directed public workshop.

Plays should have a Jewish focus, depicting some aspect of Jewish life, and should be between one and two hours in length. Playwrights must be Canadian or have a strong Canadian connection. Send submissions to Esther Arbeid, Film and Theatre Co-ordinator, Miles Nadal JCC, 750 Spadina Ave., Toronto M5S 2J2. Deadline is May 31. For full submission guidelines, phone 416-924-6211, ext. 606, or e-mail esthera@mnjcc.org.

Three previous contest winners have been published and commercially produced: *Einstein's Gift* by **Vern Thiessen**, *Sara's Cave* by **Don Molnar** and *Yahrzeit* by **Alex Poch Goldin**. Last year's winner, *The Bleeding Season* by **Brandon Marlon** of Ottawa, is to be presented on July 6.

Winchevsky Purim Party: Children, parents and grandparents are invited to "put on a costume and get ready to tap into your inner silliness" for the Wacky Winchevsky Purim Party, featuring musician **Brian Katz** performing *YidRhythms*, an interactive Purim happening.

The inter-generational program also includes *Dr. Seuss-shan*, a twist on the Purim story performed by the **Winchevsky Wits** and community members, and various carnival games and activities. \$10 for adults, \$6 for children, discounted rates for members. 585 Cranbrook Ave., Sunday, March 9, 11 a.m. 416-789-5502

Arts in Brief

• The latest Dancap Production, *3 Mo' Divas*, is in performance at the Winter Garden Theatre, 189 Yonge St. March 4 to 16. Call 416-872-5555 for tickets (\$45 to \$75) or go



Atom Egoyan

online at dancaptickets.com.

• The University of Toronto showcases a vibrant range of artistic expression at all three of its campuses with the presentation of more than 100 events in music, theatre, visual arts, dance, film and multimedia, March 3 to 20. www.utoronto.ca

• The Toronto Symphony Orchestra is holding an online sale of symphony tickets for March and April concerts at \$20, \$39 and \$49 per ticket, Feb. 23 to March 1. www.tso.ca

• "1980s Uneasy Portraits" is the topic of the upcoming film talk with **Shlomo Schwartzberg** at the Miles Nadal JCC. \$9 admission includes coffee, bagels and film clips. Sunday, March 2, 11:30 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 606

• Acting Up Stage Theatre Company presents the Canadian premiere of *A Man of No Importance*, about a Dublin bus conductor who learns to face his true nature and finally take a stand in the world. Book by **Terrence McNally**, music by **Stephen Flaherty**, both of *Ragtime* fame; the artistic producer is **Mitchell Marc**, \$35, \$25, \$21. Berkeley Street Theatre Upstairs, March 7 to 22.

• *Chaim's Love Song*, a comedy by **Marvin Chernoff** and directed by **Art Weisberg**, is at the Leah Posluns Theatre, Feb. 27 to March 9. Teatron Jewish Theatre, 416-781-5527.

At the Galleries

• An exhibition of works by **Judy Singer** is on view at the Lonsdale Gallery, 410 Spadina Rd., March 2 to 23. Opening reception, Sunday, March 2, 1 to 4 p.m. 416-487-8733, www.lonsdalegallery.com

• Fused glass art, giftware and stained glass art crafted by **Cheryl Zener** are the focus of a studio art show and sale in the Bayview-Steeles area of north Toronto. Zener's pieces include dishes, jewelry, nightlights, lamps and Judaica. Guest artists include **Linda Brodey**, **Ulla Cole** and **Karen Cashin**. 6 Regis Dr. March 1, 1 to 5 p.m. and March 2, noon to 5 p.m. 416-417-6466

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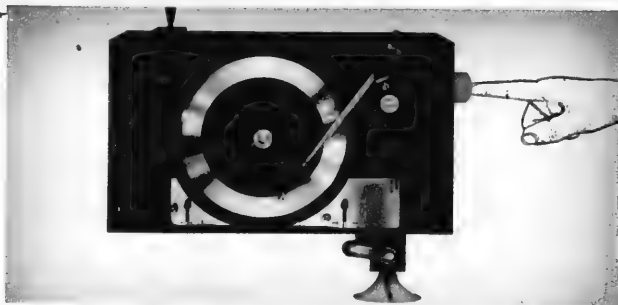
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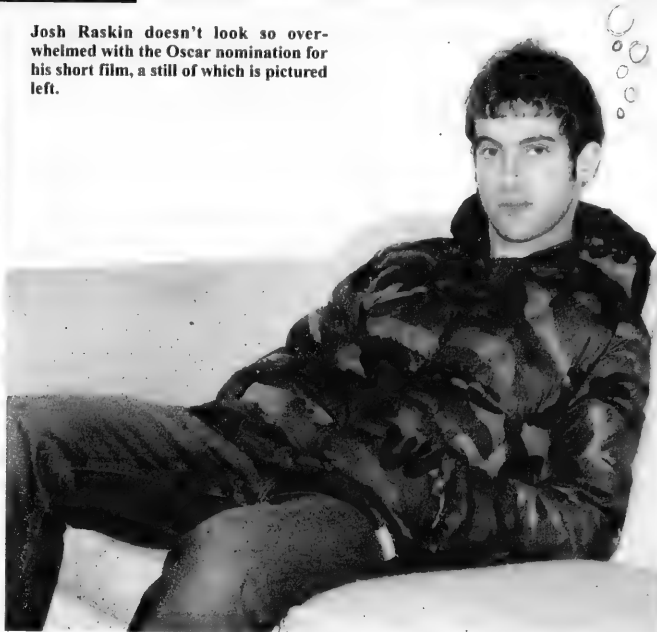
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Arts & Travel



Josh Raskin doesn't look so overwhelmed with the Oscar nomination for his short film, a still of which is pictured left.



Toronto filmmaker nominated for an Oscar

By PAMELA CHELIN
Special to The CJN

Toronto filmmaker Josh Raskin received an Oscar nomination for his animated short film *I Met the Walrus*.

The soundtrack of the five-minute film, produced with a Bravo!FACT Foundation grant, is a 14-year-old boy's interview with John Lennon.

"It's pretty overwhelming," said 27-year-old Raskin, who spoke over the phone from an airplane in Toronto, which was about to fly to San Francisco for screenings of his film. "It was entirely unexpected, so it's a strange

chaotic state of excited disbelief constantly."

From San Francisco, Raskin travelled to New York for more screenings, and his final destination was Los Angeles, for additional screenings and the 80th annual Academy Awards ceremony on Feb. 24.

In 1969, 14-year-old Jerry Levitan, who is now a Toronto lawyer, snuck into John Lennon's hotel room in Toronto, armed with a reel-to-reel tape recorder, and interviewed Lennon. This was while he and his wife, Yoko

Ono, were promoting peace with their honeymoon "bed-in." After sitting on the tape for decades, Levitan decided it was time to do something with the recording and, about a year ago, approached Raskin.

"I thought Josh was bright, creative and witty. He loves John Lennon and loved my story, so we hit it off. Josh had a great idea to take my 30-minute tape, edit it down to five minutes and animate it. Before he finished the sentence, I said, 'Great, let's do it.'" Levitan said.

Raskin says the images in the film, pen sketches by

James Braithwaite and digital illustration by Alex Kurina, represent the visual equivalent of what it must have felt like inside a 14-year-old boy's mind while he was interviewing his favourite rock 'n' roller.

Raskin submitted the film to international festivals and won several awards, including one for best animated short at the AFI (American Film Institute) Film Festival.

It was while he was in Utah, attending the Sundance Film Festival, that Raskin learned he had received an Oscar nomination.

Raskin was realistic about his chances of winning and joked that he hadn't cleared any space on his mantel for the gold statuette.

However, Raskin was excited about some good news he had just received. "We just got word, two hours ago, that Yoko Ono is fully supportive of the film, so that's the best news we could ever get," he said. "It's miraculous that we managed to get through to her."

Raskin said that he avoided interpreting Lennon's message of peace and tried not to be too heavy-handed as a filmmaker. "People can draw their own connections and conclusions from it. To me, it's pretty clear that what John Lennon is talking about is more important now than perhaps when he spoke the words 39 years ago."

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*Film based
on 14-year-old's
interview with
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Arts & Travel

Play encapsulates trials, tribulations of 20th-century Jewry

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

The 20th century was one of the most tragic and heroic periods of all time in Jewish history.

How fitting is it then that the Harold Green Jewish Theatre (HGJT) opens its inaugural season with the critically acclaimed play *Rose*, the story of a Jewish woman whose life experience in many ways encapsulates the trials and tribulations of 20th-century Jewry.

"I find Rose's journey very compelling," says veteran Canadian actress Lally Cadeau, who plays the part of Rose in the play.

"She is a thoughtful and very emotional person who has been through an enormous amount in her life."

Born in Ukraine in 1920, Rose grew up in a shtetl during unstable, revolutionary times. Her life was further turned upside down when she moved to Warsaw, where she ended up in the Nazi-imposed Warsaw Ghetto.

Like many Jews after the Holocaust, she attempted to start anew in Palestine, but was unfortunately a passenger on the infamous Exodus ship in 1947, which was barred from entering Palestine.

Eventually, she landed in Atlantic City and later, Miami Beach.

Although she never made it to the Holy Land, her son did.

"There are a whole lot of interesting things that happened in her life," says Cadeau, a mainstay of Canadian theatre and television perhaps best known for portraying the role of Janet King in the *Road to Avonlea* series, for which she won a Gemini award.

"In the play, she reflects back on all of the twists and turns of her life, and it is a thrill for me to be inside this character."



Lally Cadeau

The play was written by Martin Sherman and directed by Diana Leblanc, and will be performed from Feb. 29 to March 29 at the newly renovated Jane Mallett Theatre at the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts.

Previous productions of *Rose* were well received in England, the United States and Montreal, with reviewers describing it as "moving" and an "extraordinary tour de force."

The play has also garnered an Olivier Award nomination.

"*Rose* touches on all the key parts of 20th-century Jewish history in a funny, poignant and beautiful way," says HGJT co-artistic director David Eisner.

"It's a great way to start the season fittingly in the same year as Israel's 60th anniversary."

Born in Burlington, Ont., Cadeau began acting when she was a child.

She continued to hone her craft as a young adult in theatre productions.

"When I started, I was playing lead parts, which was terrific," she says. "It provided a wonderful training ground for a young actor."

Cadeau eventually moved on to television and film roles, including performances in *Deadly Matrimony*, *Rossini's Ghost*, *Happy Christmas*, *Miss*

King and Anne: Journey to Green Gables.

She was a member of the cast in such TV shows as *The Raes*, *Bizarre*, *Hangin' In* and *Kane & Abel*, and lent her voice to *X-Men* and *The Silver Surfer*.

The mother of three lives in Stratford with her husband, Robin, and has been in numerous Stratford Festival productions.

For more information about the HGJT company, visit www.hgjewishtheatre.com.

For tickets to *Rose*, contact the St. Lawrence Centre box office at 416-366-7723.

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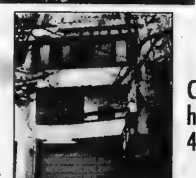
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Shahar Peer makes tennis history in Qatar

Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.
and CJN news services

DOHA, Qatar — Shahar Peer got as far as the third round of the most recent WTA tour event before Chinese tennis star Na Li eliminated her in two sets, 6-1, 6-3.

More significant than the on-court contest, however, was that she played Li at all, given the location of the match.

Last week, Peer made history by becoming the first Israeli to play a WTA tour event in the Persian Gulf region when she took part in the Qatar Open.

She started strong, defeating Slovenia's Andreja Klepac 6-3, 6-4 in the first round and then went on to beat Virginie Razzano of France with a tough 6-1, 7-6 victory in extremely windy conditions at the Khalifa International Tennis complex in Doha.

Speaking after her first game, Peer said, "When I came here I was a little bit excited, because I didn't know what to expect, like every new tournament, every new place you go. But I really got a warm welcome from the tour-



Shahar Peer

nament, so I'm really happy being here.

"When you go on the court, you don't think about politics. You just want to play your tennis. I'm really happy to be playing here and hope to keep it going as long as I can."

The impact of the occasion barely made a ripple. Played as the first match of the week and away from centre court, the only sound that greeted Peer on to court was birdsong.

The spectators in the stands when the match began were almost outnumbered by the number of officials on court, and the subdued atmosphere matched that of any opening round tennis contest.

The quality of the match did little to enliven the occasion.

The first three games, consisting of long baseline rallies, took 20 minutes, and after Peer held the first game there were seven consecutive breaks of serve before Peer held again for the set.

In the second set, after an early break each, Peer broke for 5-4 when Klepac netted a fore-

hand and she then served out the match to love. Peer said she was pleased at the way she was welcomed at the tournament.

"I was talking with the security in Israel about if I could come, and right away the answer was positive," said Peer, who visited a shuk (market) and dined in a Moroccan restaurant while in Doha.

"It wasn't a problem, and everything is good here with the relationship and I think by me being here everybody can understand that we are also human and everybody's the same in the world. It doesn't matter if you are Jewish or Muslim or Christian," she said.

"I find the people are really nice here, and everything is normal. It's even nicer than some other tournaments. I'm not coming here to help the politics of course, but if by me playing in this tournament it can help anything in the world, for peace or anything, I'll be really happy."

Peer is not playing at a tournament in Dubai this week because of a long-standing commitment to an event in Memphis.

Chelsea's Israeli soccer coach gets anti-Semitic death threat

Ha'aretz and CJN News Services

JERUSALEM — British police are investigating an anti-Semitic death threat sent to Chelsea's Israeli soccer coach Avram Grant and his wife.

Grant was in Greece for his team's Champions League match against Olympiakos last week when a parcel arrived at Chelsea's training ground in Cobham, 53 kilometres west of London.

A Chelsea staff member opened the package and found a note to Grant claiming an accompanying amount of powder was lethal.

Local police closed the training ground before the powder was tested and found to be harmless.

According to the *Daily Mail*, one note read: "You are a back-stabbing Jewish bastard. When you open this letter, you will die a very slow and painful death."

Another message made sexual threats against his wife, Tzofit, a famous Israeli television personality.

vision personality.

"Specific actions are being put in place to ensure Mr. and Mrs. Grant are safe," a Chelsea source said in response to the threat.

Grant arrived at Stamford Bridge in July 2007 as director of football and became manager in September, following the departure of the hugely popular Jose Mourinho, who led the team for three years.

The anti-Semitic element among the team's fans is relatively small, but even moderate fans view Grant's appointment against the backdrop of his nationality and his religion.

While many fans disagree with former Conservative heritage minister David Mellor, who said the only reason Grant was appointed is because he is a Russian Israeli at a club owned by a pro-Israel Russian, some believe the Jewish presence at the club's highest echelons and Grant's personal relationship with club owner Roman Abramovich were the reasons for his appointment.

The chairman of Chelsea FC, Bruce Buck, condemned some fans' use of anti-Semitic taunts against the club's manager.

"We welcome all constructive points of view. But there have been a few which could be viewed as racist and anti-Semitic, and that must stop immediately," Buck said. "This is one thing we will not tolerate, whether in written correspondence, on the chat pages, on posters or banners, or through singing and chanting."

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Inside Back

Late-life romance

By MICHAEL GORDON

I was reminded of a couple of experiences I had in my geriatric practice and role as clinical ethicist when I saw the movie, *Away from Her*, on a recent transatlantic flight.

The movie is about a couple whose marriage is tested when a woman begins to suffer from Alzheimer's disease and moves into a nursing home, where she loses virtually all memory of her husband and begins to develop a romance with another nursing home resident.

The events I experienced almost 20 years ago occurred while I attended, on a regular basis, a music program that my wife, Gilda, provided to residents of Baycrest's Jewish Home for the Aged. I attended the programs with my then-young daughter, Talia, rather than being at home with her and missing the musical program.

Over a number of weeks it became apparent that there was a gentleman with Alzheimer's attending the program. I had seen him as a patient when he lived in Baycrest Terrace, the centre's retirement home. His reputation at the Terrace was of a very sociable, charming and attractive man – a snazzy dresser and talented dancer. I noticed that during these music sessions he favoured a particular female resident, and they usually danced together whenever there was an opportunity. Between dances they sat together and held hands and clearly demonstrated affection.

One evening his wife, still a Terrace resident, attended the music session. She observed the interaction between her husband and his lady friend. She spoke to her husband momentarily, and he did not seem especially moved by her presence or indicate that she was especially related to him. She left before the program ended. Her husband and partner continued to dance until the program wound down.

I spoke to a couple of the nurses who said that this had been going on for a few months and that the wife had told them that "he was a

wonderful friend, companion and husband. He was always very charming and sociable, and if this makes him feel good, that is fine. I had more than 60 wonderful years with him, and I do not take this as a slight against me and what we had together. I know it is part of his dementia, and in many ways, he cannot help it."



The Senior Side of Life

Some nurses were uncomfortable with the situation, but others accepted it and understood that their patient's wife was a loving and remarkable woman in how she understood and accepted his current state and actions.

The movie reminded me of this situation and another one for which I was consulted on at a nursing home, where a male and female resident developed a romantic relationship. This caused distress and dismay to the woman's children, who took the action as an act of betrayal to their late father, despite the fact they recognized their mother's cognitive impairment and the positive effect the new romance was having on her sense of well-being.

It was, therefore, with great interest that I read an article in the Nov. 18 edition of the *New York Times*, by Kate Zernike, with the headline, "Love in the time of dementia." The article reveals that former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor's husband, John, who is suffering from Alzheimer's disease, has a romance with another woman, and the former justice is thrilled – and even visits with the new couple while they hold hands on the porch swing – because it is a relief to see her husband of 55 years so content.

This issue of late-life romance is complex, as is dementia and its effect on one's personality. The issue of nature of romance and love is a complex one at any stage in life. But with the growing elderly population, this aspect of life and relationships must be faced and explored with great sensitivity, affection and respect for those we love, whose lives we want to be as full as possible.

Dr. Michael Gordon is medical program director of palliative care at Baycrest and co-author with Bart Mindszenty of *Parenting Your Parents* (Dundurn Press).

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

I have been a Toronto Maple Leafs fan since I was knee high to a grasshopper. As a kid, my father and I watched Hockey Night in Canada in our cozy Kitchener home, cheering on the mask-less Johnny Bower as he recovered from a puck to the head.

Those were the days of the victorious Leafs. We remember those times with great nostalgia, when life was simpler and being a fan was easy.

Where has it all gone? What of the fanfare and the glorious feeling of being a winner?

It has been so long – 41 years – since Toronto hockey fans have walked tall in triumph and achievement.

Loss after loss has turned us into forlorn fans, walking with eyes down and with few happy-tales to share.

When a Montreal fan says to us, "The Leafs suck," we can only pretend to stand on guard for Mats, Darcy and Wade, because we know that

the Leafs really do suck.

But do they? Are we really so downtrodden, depressed and mournful about our hobbled and tattered Leafs?

I'm not so sure.



URBAN WRITER

Is there not the possibility that on some very deep psychological level, the Toronto Maple Leafs, a team in a city with more hockey talent than bagels on Bathurst Street, might be exactly what we want and need? Could it be that, subconsciously, we have created a Stanley Cup Free Zone for some very good, if neurotic and complex, reasons.

Consider this: the Toronto Maple Leafs are, and will forever be, great in the eyes of the true fan.

Memorabilia such as hockey pucks and bobble-headed Boeie Salming dolls are difficult for store owners to keep in stock. There's barely a man or woman in Thunder Bay, Niagara Falls, Bala or Thornhill who wouldn't fight to the death

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- 1 c. sugar
- 3 eggs, separated
- 1 c. sour cream
- Grated rind of one orange
- 1-3/4 c. plain flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 7 oz. poppy seeds

Cream butter & sugar. Add egg yolks, sour cream, & orange rind. Beat until fluffy. Sift together flour, baking powder, and baking soda. Stir into mixture. Fold in poppy seeds. Beat egg whites until stiff but not dry & fold into mixture. Turn into greased bundt pan; bake 1 hr. at 325°. Remove from oven; let stand about 10 min. before turning out onto a rimmed plate.

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Schools should heed the big picture

Epi on Education

Most would assume that the proposed Africentric public school in Toronto is yet another opportunity for the day school community to assert its right to a more inclusive public system that would grant funding to faith-based schools.

The obvious argument is that if the Ontario public system can harbour aboriginal schools, gay-friendly settings, Catholic institutions and now Africentric classrooms, it should be open enough to house the religious/ethnic schools of all minority communities. That fact was true before the Africentric argument was made, but because there is a flaw in the Africentric idea, I would not want to base our struggle on this latest development.

What we need is Gaia-centric schooling – based on the so-

called "Gaia hypothesis" that living and non-living parts of the earth are a complex, interacting system that can be thought of as a single organism – not Eurocentric, Africentric or Inuit-centric education.



Seymour Epstein

Of course, any ethnic group can stress pride in its own cultural and spiritual heritage and will want to broaden the knowledge of its students in the literature, history, and values of its past, but the small, damaged world we all share demands a holistic, not a narrow view.

To illustrate my point, consider the year 1492. Literate Europe was amazed at the potential of moveable-type printing, but it had actually been invented much earlier in the Orient. And most Europeans could not read in 1492. Who knows how important Jewish publishing houses were in the early days of European printing? Columbus "discovered"

America, but it was already inhabited by its aboriginal population and was probably explored much earlier by northern Europeans.

For us Jews, 1492 was the dark year when we were expelled from one of our richest Diaspora cultures, our long sojourn on the Iberian peninsula. The expulsion was the equivalent of a 15th-century Holocaust, and it changed the face of both world Jewry and much of Europe and the Middle East.

All of these 1492 facts are important, as are many others from all over the globe. The fact that I have given no Africentric information on 1492 betrays my personal ignorance and attests to the fact that my knowledge contains gaps that need filling.

Considering them together, however, is much more educative than separating out certain cultures and ranking them by some specious methodology. See Chapter 2 of Isaiah for a method of combining the particular with the universal.

Epi (Seymour Epstein) is the vice-president of Jewish Education at UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

Our Leafs are champs – of a sort

to hold four Leaf tickets in their hands, to have the chance to take their beloved family to watch an opening faceoff at the Air Canada Centre and to hear the thud of Alexei Ponikarovsky being checked into the boards – despite their team being mired at the bottom of the standings.

Ask any junior player who is drafted by the Leafs how they feel. The inevitable response is: "I grew up on the Leafs. This is a lifelong dream."

Our Leafs are icons. They are our Greek Olympians – strong, mighty and standing high on a mountaintop with sticks aloft. In our minds, it's therefore insignificant whether they win or lose. The fact is, we are satisfied that the Leafs exist at all. We are content knowing that we're able to celebrate our Canadian-ness through them and have a relationship with the only true royalty that our country has – pro hockey players.

Coupled with that is the wearisome reality that Torontonians, and perhaps Canadians in general, harbour a very well-developed sense of

mediocrity in which we expect the cream to sink to the bottom. In some strange and tragic way, we actually celebrate our losses and stomp on excellence – except in one area: money!

We Torontonians just love money. Cash is what makes our city so appealing, not our warmth and not our greatness. And the fact is, the Toronto Maple Leafs are making bushels of coin, so why should they become more competitive. Leaf investors have gone straight to "Go" with bags of gold in hand. They've already won – perhaps not the Stanley Cup, but the economic Holy Grail: an unimaginable return on their Leaf investment.

Yet, on some very deep level, everyone in Leaf Nation is happy, and there's really no need to change anything. The Leafs satisfy our desire to bow to something greater, the owners are filthy rich, and our sense of mediocrity is only strengthened by the fact that our team sits at the bottom of the standings.

Hail the Leafs: they're truly the best team in the NHL, on some very deep psychological level. avrumrosensweigideas.blogspot.com, avrum@veahavta.org. Sderot/Sudan?

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Ashkelon on the front line — please see page 42

The News in Brief

CANADA

Not Guilty Plea

REGINA — A former University of Saskatchewan lecturer charged with promoting hatred against Jews for Internet postings made from 2004 to 2007 pleaded not guilty Feb. 25, telling reporters later he's taking a stand against Jews "inordinate amount of power" in Canada. Terrence Tremaine, 59, faces up to two years in jail. In 2007, a human rights tribunal fined him \$4,000 for other hate postings, and the university fired him in 2005 after learning of his posts on a white supremacist site. Tremaine asked the court to reverse an order barring him from the web, saying he needs to do research for his defence, the *Regina Leader-Post* reported.

\$8-Million Gift

TORONTO — Theatrical promoter and philanthropist Aubrey Dan and his wife, Maria, last week gave \$8 million to the high-risk birth program at Toronto's Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre. The gift — plus \$4 million raised from a benefit concert last week by Bryan Adams, Sarah McLachlan,

Jann Arden and Josh Groban — will help build a 150,000-square-foot neo-natal facility and be honoured by naming the Aubrey & Maria Dan Program for High Risk Mothers & Babies. The Dans said they wanted to give back to the hospital, where their daughter, now 15, was born weighing less than two pounds.

WORLD

Costa Rica Criticized

WASHINGTON — U.S. Jewish groups criticized Costa Rica for recognizing "Palestine" as a state last month, saying it undermines Mideast peace efforts. Costa Rica was long a pro-Israel stalwart in Latin America and until 2006 was one of only two nations with an embassy in Jerusalem. Few non-Arab and Muslim states recognize Palestine.

Families Settle Suit

BALTIMORE — Two Jewish families have settled with a Delaware school board over pressure on their kids to become Christian. The suit against the Indian River School District was settled in a deal filed Feb. 21, Jews on First, a website

that follows the case, reported. The deal provides compensation and orders schools to change practices. The problem started in 2004 when a pastor singled out a girl at a high school graduation to pray for her conversion. When her family complained, they were harassed, and a younger son was bullied at school with anti-Semitic epithets. The son in the other family was pressed to join a middle school Bible club. One of the families moved to avoid harassment.

Muslims Reach Out

LONDON — U.K. Muslim leaders issued an unprecedented appeal to world Jewry to help bridge the gap between the two faiths. The letter came from the Muslim-Jewish study centre at the Woolf Institute of Abrahamic Faiths in Cambridge, England. Woolf Institute lecturer Sheikh Michael Mumisa said the letter is the first in modern times to be sent with the backing of Muslim leaders and scholars. British Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks has reportedly seen it and is expected to respond soon.

Iran Ordered To Pay

WASHINGTON — A U.S. judge ordered Iran to pay \$33 million (US) to the family of U.S.-born Israeli

Obama Rejects Farrakhan's Support

CLEVELAND — Barack Obama rejected the support of Louis Farrakhan during a presidential debate last week.

The Illinois senator and U.S. Senator Hillary Clinton met Feb. 26 for the 20th debate in the run for the Democratic nomination for the U.S. presidency.

Moderator Tim Russert of NBC News pressed Obama on Farrakhan's praise for him the previous weekend, noting that the Nation of Islam leader had often made anti-Semitic remarks, once calling Judaism a "gutter religion."

"This young man is the hope of the entire world that America will change and be made better," Farrakhan said of Obama at a rally in Chicago on Feb. 25.

"I have been very clear in my denunciation of Minister Farrakhan's anti-Semitic comments," Obama told Russert. "I think that they are unacceptable and reprehensible. I did not solicit this support. He expressed pride in an African-American who seems to be bringing the country together. I obviously can't censor him, but it is not support that I sought. And we're not doing anything, I assure you, formally or informally with Minister Farrakhan."

Pressed by Russert to reject Farrakhan's support, Obama said: "Tim, you know, I can't say to somebody that he can't say that he thinks I'm a good guy." Russert then noted that Obama's pastor had expressed admiration for Farrakhan. Obama countered by noting his pro-Israel record, his denunciation of anti-Semitism in the black community and his strong support among Jews nationwide.

Clinton then interjected, saying "there's a difference between denouncing and rejecting," and that she believed Obama was sincere, but "we've got to be even stronger."

Obama didn't see the difference, but added, "I'm happy to concede the point. And I would reject and denounce."

diplomat David Ben-Rafael, who died in the 1992 bombing of the Israeli Embassy in Argentina. The Feb. 25 ruling held Iran liable for the attack, which killed 29 people. Iran's Lebanese proxy, Hezbollah, took responsibility. The ruling is one of a number in recent years hold-

ing Iran liable for Hamas or Hezbollah attacks against Americans. Iran doesn't acknowledge the rulings, the result of judgments in the absence of an Iranian defence. Plaintiffs have had limited success collecting on judgments by seizing Iranian assets.

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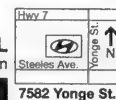
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Federation sets new schedule for BJCC construction

**Costs rise as start date
on new facility pushed back;
set to finish on time**

By **FRANCES KRAFT**
Staff Reporter

Contrary to plans that were announced last fall at the annual meeting of the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre, the facility will remain open until June 2009 before it's demolished to make way for a new JCC building.

"It's really for the convenience of members," said UJA Federation of Greater Toronto spokesperson Howard English, who added that he "wouldn't classify [the change of plans] as a delay," because the anticipated completion date for the redevelopment of the entire BJCC site is still November 2011.

In a Jan. 11 letter to members, Sherry Kulman, the BJCC's executive director, wrote that the change means, among other things, that they can "confidently renew" their memberships and register their children for day care from September 2008

to June 2009.

The BJCC's summer day camp, Centre Camp, will be held on the grounds of two public schools in the Lawrence Avenue and Avenue Road area this summer, as announced in the fall.

Demolition of the 46-year-old BJCC was originally scheduled to start in January 2009. However, the federation still anticipates that the site's redevelopment – part of the federation's "Tomorrow" project, which includes the renovation of the Miles Nadal JCC and the construction of a new community campus in Vaughan – will be completed in November 2011, the original projected completion date.

English said the parking lot next to the Lipa Green building, which was expanded as part of the first phase of the overall project, was finished earlier than expected, allowing the original completion date to be maintained.

In the spring, work will begin on the Lipa Green building, which will undergo extensive renovations and additions, Kulman wrote.

Also, she wrote, a pavilion will be constructed as the first phase of the new JCC. The pavilion – which is expected to take a year to complete after construction begins in April –

will house a seniors' centre, a children's centre (including day care) and BJCC administration offices. It will also serve as the temporary home of the Koffler Centre of the Arts.

The revised construction schedule will affect the cost of the project, which was estimated at \$150 million in the fall. English said the estimated cost is now \$160 million, of which \$85 million has already been raised in cash donations.

Membership fees for the new centre have not been determined, English said.

During the JCC construction period, members will be able to use the facilities of six other clubs. In addition to the Columbus Centre, eight kilometres southwest of the BJCC, which was announced at the annual meeting, arrangements have been made at Garnet A. Williams Community Centre, the Richmond Hill Country Club, Mayfair Racquet & Fitness Clubs, the Miles Nadal JCC, and the YMCA of Greater Toronto at Bayview Avenue

and Sheppard Avenue.

Partially subsidized memberships will still be honoured through the United Way, Kulman said.

Barring unforeseen circumstances, English does not anticipate further delays. "We're committed to this schedule."



Sherry Kulman

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Greater Toronto Area

Hamas always wins

In a recent correspondence from Israel, *CJN* columnist Rabbi Dow Marmur, rabbi emeritus of Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto, piquantly noted that "Hamas never seems to lose a battle against Israel, irrespective of the outcome."

He was referring to the fact that media coverage of Palestinian life in Gaza essentially confirms, reconfirms, emphasizes and re-emphasizes an entrenched negative image of Israel in the hearts and minds of most of the people in the world.

He made his observations in relation to a failed effort by Hamas early last week to orchestrate a march by masses of Palestinians against Gaza's border with Israel.

"It would have been a coup if Palestinians from Gaza had managed to breach the fence with Israel and invade in large numbers, as they did on the Egyptian border last month," Rabbi Marmur noted. "But even though they didn't [breach the fence], the fact that the media could photograph school-children (commandeered from schools, of course) demonstrating, made it all worthwhile."

In the contest for the sympathy of the world, Rabbi Marmur astutely points out what many others have often painfully noted. "Hamas invariably wins hands down, because the world likes the kind of victim it presents itself as, while shunning the Israeli 'bullies.' Old anti-Semitism, no longer in vogue, can now be recycled as passionate care for the Palestinian underdog."

Palestinians-as-victims and Israelis-as-bullies was the razor sharp image projected across all manner of media airwaves and through and into electronic switches in countless millions of computers around the world.

Israel is at war with Hamas. The

reason for that, which many commentators and of course critics of Israel always ignore, is that Hamas wants to destroy the Jewish state.

"Destroy the Jewish state" is not merely a slogan, a catchword, a rallying cry or an organizing principle for

Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh in Gaza or exiled leader Khaled Meshal in Damascus, the self-appointed leaders of Hamas. It is the holy of their holies. It is the pre-eminent ambition they have. Building a Palestinian state is secondary to destroying the Jewish one. Indeed, the Palestinian state that Hamas purports to want to build, will be built, according to their national plan, upon the ashes of the Jewish one.

Abu Obeida, the spokesperson for the military wing of Hamas makes this very explicit: "The Zionist settlement of Sderot, which perches on our occupied land north-east of the Gaza Strip, will continue to constitute a legitimate target for the holy warriors of the Izzadin el-Qassam Brigades."

But ashes of Jews will never again be the billowy foundation for the structure of other people's ambitions.

As of this writing, some 100 Palestinians have been killed by the IDF since last mid-week in fierce fighting with Hamas in an effort to protect the lives of Israeli citizens. It is horrible, it is terrible that civilians – women and children – are among the Palestinian dead. But the responsibility for their deaths lies squarely with Hamas.

Two IDF soldiers, 20-year-old Doron Asulin from Be'er Sheva and 20-year-old Eran Dan-Gur from Jerusalem were killed in the fighting. Forty-seven-year-old Ron Yichyeh was killed by a Qassam rocket the week before.

The IDF incursion into northern Gaza was aimed at trying to bring an

end to the daily barrage of rockets into Israel.

Hamas decided to aim its death at "legitimate targets" farther into Israel than the Jewish communities adjacent to Gaza. On Sunday alone, some 40 rockets were fired against Israel, including two Grad-type missiles, which struck the city of Ashkelon.

The European Union on the weekend joined the United Nations in condemning what it referred to as "disproportionate" use of force by the Israel Defence Forces in Gaza, after more than 60 Palestinians were killed last Saturday in fighting.

Earlier in the day, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon condemned what he called Israel's "excessive and disproportionate" response to Palestinian rocket fire.

To be sure, the European Union and the secretary general also denounced the ongoing rocket attacks against Israel. But the thrust of their comments were levelled against Israel because, in the gruesome calculus of dead bodies, Israel's count was far less than that of the Palestinians.

But the call for proportionate use of force is meaningless, absurd and unfair against an enemy such as Hamas. Israel is correct to do all within its power to prevent the rocket fire, to save and protect the lives of its citizens. Israel should not apologize for acting against terrorists, for wanting to live.

The tragedy for Israelis and for the innocent Palestinians is that the IDF can win only temporary respites from the murderous rocket barrages against Israelis. In truth, only Palestinians can stop and prevent the bloodshed. Herein lies the other, more devastating tragedy: there seem to be no Palestinians capable of doing this or even wanting to do it. For, as Rabbi Marmur sadly points out, even when they lose, they win.

—MBD

From the editor's desk



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See JN



HELP FOR SDEROT

Senior kindergartners from Leo Baeck Day School's Thornhill campus present a cheque to Alon Davidi, chair of the Sderot Defence Council, to buy art supplies for the children of Sderot. The money was raised through a silent auction of artwork created during a unit on famous artists, and by the children themselves through various fundraising activities. Please see related story on page 6.



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Sderot a town 'under trauma,' says spokesman

By **SHELDON KIRSHNER**

Staff Reporter

"We want to wake up to a peaceful tomorrow," says Alon Davidi, chair of the Sderot Defence Council.

Davidi, whose grassroots advocacy organization raises awareness about Sderot's plight as a town under constant Palestinian rocket and mortar fire, plaintively expressed hope that its long nightmare will soon end.

For the past seven years, particularly since Israel's unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip in 2005, Sderot has endured an almost-daily succession of Qassam rocket and mortar attacks.

More than 7,000 Qassams and mortars, launched mainly

by Hamas and Islamic Jihad, have landed in Sderot and surrounding communities, killing 13 civilians, injuring hundreds more and damaging many residential and commercial buildings.

Israel has retaliated, striking rocket launcher crews and their bases in Gaza, but to no avail.

"This is a town under trauma," said Davidi, who was in Toronto late last month as part of a North American tour to highlight Sderot's vulnerability.

In an interview, he said that the bombardments have driven away some 4,000 residents from beleaguered Sderot, which had a population of 24,000 until quite recently.

"The people with money have left," he said, adding that the situation has depressed real estate prices. "If the firing

doesn't stop, thousands more will leave."

He warned that if Israel fails to take much stronger military steps to end the terrorism, Ashkelon, a neighbouring city with a far larger population, will find itself in the same boat as Sderot.

"There is a big war in Sderot," said Davidi, whose appearance was sponsored by the Toronto Zionist Council. "Hamas wants to kill Jews and harm Israel."

Declaring that Sderot needs the moral and financial support of the Canadian Jewish community for what may be a prolonged siege, Davidi said, "We're a big family. We're in this together."

Davidi, 34, has lived in Sderot for the last 12 years. Shortly after a Qassam struck his home in 2006, breaking windows, splintering furniture and traumatizing his wife and children, he founded the Sderot Defence Council.

"I thought we could live with the Qassams, but then I realized we have to deal with them."

The council, which is politically non-partisan, has taken the lead in lobbying the Israeli government for help.

It has organized rallies, marches and demonstrations, including vigils in front of the homes of Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Defence Minister Ehud Barak.

It has also assisted families that have been physically, mentally and economically victimized by the bombardments.

And it has forced the Israeli government to reinforce thousands of homes in Sderot. Two weeks ago, Israel allocated more than \$90 million to fortify 3,600 homes within a four-kilometre range of Gaza. Homes beyond that range will supposedly be protected by an anti-missile defence system due to become operational within approximately two years.

Davidi was critical of the fact that the government has not set aside funds for the additional fortification of about 3,500 homes in Sderot.

"We feel like we're struggling to convince the government to protect us. Why? Why?"

Claiming that Olmert has grown timid since the Second Lebanon War in 2006, Davidi complained that the prime minister has visited Sderot only twice, and only after midnight. "He's afraid to see the people of Sderot suffering."

As well, he voiced disappointment that Barak has broken his promises and not "fixed the problem."

According to Davidi, Israeli tactics have not worked. Neither pinpoint raids into Gaza nor the partial cutoff of fuel and electricity supplies to the territory have been effective in deterring terrorists.

Calling for tougher measures, he urged the Israeli army to reoccupy the northern part of Gaza and the Philadelphi Route, the strip of land between Israel and the Egyptian border, from where, among other locales, Palestinians launch rockets and mortars.

"You need to blow up their homes and kill their leadership," he said. "Unless we do this, Sderot will suffer."

He dismissed the possibility of an Israeli truce with militant Palestinian groups that have taken responsibility for the bombardments.

"Hamas will not honour a ceasefire. It has not honoured previous ceasefires. They bring only short-term relief. You need to break the evil. A normal country can't allow its citizens to be hurt."

Davidi described Israel's unilateral pullout from Gaza as "a very big mistake," and he had nothing but scorn for a recent European Union call for Israel to cease military operations in Gaza, lift its blockade of Gaza and refrain from inflicting "collective punishment" on Palestinian civilians there.



Alon Davidi
(Ed Dunbar photo)

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Greater Toronto Area

Dershowitz headlines rally for Sderot

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

"What would you do if it were you? If it were your family? If it were your city? If it were your country and Qassam rockets were raining down with the names of your children on the ends of them, if not literally, then figuratively?"

That was the question asked by Alan Dershowitz, the Harvard University law professor and outspoken defender of Israel, in his keynote address to the Rally for Sderot, held Feb. 25 at the Sheraton Centre.

The event – organized by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and co-sponsored by more than 100 Jewish community groups – attracted some 2,500 people who gathered to support the southern Israeli town of Sderot, located a few kilometres from the Gaza border, which has suffered thousands of Palestinian rocket attacks over the past seven years.

"As a human rights lawyer, I tell you this: Israel has every right, legally and morally, to do whatever it takes to prevent more rockets from raining on Sderot," Dershowitz said.

Before Dershowitz took to the podium, federation chair David Koschitsky commended the Toronto Jewish community for sending a strong message of solidarity to the residents of Sderot.

The evening's program was broadcast live via satellite feed to a community centre in Sderot.

Despite the fact that it was 3 a.m. in Israel, about 100 Sderot residents gathered to be a part of the rally, and some had the opportunity to communicate their frustrations and fears.

A 16-year-old girl said she doesn't feel free living in Sderot, because when she goes out, she needs to plan her route based on where the bomb shelters are located.

"Your challenges are our challenges," Koschitsky said. "And your right to a peaceful future is just as strong as our right to a peaceful future... Sderot today is a symbol of Israel's determination to survive, to thrive and to prevail."

Israeli Consul General Amir Gissin spoke briefly about the frustration that both Israelis and Diaspora Jews feel regarding the "civic problem and the military problem" in Sderot.

Gissin was booed by some when he said that patience is needed, as it will take time to find the right solution to the Qassam problem, but he was applauded when he pledged that Israel will find a way to end the constant threat of rocket attacks, just as it was able to dramatically decrease the number of suicide bombings.

Alon Davidi, the head of the Sderot Defence Council and a father of five, spoke about the hardships that his family and the rest of his community have to face on a daily basis.

"You see children who are afraid to go outside because they are so afraid that a Qassam rocket will hit them. And they are right. You know why? Because it happens," Davidi said.

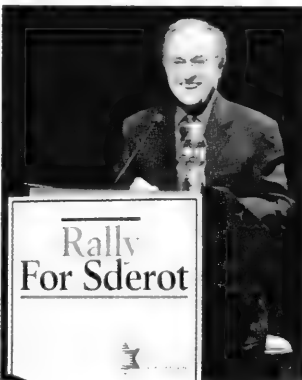
In fact, earlier that day, a 10-year-old boy nearly lost his arm when a Qassam rocket landed near him while he was on his way home from school.

"The only fault of that little kid is that he didn't run fast enough into one of the

shelters," Yossi Tanuri, director general of the UJA Federations Canada's Israel office, said via the live video satellite feed.

Just two days later, a 47-year-old Sapir College student was killed when a rocket landed in a parking lot adjacent to his school.

Dershowitz, who praised the Toronto Jewish community for setting an example for the rest of the Diaspora communities in North America, offered words of encouragement for the people gathered in Sderot who were listening to his address via satellite.



Alan Dershowitz

"You are our heroes. We love you, we support you, and we will never let you down."

Dershowitz, who met with students for a question-and-answer session prior to the rally, said the international community imposes a double standard on Israel when it defends its citizens.

"The world is waiting for one of those rockets to hit a school bus, God forbid, to hit a school room, God forbid, to hit an ambulance, to hit a hospital, to hit a group of children. Then the world will say it's OK for Israel to respond. As long as it's proportionate, and as long as no civilians are killed, and as long as it's done in a way that will have no impact on preventing it in the future. What other democracy in the world would wait until that horrible disaster occurs?"

Continued on page 17



HOW TO MOVE A HOUSE INTO A CONDO

BY CARMEN DRAGOMIR

Thursday, March 6, 6:30 pm

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Israel's options in Gaza

The dire situation along Israel's border with the Gaza Strip grew far worse last week as Hamas bombarded Sderot and Ashkelon with a deadly barrage of rockets, mortars and Katyushas. During the course of these indiscriminate bombardments, which may rightly be described as war crimes, a man in Sderot was killed, bringing to 14 the number of Israeli civilians killed by these projectiles since 2001. Sderot, located one kilometre from Gaza, has borne the brunt of these attacks. But in an ominous and unprecedented development, 20 Katyushas struck residential neighbourhoods in Ashkelon, 17 kilometres away, scoring direct hits on homes and injuring several civilians. Israel believes that the Katyushas were made in Iran and smuggled into Gaza via the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt. In the face of this blatant aggression, Israel retaliated fiercely, and unfortunately, Palestinian civilians were killed in the crossfire. Hamas – which seized control of Gaza from Fatah last summer and deliberately and cynically fires missiles from civilian areas – is to blame for their deaths.

As it considers what to do next, Israel basically has four options at its disposal. Israel can put up with the blood-soaked status quo, which means enduring further casualties and challenges to its sovereignty. By the same token, Israel can launch more reprisal raids and continue its blockade of Gaza until Hamas recognizes its existence and renounces terrorism. This option, ultimately, is of no value. Alternatively, Israel can launch a major ground offensive. Defence Minister Ehud Barak has warned that this remains a "real and tangible" possibility. But such an operation would be costly in terms of lives and perhaps force Israel to reoccupy all or parts of Gaza, an unpalatable solution. Barring an invasion, Israel can agree to a long-term ceasefire with Hamas, but previous *hudnas* have broken down. Still, it is worth recalling that Israel and Hezbollah laid down their arms in a United Nations truce that ended the Second Lebanon War in 2006. As a last resort, Israel can agree to the presence of an international peacekeeping force in Gaza. It just might work, as it has so far in Lebanon and on the Golan Heights. Certainly, a diplomatic solution would be preferable to all out war. – S.K.

Wise words

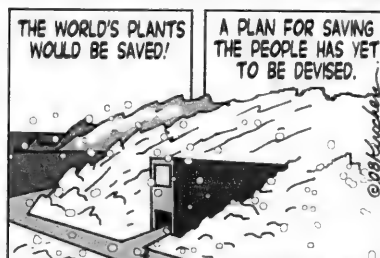
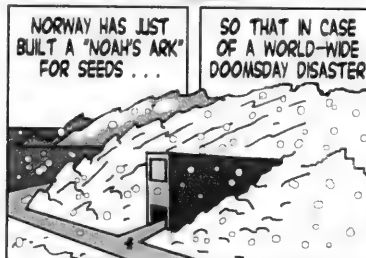
Hassan Rowhani is a key Iranian official, and when he speaks, we should prick up our ears. Formerly Iran's top nuclear negotiator, he is a member of the Assembly of Experts – an elite Islamic body – and a representative of Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, on the National Security Council. Last week, Rowhani launched an important verbal broadside against the current president of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, declaring that his "coarse slogans" are not in Iran's national interests. Two weeks ago, Ahmadinejad, who has repeatedly called for Israel's destruction, borrowed a phrase from the Nazi era in Germany and branded Israel as a "dirty microbe." This was too much for even Rowhani, who warned that Ahmadinejad's miserable rhetoric may bring Iran more trouble than it can handle. "We must act in such a way that the world understands that we are ready for more flexibility and more dialogue," he said. These are wise words for Iran's leadership to ponder. – S.K.

25 years ago in The CJN

Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, via MP Roland De Cornielle, assured Parliament that Canada would not recognize the PLO as a representative of the Palestinians until it accepted "Israel's right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries." De Cornielle had sharply criticized Canada's ambassador to Lebanon for meeting with the PLO.

Editorials & Letters

Dry Bones UP NORTH



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Conservative Jews are not in 'discomfort'

The opinions expressed by Rabbi Yehiel Ben Ayon ("Why Sephardim shun non-Orthodox movements," *CJN*, Feb 7) are interesting and provocative, if not incendiary to the Jewish Conservative community. The mere title of his column is negative and suggests that the Conservative movement is somehow a diluted form of Judaism and a step down for our Sephardi brethren. Further, the notion that we are in any "discomfort" and that Conservative Jews find this "dichotomy unbearable" are ludicrous and unfounded statements.

I have been a practising Conservative Jew for more than 30 years, and I am not anguished by the supposed compromises of my movement to traditional Jewish practice. The Conservative movement is founded and continues to be based

on Halachah. Moreover, the three different Conservative congregations to which I have belonged have had a significant number of Jews of Sephardi origin, including Moroccans, Iraqis, Tunisians and Persians. The opinions of Rabbi Ben Ayon serve to propagate the idea that there are different types of Jews who can be delineated by their choice of religious affiliation. I would like to respectfully suggest that the good rabbi recognize that Jews have enough external criticism around the world and that opinions such as his are divisive and create animosity among our people.

Peter Klauber
Dollard des Ormeaux, Que.

Response to Held (1)

I read Daniel Held's column, "We need to create our own shuls" (*CJN*, Feb. 7), with interest, hoping to gain insight into one of my burning questions, "Where have all the Jewish youth gone?" As a middle-aged member of a "big-box establishment" synagogue, I am often among the younger attendees at Shabbat services.

In defence of these establishments, it has taken generations of hardworking Jews and their financial contributions to build these fine synagogues as a tribute to the maintenance of the Jewish religion and culture. If we, of the older generation, choose to worship in clean, well-decorated surroundings while seated on padded chairs, we've paid dearly for that comfort!

Friday night, the synagogue president makes announcements for events that, according to Held, "bear little relevance to me." These events take a lot of effort to prepare, all of which is expended by volunteers. The volunteers appeal to their peers, knowing that others with similar interests will attend. The synagogue president

will be thrilled to add young adult events to his Friday night announcements if only they would take action to organize functions of interest to them. Our synagogues have space that is not being used and excellent staff who are happy to help with the logistics for new events. It just takes some effort to prepare a Jewish-themed event.

Held uses B'nai Beshurun in New York as a model progressive synagogue. If this congregation of 1,900 families can attract a large number of young adults to Shabbat services, then surely we can learn from their efforts. If this age group wants a 5 p.m. Shabbat service in a stark basement environment, please meet me at my synagogue, as I would be happy to help you clean an unused basement area, whitewash the walls, install electrical outlets and haul amplifiers for your modern liturgy. I'm sure the rabbi would not be opposed to

pausing his sermon in the main sanctuary so we all can enjoy your electrified musical strains reverberating throughout the building! I look forward to seeing dozens of young adults gracing the steps of my synagogue, coming for their own service in their own space.

Robert Bowden
Greenfield Park, Que.

Response to Held (2)

We have created our own shul, as Daniel Held has suggested ("We need to create our own shuls," *CJN*, Feb. 7)!

The Annex Shul is a vibrant and inclusive grassroots community in downtown Toronto that serves the spiritual, educational and social needs of a diverse variety of Jews through lively and participatory Carlebach-style Friday night services, learning opportunities and social gatherings ranging from Shabbat dinners to holiday parties.

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Richard Meloff
Co-founder
Annex Shul
info@annexshul.com

Editor's note: We failed to note that the information in *Wif Mandel's* letter, "Canadians who fell in 1948 war" (*CJN*, Feb. 28), was supplied by Eddy Kaplansky. Kaplansky, who died in 2005, served as a volunteer crew member on an *Aliya Bet* ship bringing refugees to Israel after World War II. One of the first pilots in the Israeli Air Force in the fight for independence, he wrote *The First Fliers*, a historical account of those events.

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman,
Ehud Goldwasser, Guy Hever,
Yehuda Katz, Eldad Regev, Gilad Shalit

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Isaac Abarbanel: 500 Years of Memories

By ERIC LAWEE

This year, 2008, marks 500 years since the death of one of the most remarkable figures of the last 1,000 years of Jewish history, Isaac Abarbanel (1437-1508). Most famous as a leader of Spanish Jewry at the time of its 1492 expulsion, Abarbanel was also a major



Eric Lawee

figure in several Mediterranean courts. His intellectual reputation rests on an immense corpus of Jewish scholarship, mainly expressed in the form of biblical commentary, that cuts across numerous religious-literary lines. Rather than revisit details of Abarbanel's career or scholarly legacy, however, this essay commemorates the quincentenary of his death by considering various Jewish "memories" of Abarbanel that have developed over the ages, paying special attention to one image of Abarbanel that has an especially strong contemporary resonance.

Interesting Times

Abarbanel's life bears meaning in part due to the consequential and turbulent period in which Abarbanel lived. It bears heightened significance in our own day due to his times' striking resemblance, in several notable ways, to our own. Abarbanel's epoch saw the devastating destruction of Europe's largest Jewry, resident in Spain, a momentous event that left post-1492 Spanish Jews pondering why it happened and what it meant.

This same era saw the rise of a revolutionary invention that transformed human communication: the printing press. When three of his books were printed in 1505, Abarbanel became one of the first living Jewish authors to have his writings disseminated through the great leap forward in "information technology."

Abarbanel's day also saw the astonishing advances in overseas discovery, most notably Columbus' voyages to the Americas. While he never mentions him, Abarbanel may have met Columbus in Lisbon in the mid-1470s, when the prospect of sailing west to Asia was first being imagined.

Finally, Abarbanel's lifetime witnessed Christian-Muslim military confrontations that shook the world, with the 1453 fall of eastern Christendom's capital, Constantinople, most notable among them. For Abarbanel and others, these battles nurtured expectations of history's imminent end that mirror some of the apocalyptic scenarios that play out in our own morning headlines.

Abarbanel's Life: From Tranquility to Tribulation

Born in Lisbon in 1437, Abarbanel passed most of his life in relative tranquility in Portugal, where he served in the inner circle of King Afonso V. He fled to Spain when he was 46 years old after being implicated (wrongly, he claimed) in a noble conspiracy against Afonso's son, João II. He soon joined the retinue of Spain's "Catholic monarchs," Fernando II and Isabel I, contributing extensive loans to their campaign against Islam's last Iberian citadel, Granada, which fell in January 1492.

Whether Abarbanel celebrated Granada's fall

like other Spanish Jews is unknown. What is clear was his failure to foresee what came as a bolt out of the blue: Fernando's and Isabel's attempt to solve Spain's "Jewish problem" by expelling (in a charter dated March 31, 1492, but issued only a month later) Spain's "Jews and Jewesses" from their kingdoms, with the stipulation that they "never return."

Choosing departure from Spain over the only other option, conversion to Christianity, Abarbanel spent his last decade-and-a-half in Italy, arriving in Naples and ending his life, after living in several Italian centres, in Venice. In a late-in-life retrospective, he lamented days squandered in "futile pursuit" in the "palaces of kings." Yet soon after landing in Venice, he devised a plan to resolve a major international commercial dispute. The India trade in spices and other materials was the backbone of the Venetian economy. Following Vasco de Gama's 1498 landing in India, however, the Portuguese no longer had need of the Venetian entrepôt between east and west. As the republic's patriots sought to avert financial disaster, Abarbanel developed a pitch for the Portuguese. Venice's rulers assured him of the state's "customary gratitude" if all went well, though the plan came to naught (the Portuguese had little reason to negotiate).

Memories of Abarbanel

With a basic outline of Abarbanel's life and times in hand, we may turn to some of the diverse ways in which Abarbanel has been remembered by Jews over the past 500 years.

Sephardi Images

Echoing his self-representations after 1492, Sephardi images of Abarbanel coalesce around the theme of the "hero in exile." In particular, Abarbanel is depicted as the "last of the galaxy of stars shining in the Spanish sky" who led Spain's beleaguered Jews from the land their ancestors called home for more than a millennium.

The characterization just cited is that of Ovadia Canby, editor of *Le Judaïsme Sephardi*, the official organ of the World Confederation of Sephardic Jews, who devoted a whole issue of his journal to Abarbanel in 1937 to mark the 500th anniversary of Abarbanel's birth. Canby vividly recalled his first encounter with the Sephardi great in a play titled *Don Isaac Abarbanel*. The figure who appeared on stage, he observed, "exuded a fluid magnetism that dominated and carried away the wavering herd of poor exiles." Little wonder that Abarbanel became a significant subject of eastern Sephardi theatre in modern times. In one Judeo-Spanish production, he appeared as the financier of Columbus' fateful voyage in 1492.

A Sephardi folkloric tradition that has come to light recently casts Abarbanel in a slightly dif-

ferent role. Instead of leading "poor exiles" into dispersion, he plans to organize them to fight their enemies (the plan is scuttled by a converso turncoat). Though this tradition appears uniquely in a responsum of the Sephardi chief rabbi of Tel Aviv (beginning in 1942), Yaakov Moshe Toledano, it seems to have been widespread. It retains the image of Abarbanel as a hero of the expulsion, but with a Zionist twist.

Abarbanel in Germany

By 1937, the year marking the quincentenary of Abarbanel's birth, modern German Jewry's romance with medieval Sephardi Jewry had been long in the making. Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, German Jewish modernizers bled up Spanish Jewry as a model worthy of emulation, not least because of the marriage of Jewish learning, sophisticated rationalism, and worldly engagement displayed by Sephardi leaders such as Abarbanel. As their darkest hour closed in, German Jews again summoned models and images from the world of Sephardi experience to provide comfort and clarification.

In 1937, the Jewish Museum in Berlin mounted a major exhibition to commemorate the quincentenary of Abarbanel's birth. In an article on "The Strange Career of the Abarbanel Family" (published in *Aufklärung und Skepsis*, a volume devoted to the Jewish-born German poet and essayist Heinrich Heine, 1797-1856), Jonathan Kolnik lists reasons why Abarbanel served as a touchstone for German Jews in the 1930s and before. (For his part, Heine had included a figure named Isaac Abarbanel, a Jewish apostate, in an unfinished part of one of his novels.) One is that, as the Nazis entered their fifth year in power, German Jews apparently saw parallels between their own dire situation and that of Spanish Jewry on the eve of 1492.

Meanwhile, for their own reasons, various German Jewish thinkers and writers were also drawn to Abarbanel. One was a young rabbi named Abraham Joshua Heschel, who published a German volume on Abarbanel in 1937. Another was the German-Jewish exile Hermann Kesten, who published a novel the year before that featured Abarbanel at its dramatic centre.

The Netanyahu Connection

One may ask – and it's a question I routinely urge students to ask – who cares about any of this? One answer to this question in the current context is: Netanyahu does. No, not the former Israeli prime minister and current leader of the opposition, Benjamin Netanyahu (or at least not him in the first instance), but Benzion Netanyahu, his father.

In the late 1940s, the elder Netanyahu, a diehard of the "Revisionist" wing of the Zionist movement led by Vladimir Zev Jabotinsky, wrote a doctoral dissertation on Abarbanel's political and messianic teachings. He conducted his study in the shadow of the Holocaust and in the wake of the successful struggle to found a new Jewish state. Ruminations on Jewish history's ups and downs inexorably imposed themselves.

In his dissertation, subsequently turned into a book that became the standard 20th-century reference on Abarbanel, Netanyahu displayed considerable ambivalence towards his subject. Following in the time-honoured Sephardi tradition, Netanyahu celebrated Abarbanel's communal devotion as reflected in his struggle to secure the edict of expulsion's withdrawal and, when his efforts failed, choice of exile over conversion. Yet regarding Abarbanel's leadership overall, Netanyahu was, to say the least, far from wholly sanguine. In essence, he alleged that Abarbanel had failed to apply the political acumen and ambitions that he placed in the service of gentle potentates to the condition of his own people. It was a failure that Netanyahu understood in terms of Abarbanel's messianism, which encouraged Jews to breathe "the atmosphere of dreams rather than reality" when what was needed was a "realistic course."

What would such a course have entailed? For Abarbanel's Revisionist Zionist biographer, the answer was clear: propagation of a plan for "regaining the Promised Land." Had he addressed a proper call to his people (along lines that Netanyahu associated with the mid-16th century Iberian-born Ottoman Jewish statesman, Don Joseph Nasi), the entire attitude of Jews toward their "national problem" might have changed. As it was, Abarbanel fell victim to a "falsely optimistic view" and contributed much to its spread in the Jewish world through his messianic teachings. So while Netanyahu's Abarbanel remained a hero of the exile, he also became the embodiment of, on the Zionist reckoning, premodern Diaspora Jewry's worst sin: political passivity and impotence.

If this brief sketch of Benzion Netanyahu's image of Abarbanel summons things Benjamin Netanyahu used to say about Shimon Peres and his messianic dreams of a "New Middle East" (and that he now says about failures of the Olmert government), this is obviously no coincidence. Bibi Netanyahu learned his politics from his father, who, when Benjamin was yet a toddler, wrote a book that cast Abarbanel's failures as a paradigm of "the blindness manifested by the Jews in the Diaspora for developments laden with mortal danger," a blindness that Bibi's father deemed "nothing short of proverbial."

Though many other images of Abarbanel generated over the ages could be summoned, the ones sampled above must suffice to remind us how evocations of great figures from the Jewish past often reflect circumstances in which they were fashioned and the views and sensibilities of those who created them. We should also remember that, at times implicitly and at times with full self-awareness, images such as these help to shape visions of the Jewish future as well.

Eric Lawee is a professor in York University's division of humanities. He co-ordinates the university's Jewish studies program and is currently working on a book titled *Canon and Commentary: Rashi's Resisting Readers*.

Opinions

Day schools promote integration

The British government seems to have a much better understanding of education than the province of Ontario. Britain's faith-based, state-aided schools, serving different religions, put Ontario to shame.



Rabbi Dov
Marmur
in Toronto

In a recent interview in the *London Jewish Chronicle*, the minister responsible for schools in Britain said that "Jewish schools play a very important part in our education system, and I absolutely want that to carry on." He added: "They are, in many ways, leading in showing other parts of our school system how you promote communal cohesion."

Last month, I was privileged to participate in the celebration marking the Akiva School in North London joining the British state system. The change has enabled the school to move into a new building and double its size.

I had helped to start Akiva almost three decades ago as the first Jewish day school in Britain under the auspices of the Reform movement. Other such schools, including Leo Baeck Day School in Toronto, were already in existence, and many more have been established since then.

At the time, most Reform leaders objected to segregated schools out of fear that they would ghettoize Jewish children. But one leader thought otherwise and provided us with the wherewithal. It's a mark of his character that he would not allow the school to be named after him. Today, it's one of several liberal Jewish day schools in Britain. Soon, a non-denominational secondary school, also state-aided, will be added.

Over the years, we have seen how students in Jewish day schools can be much more comfortable in their Jewish skins than their peers in the general system. Also, Jewish day schools often provide a better secular education and thus make students feel very much part of the society in which they live.

Not having to go to supplementary schools on Sundays and weekdays gives them opportunities for leisure activities with their non-Jewish friends and neighbours. What was feared to be segregationist has become a potential path toward integration.

The Reform movement had to create its own schools, because other institutions, invariably under Orthodox auspices, discriminated against children from Reform families. Orthodox leaders in Britain are said still to be trying to sabotage the efforts of the Reform movement in the ominously mistaken belief that Orthodoxy is owed the sole franchise on Jewish education. Mercifully, the British government refuses to collude.

In keeping with the liberal tradition of openness and tolerance, Akiva and its sister schools welcome all Jews. In line with many forward-thinking women and men, their leaders rightly believe that the future of Judaism is post-denominational and non-partisan – inclusive not exclusive. The entire Jewish world could do well to learn from them.

Time to expose the hypocrisy of Israel's enemies

For the last few years, we have become accustomed to hearing about Israeli Apartheid Week on Canadian campuses, and for just as long, our community has struggled to come up with an answer for the seven-day assault on the only true democracy in the Middle East.

The most common solution has been to complain and describe the organizers as hatemongers who are blinded to the truth by spite.

This has not been good enough. We will never be able to prevent Israel's detractors from yelling at the top of their lungs about perceived crimes against humanity. We live in a country where free speech is highly valued, and this is a good thing. We shouldn't be surprised when people stretch this freedom to further their own radical agenda. It happens all the time.

For years, our campus leaders have assumed that since Israeli Apartheid Week is based on faulty premises, students would clue in and discount its message, despite having heard Israel being associated with the word "apartheid" over and over again.

It hasn't worked, and now, finally, an effective response has been formulated. Four words have changed everything for Israel advocates on campuses across the country: Islamic State Apartheid Week.

Ben Feferman, a former president of the Alpha Epsilon Pi Jewish fraternity in Ottawa and currently the Canadian campus co-ordinator for the Hasbara Fellowship program, is the architect of this initiative. Ben put the idea into motion because he understands the need to shift the focus of the Middle East debate and make sure the public relations battle is waged on our terms.



Mark Masters
in Ottawa

The first Islamic State Apartheid Week was held recently at York University in Toronto. It consisted of a few events and tabling sessions aimed at pointing out the terrible discrimination against women, homosexuals and other minorities that exists in Islamic countries. Every other nation in the Middle East has a human rights record that's worse than Israel's, and all of them have been given a free pass for far too long.

Islamic State Apartheid Week is not meant to excuse any mistakes that Israel has made. Instead, it's meant to shine a light on the horrible atrocities being committed by countries whose defenders are all too eager to single out the Jewish state as being the cruellest of them all.

Speaking to Ben after the event, he told me stories about angry students who approached him at the events, but didn't have plausible arguments against the content being presented. They couldn't respond, because there is no excuse for what goes on in these countries. Most of the angry students simply muttered something about how unfair the events were.

How nice to hear the other side saying that for once.

When Ben was planning Islamic State Apartheid Week, he heard a lot of the usual criticism. "Why are you doing something you know will cause trouble?" "Why are you doing something that risks making our community look bad?" "Why light a match under the powder keg that is the debate about the Middle East?"

Ben understands, however, that in order to win the public relations battle, we must show the world that Israel is by far the most progressive, free and democratic nation in the region. Israel is like Canada, and these other countries are not. Period.

We can't give other countries a free pass.

But so far, campus leaders have decided to emphasize Israel's good side rather than highlight the double standard that Israel is being held to.

I recently attended a lecture at Carleton University given by Benjamin Pogrud, a South African-born Jewish journalist. The event was part of Israel Week sponsored by the Jewish Students' Association in Ottawa. Pogrud did a tremendous job of explaining why Israel is not an apartheid state. However, the event attracted only a handful of students and didn't even come close to filling the lecture hall where it was held.

Simply put, the message did not get out.

Next year, Islamic State Apartheid Week should be held in Ottawa, where it's guaranteed to garner a lot of attention.

Islamic State Apartheid Week must become a staple at campuses across Canada.

It's time to expose the hypocrisy of the anti-Israel movement once and for all.

India and Pakistan hold lessons for Mideast

When *The CJN* asked me to write a monthly column, I must admit I was rather puzzled about the direction I should take. Realistically, there is little wisdom – aside, perhaps, from insights into today's slang or popular music scene – that a third-year uni-

versity student with a limited Jewish education can hope to impart to the general public. Yet, a letter to the editor in response to my last column ("Israel should re-think policy in Gaza," Feb. 7) proves that I've made at least one person evaluate (or possibly re-evaluate) their convictions.

It's with that letter in mind that I write this month's column.

The Feb. 21 edition of *The CJN* contained two seemingly unrelated news stories: one discussed the similar issues facing Israel and Jews on the one hand and India and Hindus on the other. The second article was about the Israeli group Peace Now and the possibilities for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

While the articles may seem unrelated, a closer look reveals otherwise.

Undoubtedly, there are many similarities between Jews and Hindus, and by extension, Israel and India. Both religions are the subject of misconceptions and stereotypes, both countries face a similar threat from "radical Islam," and both are similarly chastised for defending themselves against it.

The similarities, however, don't end there. While the article on Jews and Hindus did not make specific mention of it, any two-state solution – the same one that's discussed at every

Mideast summit meeting and is the goal of the much-touted "road map" peace plan – would be similar to the one employed in the partitioning of India and Pakistan in 1947.

It was thought that India then, like Israel now, would either be divided or destroyed. Therefore, the British partitioned India into India and Pakistan according to the Mountbatten Plan, essentially demarcating the newly formed countries along religious lines, leaving a majority Muslim Pakistan and a majority Hindu India.

This, essentially, is the basis for a two-state solution in the Middle East – creating a Jewish Israel and a Muslim Palestine.

What advocates of the two-state solution rarely mention, though, is what ensued after the partition of 1947.

While some of the blame for what happened can be placed on the British, nearly one million people died in the riots and chaos that stemmed from the religious division itself. Since then, four wars and innumerable skirmishes have been fought between the two neighbouring countries, with one such conflict resulting in a serious nuclear scare.

The origins of the hostilities lie in the ill-conceived partition plan, which left whole communities "stranded" and fostered antipathy and enmity on both sides.

This column is not intended to discredit a two-state solution, which is the light at the end of the tunnel of Israeli-Palestinian peace efforts. It's endorsed by leading political figures on both sides, and its defended by prominent writers such as



Jesse Mintz
in Halifax

Alan Dershowitz.

However, the pursuit of a two-state solution must be tempered by lessons learned from the missteps of history.

There are issues that need to be addressed before any solution – one-state, two-state or six-state (i.e., bringing surrounding countries into a body modelled on the European Union) – can be reached.

First and foremost, a profound and genuine respect for each other's sovereignty and safety is needed.

But thinking beyond respect, if Pakistani-Indian relations have taught us anything, it's that the sovereignty of the two countries that emerge from a two-state solution must be tempered by some kind of interconnectedness.

Regardless of how the partition is accomplished, undoubtedly some communities will become religious minorities in a veritable sea of otherness. A certain level of disconnection will affect not only those who are left on the "wrong" side of a partition. People who have been transplanted as a result of a peace deal will feel it as well. The two resulting countries, therefore, must share cultural and economic exchanges, as only such links will foster genuine care for the other's well-being.

An ardent pursuit of a two-state solution cannot preclude an awareness of its possible ramifications. We must learn from the mistakes of history.

Israel may have much in common with India before the 1947 partition, but the resultant enmity between India and Pakistan is not something Israel should seek to replicate in pursuing its own two-state solution.

The Kirshner File

Letter from Be'er Sheva

Be'er Sheva, the capital of the Negev Desert region and Israel's sixth largest city, is a work in progress.

Once a seat of Judean kings and much later a dusty Ottoman outpost inhabited mainly by Bedouin Arabs, Be'er Sheva was allotted to the Palestinians under the 1947 United Nations Palestine partition plan.

But having rejected a two-state solution, Arab states invaded the newly created state of Israel, hoping to throttle it.

Israel fought back. Its first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, was guided by the credo that the best defence is a good offence. Be'er Sheva, held by the Egyptian army, fell to Israeli forces on Oct. 21, 1948, almost exactly 31 years after British, Australian and New Zealand troops routed its Ottoman Turkish defenders.

During that battle, the Australian 4th Light Horse Brigade, consisting of 800 troops and commanded by Brig.-Gen. William Grant, charged the Turkish trenches in what was supposedly the last successful cavalry charge in British military history.

Two previous attempts to dislodge the Turks had failed.

The battle, which turned the tide of the war in the Middle East, is recreated in a 1983 Australian feature film, *The Light Horsemen*.

Hundreds of soldiers, still in their bloom of youth, were killed in these raging battles. Today, they rest quietly in a manicured Commonwealth cemetery on the edge of Be'er Sheva's old town, filled with low, dun-coloured Ottoman buildings, shops, a mosque and a renovated Turkish railroad station.

A handful of Jews lived in Be'er Sheva after World War I, but as Arab-Jewish violence flared in the 1920s and '30s, they left.

During the War of Independence, the Israeli army advanced from Mishmar Hanegev and Hatzertim and captured Be'er Sheva in Operation Yoav.

By then, Beit Eshel, one of three settlements founded in the vicinity in 1943, had been destroyed by the Egyptians.

Be'er Sheva, whose most famous resi-

dent was Israel's first astronaut, Ilan Ramon, developed in fits and starts, nurtured by the arrival of new immigrants from Europe and North Africa.

Its neighbourhoods were named after the letters of the Hebrew alphabet.



Sheldon Kirshner
in Israel

For many years, the old town, with its atmospheric open air central market and its quaint stone-clad structures, was the city's commercial hub. But in the late 1990s, the centre of gravity shifted to a new indoor mall near the bus and railway station.

The Kanyon HaNegev, where Jews and Arabs mingle easily, was the brainchild of Canadian architect and developer David Azrieli, a Polish Jew who fought in the 1948 Arab-Israeli war and lived in Israel before settling in Montreal in 1954.

The mall has its detractors, who complain of business drawn away from the gentrified old town. Yet like the Soroka medical centre and the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, the mall is widely regarded as a tonic for Be'er Sheva.

Nevertheless, as Israel prepares to mark 60 years of statehood, Be'er Sheva, with a population approaching 200,000 thanks to fresh infusions of Russian and Ethiopian immigrants, is generally viewed as something of a backwater, at least in comparison to Israel's big three, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Haifa.

If the Jewish National Fund has its way, Be'er Sheva will be transformed.

The JNF, through its Blueprint Negev initiative, has begun building the Be'er Sheva River Park, a \$60-million, 350-hectare project.

Its manager, Itai Freeman, hopes it will mark a real turning point in Be'er Sheva's history.

It is rising up along and around the banks of the Be'er Sheva River, which originates in the Hebron mountains of the West Bank and is usually a dry river bed when not inundated by flash floods in late autumn and winter.

Until quite recently, the eight kilometre stretch of the river in Be'er Sheva was an eyesore and an ecological hazard, used as a sand and gravel quarry and as a dumping

ground for castoff construction materials and hundreds of derelict cars.

"The city turned its face away from the river," said Freeman, a 37-year-old environmental and urban planner from Kfar Bilu, a moshav near Rehovot.

The plan to rehabilitate the riverfront was in the works for two decades before the first steps to clean it up were finally taken by the JNF and the government eight years ago.

"Historically, Be'er Sheva doesn't have well-developed green spaces," Freeman explained. "Not even a city park. No one thought it was a priority, and the city didn't have the means to build one."

As envisaged by Freeman and his colleagues, the park will consist of a promenade, an artificial lake, an amphitheatre, a cluster of playing fields, walking and running paths and a War of Independence memorial site at Beit Eshel that will serve as a logistics center and entry point.

The promenade, conceived as the backbone of the park, is currently under construction. Five kilometres long and intended to be planted with fruit and shade trees and desert vegetation, it will appeal to strollers, joggers and cyclists.

The lake, which will be filled with treated waste water from the city's sewage treatment plant, will be surrounded by one or more restaurants and will accommodate recreational sports from rowing to water pedalling.

The amphitheatre, expected to be located in middle of the park, will seat 8,000 and may yet be Be'er Sheva's cultural centre.

The playgrounds will have space for a football field and basketball and volleyball courts.

The promenade, lake and amphitheatre will be built during the first phase of construction, which is expected to take seven to

eight years to complete.

"We have to raise nearly \$40 million for that," said Freeman.

He does not know when the second and probably last phase, featuring an exhibition centre and a reconstructed biblical city, will be ready.

"Parks are never really finished. They're ongoing works. We're still trying to determine what the annual maintenance costs will be. This is the key issue, a sustainable maintenance system. We take this very seriously."

Working on the assumption that a vital waterfront district will attract new businesses and visitors, the Jewish National Fund regards the project as an engine for the city's rebirth and as a catalyst for a population jump to 400,000.

The park is designed for both the city and outlying communities such as Omer.

In Freeman's estimation, it should be instrumental in improving Be'er Sheva's quality of life.

As he put it, "Water in the desert adds value and attracts new residents."

The last point is of crucial importance.

Freeman hopes that the park will convince two classes of Israelis to settle in Be'er Sheva: students from Ben-Gurion University — one of Israel's most dynamic and innovative institutions of higher learning — who currently commute from out of town, and career army officers, whose bases in

central Israel are scheduled to be moved to the Negev in the near future.

"The government wants to develop the Negev," said Freeman. "The park is a window of opportunity."

The existing Montreal Oasis Park, a pleasant patch of green funded by JNF Canada, will be a component of the new park.

Both will doubtless help Be'er Sheva progress forward to a greener future.



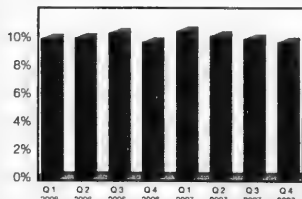
Itai Freeman

(Sheldon Kirshner photo)

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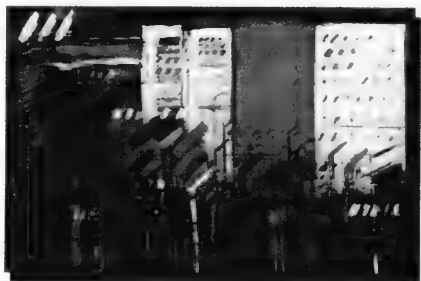
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B'nai Brith expels members for 'conduct unbecoming'

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

B'nai Brith Canada (BBC) has expelled some of its most vocal critics for what a disciplinary committee found to be "conduct unbecoming a member."

Eight of 21 members facing discipline were expelled – including BBC's most senior member, 68-year veteran Lou Ronson – one month after a four-hour hearing into their status. The expelled members received unsigned letters last week saying they had been stripped of "all rights and privileges of membership."

A letter addressed to Hermie Gimpel, who was expelled along with her husband, Henry, stated, "Your behaviour amounts to a persistent disregard or violation of established B'nai Brith Canada policy and code of conduct and other such disreputable behaviour that is contrary to the interests of BBC have been made out."

"It is the panel's finding that documents presented have clearly identified you as a member of the group calling itself Concerned Members of B'nai Brith Canada and that there is sufficient evidence of conduct unbecoming a member."

BBC launched the expulsion proceedings in November 2007 after several high-profile members, including past presidents, raised concerns over governance and what they described as a lack of transparency at the 132-year-old

organization.

Montreal lawyer Harvey Crestohl, one of those expelled, said he was "a little aggravated" by the decision.

"It has to have been the most undemocratic, dictatorial procedures ever produced by a human rights organization in the free world," he said.

"There was no opportunity by our counsel to cross-examine anybody. No witnesses were called. Documents were filed with the [disciplinary] panel and not given to our counsel" until the end of the hearing.

"There was no indication of who it was who voted for the procedure to start, who filed the complaint, what the complaints were even about. None of this information was made available."

Crestohl, a former BBC president, said the entire procedure was fraught with procedural irregularities and violated longstanding Canadian legal requirements of "natural justice" in administrative hearings.

He said that despite the disciplinary committee's ruling, he has "absolutely no idea" what he did to warrant expulsion.

He said he and the other expelled members plan to appeal and exhaust all legal remedies, including those in the civil courts.

B'nai Brith Canada responded with the following statement: "After a thoughtful and careful process of deliberation, the disciplinary committee of B'nai Brith Canada unanimously decided to expel a handful of disgruntled individuals for 'conduct unbecoming a member of B'nai Brith Canada, contrary to the best interests of the organization.' These eight individuals who received expulsion orders represented the most blatant cases of members seeking to undermine and bring harm to the organization."

"In the remaining 13 cases under review by the disciplinary committee, five were dismissed, whereas the other eight voluntarily came forward to disassociate themselves from Concerned Members [of BBC] and reaffirmed their B'nai Brith membership."

"This peer-to-peer internal review process was conducted in full compliance with B'nai Brith International's governing structure and Brith Canada's constitution."

"B'nai Brith considers this matter now closed and is moving forward with the good and important work that it has always done in service to the community."

Those facing expulsion were sent a letter last November warning they could face removal from the organization. The letter, alleged members circulated information at the 2006 annual general meeting that "contained serious and unsubstantiated allegations against the organization and leadership."

In addition, BBC documents alleged a group called Concerned Members of B'nai Brith Canada circulated e-mails that included "defamatory allegations of wrongdoing, both financial and otherwise."

Lawyer Rochelle Cantor, who represented Crestohl and 11 others, said that members of the disciplinary committee "have not specified what the conduct unbecoming is. They haven't defined it, outlined what the conduct is."

She said the disciplinary committee departed so far from procedural norms that it expelled one member, Sid Isenberg, who had not even been served with notice that he was subject to expulsion. Isenberg learned that his membership was in question only after he arrived at the hearing to support others facing expulsion, Cantor said.

At the actual hearing, no evidence was called, she continued. "Did they give any of these people the opportunity to speak at the hearing before expelling them? Absolutely not."

Cantor also criticized BBC for handing her a file of materials as the hearing came to a close. The material, which included clippings of C/JN articles that appeared after the expulsion proceedings were launched, was relied upon by the tribunal.

Her request for an adjournment so she could study the materials was turned down, she added.

Henry Gimpel, past chair of the BBC's Toronto co-ordinating committee, said he was expelled by "a kangaroo court."

"I'm not surprised. The whole thing was a total sham from the beginning to end," Gimpel said.

He said he planned to appeal, but he questioned whether taking the case to an internal BBC review would make a difference. He preferred, he said, to proceed to the civil courts for a hearing.

Gimpel questioned why BBC was acting against long-standing members. "I assume it's being done to hide something. What are they trying to hide? They don't give us financial reports. Everything is unsigned. Everything is hushed up. What are they trying to hide?"

Continued on page 24

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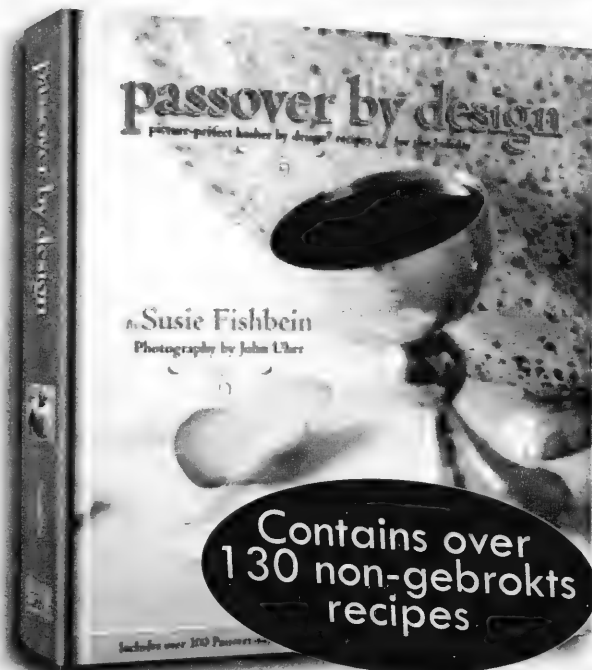
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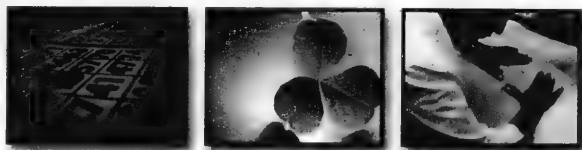
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Greater Toronto Area

Conservative shuls adopt new siddur

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

The new Sabbath and festival prayerbook adopted recently by two Toronto-area Conservative congregations -

and soon to be become a mainstay at at least two others - is called, simply, *Siddur Hadash*, Hebrew for "new siddur."



Rabbi Philip Scheim
Conn., *Siddur Hadash: The*

Moreshet Edition is a reworking of an earlier version.

The siddur, which has only been released in Toronto so far, is not officially connected to the Conservative movement, but is consistent with a traditional Conservative Jewish approach.

Rabbi Philip Scheim of Toronto's Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Congregation initially went to the Conservative movement's Rabbinical Assembly with the idea of "a more traditional version of *Sim Shalom* [the Conservative movement's most recently published siddur]" to meet the needs of traditional Conservative congregations like his own.

When the proposal was not approved, he approached Media Judaica, an independent publisher. The prayerbook was in the works for about five years.

The Moreshet edition follows a "more traditional rendering" of the Hebrew text than earlier versions, said Rabbi Jonathan Levine of Media Judaica. "It's very close to an Orthodox text, but not identical," he added.

It also has new prayers, meditations and readings that have been commissioned over a period of about a dozen years, said Rabbi Levine. One supplement has prayers and readings for special occasions including the birthday of a child and welcoming new congregants.

As well, the siddur has "a fair amount of transliteration, something we didn't have before," noted Rabbi Scheim. "People who are not familiar with Hebrew will be able to participate, which... makes the document more inclusive. We're trying to be more welcoming."

At Beth David and Shaar Shalom, the siddur replaces the Conservative movement's *Sabbath and Festival Prayerbook*, commonly known as the Silverman siddur. It dates back to 1946, although it has been reprinted more recently.

However, said Rabbi Scheim, its text predates the establishment of the State of Israel

by two years, and the siddur was edited at a time when "the Holocaust had not yet taken hold on people's imagination." For those reasons it does not deal with "the two most significant events, good and bad, in the life of the Jewish people" in the 20th century.

Also, he added, its language is "stilted" by contemporary standards.

Although Beth David and some other local Conservative congregations have become more liberal in recent years - allowing women to have aliyot, for example - the most recent Conservative siddur, *Sim Shalom*, which was published about 10 years ago included certain liturgical changes that Rabbi Scheim and some of his colleagues felt were "problematic."

Those included adding the names of the matriarchs in prayers like the *Amidah* in which, traditionally, only the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) are mentioned. The change is presented as an option in *Sim Shalom*.

Of the half dozen GTA congregations affiliated with the Conservative movement, only Beit Rayim uses *Sim Shalom*, Rabbi Scheim said. Beit Rayim is also the most liberal in ritual practice, being fully egalitarian, which includes counting women as part of a minyan, a sticking point for some congregations that give women Torah honours.



Publication of *Siddur Hadash* - which has a somewhat limited market - was made possible by fundraising, much of which took place in Toronto, Rabbi Scheim said.

Adath Israel Congregation, which is affiliated with the Conservative movement, and Beth Shalom Synagogue, which is unaffiliated, plan to introduce *Siddur Hadash* in the next few months.

Rabbi Scheim has met with Rabbi Levine about the possibility of publishing a new machzor along the same lines. It is under consideration, Rabbi Levine said.

Greater Toronto Area

Strong message of support sent to Sderot

Continued from page 7

Dershowitz said that Israel shouldn't be criticized for cutting off electricity and supplies to Hamas-controlled Gaza, because Palestinians there "need to understand that there are consequences for putting murderous tyrants into office."

He said that the restrictions shouldn't be regarded as collective punishment, but as collective responsibility.

"Hamas had a fair election... The majority, the plurality of the people voted for Hamas, and they have to understand that a vote like that carries consequences."

Dershowitz recalled a conversation he had with former Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon, before his stroke, who was working toward a land-for-peace deal with the Palestinians.

"Israel tried everything in its power. It gave up Gaza... and what did Israel get? It got land for rockets. Land for terrorism. Land for the kidnapping of a brave young soldier who still remains a prisoner... It's been land that has increased the ability of Hamas to inflict attacks on Israeli civilians."

He added that Hamas' goal is to kill as many Israeli children and civilians as possible, and it wants Israel to kill as many Palestinians as possible, because Hamas leaders regard the victims as martyrs.

"[Hamas] has a culture of death, not a culture of life... We choose life. [But] the international community will not allow Israel to engage in proportional, lawful actions that every other country in the world facing comparable threats would engage in."

Dershowitz, who will be travelling to Sderot this month with Liberal MP Irwin Cotler, issued a challenge to Louise Arbour, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and a former justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, who criti-

cized Israel for using disproportionate force during the Second Lebanon War.

"Come with me to Sderot... Come with your fellow Canadian, Irwin Cotler. Let the people of Sderot show you that human rights exists on both sides of the ledger. All she does

is spend her time in Lebanon and in Gaza and hears only the other side of the story. Come to Sderot. Open your eyes, open your mind, open your heart, open your soul. Understand that the killing of Jews is also a violation of human rights and a crime against humanity," Dershowitz said.



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Jewish Life

Making a difference

how to use a toilet. As he came from a traditional culture in which respect of elders was paramount, the new power held by the youth created an imbalance that neither the parents nor the children knew how to cope with.

I remember the close relationships I built with the children. While we mocked my Hebrew accent, we would sing songs, play soccer or talk about school. The kids in Kiriyat Moshe were full of hopes, but dreaded that their dreams would never be realized.

During my last visit to Kiriyat Moshe, when we left the bomb shelter for Kabbalat Shabbat, someone broke-in and stole our wallets and cell phones. I left eight years ago hopeful that things would improve, but fearful that change would be long in coming.

Last week, I returned to Kiriyat Moshe with a group of students from the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, many of whom were experiencing Israel for the first time. For a week, we had been touring, seeing highlights of the country from the Golan to the Negev. Kiriyat Moshe is not usually on the itinerary for such trips, but these students were on their way to a chesed project, working alongside local youth.

As our bus pulled in, the students were excited, but I think I was even more so. Since my last visit, a community centre and new basketball courts have been built. There were children playing hopscotch and skipping. We got off the bus and headed into the school where I used to sleep. Throughout the building there were after-school programs taking place: tutoring, big brothers and more. We headed downstairs into the shelter where I had slept many times. Thoroughly cleaned and painted, the shelter had been converted into a lounge including couches, TV, foosball (a table-top soccer game) and ping-pong.

For several hours, my students sat with a group of Ethiopian children. Together they assembled care packages for Israeli soldiers, shared stories and songs, and formed relationships just as I had done years before.

Since I first arrived in Kiriyat Moshe, our Toronto community has helped change the spirit of the community, investing in new parks and outdoor activities, after-school programs and tutoring. It is easy to see the effect we have had. And yet, despite the investment in infrastructure, it is often the personal connection, when children sit together, sing together and laugh together, as I did years-ago and as my students did now, that makes all the difference in the world.



Class Act
By Daniel Held

I first visited Kiriyat Moshe, a small neighbourhood of Rehovot, eight years ago. While studying in Israel, a group of Americans and I adopted the Ethiopian community as a volunteer project. Each week, a few of us spent Shabbat partnering with the local Bnai Akiva chapter to run youth programs. The goals were twofold: to offer educational content while giving the youths a positive social outlet away from the dangerous culture of the street.

I visited Kiriyat Moshe nearly 20 times. Each week, we slept in the bomb shelter of an abandoned school and ran programs in the bomb shelter next to ours. During our brief forays outside, we found a drab, dark neighbourhood filled with dilapidated buildings falling into disrepair and children on the streets with nowhere to go. Most upsetting, many of the children were losing their rich Ethiopian heritage and instead grasping American rap culture in an attempt to form their own, confused identity.

As the Ethiopian community immigrated to Israel, they were thrust into a new world. Everything from language to buses, basketballs to grocery stores was new. I remember one child telling me that because he had learned Hebrew faster than his family, he became the translator. One day an absorption officer pulled him aside and insisted that he explain to his parents

The party everybody loves to hate

By RABBI YEHIEL BEN AYON

Politics is not a clean game. When you call someone a politician, you're not paying him a compliment. A Politics, however, is a reality in our imperfect world.

In 1984, many Sephardim realized that their traditional political allegiance to the Likud party was no longer serving them well, and, for that matter, neither was their support for the haredi and Ashkenazi Agudah party. They felt they were being patronized by both and that their interests were not being met. The conclusion that their numbers were being used for the political gains of others spurred them to form Israel's third-largest party, Shas. It would represent them from that point on.

And this it has done. Shas today has its own nationwide school system; it offers social assistance to those in need and at a level not seen before; and it continues to vigorously demand a fair share of the national budget for a sector of Israeli society that, historically, had not been a

priority.

For these efforts, it's equally maligned by the haredi Ashkenazi community and the secular Israeli one. The latter perceives Shas as

party of political opportunists who would stoop ever so low in order to advance their political agenda. The former resents the party for having usurped its traditional role as the sole champion of religious causes.

It's true that, over the years, Shas has sat in governments that have signed peace treaties and in others that have not. It has remained in coalitions that have been fiscally conservative and in others that have been more liberal. The debacles of the Oslo accords and the Gaza withdrawal were pursued by governments that included Shas, even though Shas was against the pullout. Indeed, today, Shas sits in the governing coalition, despite its "non-negotiable" stance on the division of Jerusalem.

Because of all this, in the eyes of many, Shas is seen as a party that lacks a compass, a party that will

bend any which way to advance its own interests.

But one can't blame a person or thing for being exactly what they or it are supposed to be. Shas is, quite evidently, a political party (although, personally, I believe that it's much more than that – it's also a social, religious and economic movement). Undeniably, it's a very successful political force, one to be reckoned with. For better or worse, it's part of a parliamentary system of government that breeds small parties, which in turn necessitate coalitions in order for any sort of government to function.

Politics in general, and coalitions in particular, are rife with backroom deals, crassness, cynics and unsavory alliances. All this is a reality. This is the system, and it's not the fault of any one party. Shas is only playing its role – and playing it very well, thank you very much – on this political playing field.

The only difference is that for Shas, politics is not about power for its own sake. Rather, it's about advancing the interests of a significant segment – indeed, half – of the Israeli population that wasn't being represented before.

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Jewish Life

Yearnings: Embracing the Sacred Messianism of Life by Irwin Kula, Hyperion Press.

Rabbi Irwin Kula, the author of this eloquent and inspirational guide to a fuller and more engaging life, is an eighth-generation rabbi and president of the National Jewish Centre for Learning and Leadership.

In *Yearnings*, his aim is to merge ancient wisdom with contemporary insights to show how our yearnings can bring spiritual fulfillment.

The Hebrew word "emet," Rabbi Kula teaches, is composed of the first, middle and last letters of the Hebrew alphabet. This very construction urges us always to seek a wider, more encompassing truth.

He writes that by dozens of measures, life has gotten better for most Americans since the 1950s. We have achieved what our grandparents or great-grandparents could barely dream of, and yet polling data shows that we are no happier than we were back then; 60 per cent of Americans feel less well off than their parents.

"We have greater prosperity and yet the number of people who consider themselves depressed has dramatically increased — some social scientists say by as much as twenty-fold. We suffer what some have called 'abundance denial.'"

Evidently, in our culture, wants get converted so quickly into needs that feeling sat-

isfied becomes incredibly elusive. In other words, the question is not, how can I feel grateful for an olive-size amount of food, but how can I feel satisfied when I can have as many olives as I want? That's the dayenu challenge for most of us."

What about the various forms of ritual that makes up daily living? The author says that he's always amused when he discusses ritual practice and some intellectually sophisticated, highly rational, ethically sensitive person says something like, "This is silly and superfluous. I don't need ritual."

He responds, "What do you eat on Thanksgiving and who carves the turkey? Do you and your lover have a favourite song? Where does the CEO sit in your boardroom? Imagine the graduation with no pomp and circumstance. Imagine the death of a loved one with no funeral rites. Imagine saying to your wife or husband, 'You know I love you. Who needs a ring?' and then dropping the wedding band into the toilet with a shrug. Even the most cynical people usually get the idea."

Rabbi Kula insists that Judaism is first and foremost a system of physical enjoyment that celebrates and enhances the carnal for its own sake. The Talmud, he insists, is clear. If we don't enjoy life's pleasures, we will be disappointing God. "In other words,

we'll diminish reality itself."

He suggests that for many married couples sex has become routine and less exciting. "When we think we don't need to seduce our lover, we'll end up seeking seduction outside the relationship," he writes. "When we don't have erotic adventure within our relationships, we'll seek it elsewhere."

"When our illicit fantasies are banished from our own bedroom, when we play it safe at home, we'll look for danger somewhere else. And so sex with someone new and forbidden becomes so appealing. Or if we don't dare do that, there's always the titillation of *Desperate Housewives*, or pornography."

In making decisions, what is right, proper and ethical? He maintains that wise persons acknowledge that often the certainty for making decisions is doomed to failure.

"Many people to whom I teach the Talmud are struck by the fact that 75 per cent of all the debates and arguments of the sages are left unresolved. No final decision is ever reached. By not providing definitive decisions, the rabbis were teaching us that we ought not to fool ourselves. Not even the most intense debate, investigation or wrestling will allow us to make decisions with anything less than uncertainty and indeterminacy."

I remain unconvinced that Rabbi Kula will enable us to avoid the inevitable messiness that life presents. But his book will serve as a useful and necessary tool.



Books
Bernard Baskin

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

Although Israel's national anthem is beloved by many, that admiration is not universal. Some people claim that the hymn is old-fashioned and doesn't represent the reality of the ethnic and religious mix of the country today.

Last year, Raleb Majadele, Israel's first Arab cabinet minister created headlines when he said that he does not sing *Hatikvah*. "I fail to understand how an enlightened, sane Jew allows himself to ask a Muslim person with a different language and culture, to sing an anthem that was written for Jews only." [tinyurl.com/2p4mw6]

Writing in the *New York Times*, journalist Adam Lebor argued that to gain wider appeal "only a single phrase needs to be changed: 'nefesh Yehudi,' which means a Jewish soul, should be replaced with 'nefesh Israeli,' an Israeli soul." Lebor admits that that change won't automatically instill a love of the anthem among Israel's minorities — he doesn't suggest altering lyrics that talk about longing for Zion — but the change "would send a clear message: here we are, Israelis — Jewish, Christian, Muslim, African, Russian and more — in the heart of the Middle East. And we are here to stay." [tinyurl.com/3ypm5]

Don't go tampering with those lyrics says Gadi BenMark. Writing in *Haaretz*, he said that Israel should follow Canada's lead whose anthem has two sets of very different lyrics in both of the country's official languages, English and French. "Just as all

Canadians share the music of *O Canada*, all Israelis can share the music of *Hatikvah*. The music is the bridge that unites... The mission would be to put together text to which any Israeli citizen who speaks Arabic can relate... It can be called *Al Amal*, the hope, thus carrying the same meaning as *Hatikvah*, yet this hope needs to be 'universal Israeli.'"

[tinyurl.com/2bhvkj2]
Amir Benayoun didn't change the words. He just sang them with a subtle, smoldering anger. This year, the Israeli singer set the lyrics to the melody of *Keli Atah Ve' Odeca*, a traditional Chabad tune. He then interspersed the song with radio news reports about childhood poverty in Israel, the kidnapping of Gilad Shalit, the possible division of Jerusalem and more. And he had his "little gift" delivered to the country's cabinet ministers. You can read up on Benayoun's version in the Hebrew article "Abda Tikvatu" (Our hope has been lost) [tinyurl.com/2y4xxz] and then listen to it online. [tinyurl.com/ypz3v]

Not everyone has given up hope. Last year, ynetnews.com (the English online arm of *Yedioth Ahronoth*) embarked on an interesting project. Titled "There's Hope," the website invited Israeli and Jewish singers and performers from all walks of life and musical genres to put their stamp on *Hatikvah*, including:

• American Marty Friedman, former lead guitarist of Megadeth [tinyurl.com/2bwq2]

Hatikvah, Part 2

- Teapacks, Israel's representatives at the 2007 Eurovision Song Contest
- a great tearing of Dudu Fisher and the Human Beat Box for a hip-hop version [tinyurl.com/ywm2jw]

Try your own variation after you download the sheet music. [tinyurl.com/27mcc4] And for something different, sing the lyrics in French, German, Portuguese, Polish, Malay, Japanese, Hungarian, Spanish, Italian, Esperanto, Ukrainian, Farsi, Chinese or Arabic. [tinyurl.com/yv2jas]

If you'd like to download a wild adaptation and blow out your speakers at the same time, try cranking up this version by Seth Diamond (aka DJ Blood Sacrifice) of the New York metal band Gods of Fire. [tinyurl.com/265f53]

On the other end of the aural spectrum, David Bar-Tzur has created a version to aid interpreters who want to deliver *Hatikvah* using sign language. [tinyurl.com/2wapacl]

The most famous song to compete with *Hatikvah* for the hearts of Israelis is Naomi Shemer's *Yerushalayim shel Zahav*. Shortly after the 1967 Six Day War, Knesset member Uri Avneri tabled a bill to make that song the national anthem. According to the Jerusalem of Gold website, Avneri met with Shemer in a café and attempted to explain to her how important her song had become. Shemer found it amusing. "I like *Hatikvah*," she said, "and it is not replaceable." The bill never went to committee. [jerusalemofgold.co.il/thesong.html]

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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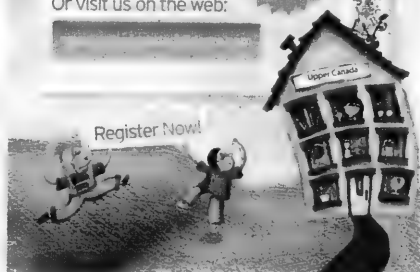
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Educators discuss challenges of Holocaust education

By LAURA STRICKER

Special to The CJN

Teaching students in multicultural settings about the Holocaust is far from easy, agreed three educators speaking at York University Feb. 10.

David Cesarani, a research professor at the University of London; Jennifer Gerwlvich, dean of English at Father McGivney Catholic Academy in Markham; and Elke Gryglewski, a senior educator at the House of the Wannsee Conference Memorial and Educational Centre in Berlin, each face unique challenges in teaching about this dark period in history.

Cesarani, who discussed his experiences teaching inner-city students in London, England, said many difficulties in

teaching about the Holocaust come from what a teacher hopes to achieve through those lessons.

"The challenges in teaching about the Holocaust and how you evaluate the success depends very much on what your goals are," he said.

"Are you teaching the subject because it's an important part of the European historical experience? Are you teaching it to try and encourage notions of good citizenship? Are you using it to counter racism? Are you using it to counter bigotry of all kinds? Are you teaching it because you think teaching about the Holocaust is a way to prevent genocide?"

Achieving or not achieving your goal also depends on who is being taught, Cesarani added.

"The success in achieving these goals depends very much on the kinds of audiences you're addressing, and the kind of

obstacles in the way of getting any of those messages across."

Gerwlvich, who spoke about teaching Catholic high school students in Ontario, said that for her, the biggest challenge in teaching about the Holocaust has been the diverse population at Father McGivney Catholic Academy.

Students there come from all over the world, including places such as Israel, Jamaica, and Pakistan, and not all of them are Catholic, she said.

"As the student population at McGivney is diverse, one of the key considerations in creating and delivering Holocaust education programs is that students often bring their own difficult histories to the classroom. Some of these students have come from countries that are experiencing war or civil unrest. Some have been in refugee situations. Many experience family conflict. Many experience personal loss, and many have dealt with violence, both in Canada and abroad," Gerwlvich said.

Gryglewski, who spoke about teaching young Germans who have Palestinian backgrounds, said that one of her main challenges in teaching about the Holocaust is the lack of opportunities available for students without pure German backgrounds.

"We [Germany]... have a very unhelpful school system," she said. "Due to very racist integration policies during the last decade, the majority of school kids with a non-German background are the lowest of the low. Many of them finish school without having a degree."

The educators also spoke about the different methods they use to overcome the challenges they face in teaching about the Holocaust. Cesarani spoke of his experiences teaching students at the City and Islington College in London, the majority of whom were black.

"With black students, one of the greatest challenges was their impatience with the subject... what really concerned [most of] them was transatlantic slavery, and whether or not they had an opportunity to study it. What they thought was that here was a chance to explore the black experience of slavery."

"It caused a degree of frustration," Cesarani said, adding that the students would often ask why he was only discussing Jews as victims, not Jews in their role as slave traders.

Because most of the exposure that students at City and Islington College had to Jewish people was through the media, Cesarani said he spent a lot of his time "unpacking" those myths. "It's difficult, because there is a completely distorted perception of what is happening in the Middle East," he said.

Jennifer Gerwlvich used a different tactic than Cesarani: reaching out to her students through literature.

"In the Grade 9 and 10 course, I try to incorporate Holocaust education into units on poetry, speaking on personal voice," she said.

In the Grade 11 course, *Night* by Elie Wiesel and *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding are required readings.

"When we teach *Night*, students are invited to discuss and analyze passages from the text and how they relate to the central meaning of the course."

The Grade 12 English course has Gerwlvich's students reading the graphic Holocaust novel *Maus* by Art Spiegelman.

"What I've found is that through story, I'm able to make [the Holocaust] relevant to them," she said.

"Overall I have found that in my experience, students are interested in learning about the Holocaust, regardless of their cultural background, regardless of their religious background... these are the things that stick with them, and for me that confirms what I'm doing through literature is significant."

Gryglewski, meanwhile, uses another method entirely. Since October 2007, she has been working with 16 Berliners with Palestinian backgrounds. They are aged 13 to 17, and most don't have much in the way of formal education.

They learn about the history of National Socialism, their family biographies, and the history of Palestinians. Despite complaints from other teachers about a lack of interest, and anti-Semitic remarks and attitudes they often find from German students with Palestinian backgrounds, Gryglewski said her experience was different.

"[My] general impression was that Muslim youngsters did not refuse to deal with the Shoah," she said, adding that they all chose to participate in the project voluntarily.

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Greater Toronto Area

Israel's water tech sector seeking new investors

By **ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF**
Staff Reporter

Israel is on an aggressive mission to peddle its leading-edge water technologies internationally.

Last week, Baruch "Booky" Oren, former chairman of the board of Mekorot, Israel's national water company, spent three days in Toronto courting Canadian investors.

Oren, now president and CEO of the Anson Israel Water Initiative, a private holding company that invests in water equipment and related technologies, addressed some 50 people last Wednesday morning at the downtown offices of the law firm Ogilvy Renault.

The event, titled "Israel's Water Technology: Solutions For a Thirsty Planet" was sponsored by the Government of Israel's economic mission to Canada.

Saying he had "high hopes" for his Canadian visit, Oren launched into highlights of Israel's various accomplishments in the water technology sector over the years, focusing on breakthroughs in desalination, drip irrigation and sewage water reclamation, among others.

Using a slide show, Oren presented statistics and graphics demonstrating how Israel's public and private sectors work together to satisfy the country's water needs and how they're now turning their attention to the global community's demands as well.

"The next challenge, as we see in Israel, is global warming," Oren said. "There's a lot of talk about [using] alternative energy... but there's a significant overlap between water and energy. You use a lot of water [to produce] energy. Water is a \$465-billion dollar market."

Oren said it's time for both multinational companies and governments to start looking at water as "an economic resource, not a natural resource."

To that end, he said governments should consider increasing regulations and controls

on water in conjunction with stepping up education campaigns about conservation.

"In Israel, everyone knows that every drop counts. I don't see that in Canada," Oren said.

Referring to the increase in production of bio-ethanol – fuel created from corn or other renewable feedstock – Oren said governments and industry in North America are more concerned with the political popularity of moving away from fossil fuels.

The problem, he said, is that it's a "waste," because governments don't consider the cost of the water needed to produce the crops.

He said another misconception by international governments about how best to solve their domestic water problems lies in the idea that merely fixing aging water infrastructure is enough to save them money on water distribution.

"More than 30 per cent of drinking water is lost on its way to the tap," Oren said.

"Urban population growth hasn't been matched by expanding water infrastructure by governments. And there will be a 40 per cent increase in [urban] water consumption by 2025."

Oren said his company and the government of Israel are now positioning the country to take advantage of this growing need by using the expertise of the Israeli water sector against a backdrop of growing international demand and the perception that Israel is "the Silicon Valley of water technology."

Israel currently has multiple water tech incubators working on creative solutions to the world's water problem.

Jonathan Levy, Israel's consul for economic affairs and its trade commissioner in Toronto, helped promote Oren's event to local media and investors, and he also spoke to the audience.

Levy reminded the audience that for Israel, "water is a national priority," because of the country's location in one of the world's most arid climates. It's therefore been forced to

pioneer advances in water technology throughout its existence.

He pitched the Israeli government's NEWTech program (Novel Efficient Water Technologies), launched in 2005 with a three-year mandate to promote the country's water industry to the world.

"We want to double Israeli exports in water tech by 2010," Levy said. "We've seen a 28 per cent growth rate in water tech exports in 2007."

Levy also spoke of Israel's burgeoning partnership with China's water ministry, citing new "framework agreements" with one of the world's fastest-growing economies.

Andrew Taylor, a lawyer at Ogilvy Renault

who specializes in environmental issues, was impressed by what he heard.

"Water and energy are co-dependent. Energy is required to supply drinking water, and water is required to generate most of our electricity. Because fresh water is abundant in Ontario, it's easy for us to forget how important this connection is in other parts of the world," Taylor said.

Speaking to *The CJN* afterward, Oren noted that Canadian investment in Israel's water tech sector was close to \$100 million last year.

"Many venture capital investors are coming [to Israel] from Canada... and I'm sure there will be a lot of collaboration between academic institutes as well."

Correction

The Feb. 21 article "Rabbis Lobby Ottawa on Israel Issues" incorrectly stated that the Canadian Rabbinic Caucus represents "the interests of the main Jewish religious streams, from Orthodox to Reconstructionist." In fact, the rabbis in the group do not formally represent their denominations, and there is no formal consultation between the caucus and the various Jewish streams. As well, there was no Reconstructionist rabbi in the group that visited Ottawa this year. The caucus draws its membership and mandate from individual Canadian rabbis of diverse backgrounds and religious philosophies from across Canada, including rabbis affiliated with every movement and region.



Booky Oren



BRINGING ISRAEL CLOSER: As part of the Zionist Seminars Toronto Delegation 2008, visiting Israeli madrichim Mordy Golinkin, back row centre, and Eli Aviv, seated on the floor, recently conducted interactive workshops on Israeli geography with grade 5 and 6 students at the Downtown Jewish Community School. The four-week program was part of the Zionist seminars sponsored by the Jewish Agency For Israel in co-operation with UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

Jeremy & Shawna Magence are BRINGING WISDOM TO Life



Lawyer (Jeremy) and Law Office Manager (Shawna) at Bergel, Magence LLP. Both are community leaders holding senior lay positions at YU Canada, Camp Moshava, BAYT, Mizrahi Canada, Netivot Hatorah and Emdah Women. They and have four children - Aitan, Yana, Abava and Yaki.

"Yeshiva University provided us with an environment where we gained a deeper insight into Torah and Judaism, strengthened our emunah and obtained outstanding general academic knowledge. Being in a religious institution that trained us to live our lives as Torah observant Jews and showed us the importance of communal life was essential. YU not only prepared us to excel in our chosen professions but it help teach us how to raise a family based on the values that Yeshiva University represents. We will most definitely recommend that our own children continue their education at Yeshiva University."

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Yeshiva University

Anti-Semitic graffiti discovered at York U

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Jewish groups and the York University community have united to condemn anti-Semitic graffiti discovered on a desk in the school's main library last week.

The racist comments were found Feb. 27 in Scott Library by a Jewish student who immediately contacted Hillel. The graffiti included an image of a swastika and a number of threats against Jews, including, "Zionist Jews will burn in Hell," "Kill all Zionists," "Hitler had the Right idea," and "I agree. Kill the Jews."

"What was disturbing about the nature of the graffiti was that it looked as if – it's possible that – it was more than one person. It could have been individuals adding to it over time," said Tilly Shames, Hillel of Greater Toronto's associate director.

Hillel@York promptly alerted campus security, requesting an immediate investigation.

York spokesperson Alex Bilyk said Toronto police are on the case.

"As in most cases of graffiti, and especially in 'criminal graffiti,' perpetrators hide behind their anonymity. In fact, we have no way of knowing or even suspecting that this was done

by a community member, because as a university, we are a very open place," Bilyk said, adding that the offending materials were immediately removed after police gathered evidence.

"I can't speak to the motivations of someone who would do this. We're con-

cerned about not knowing how long the graffiti would have been on that desk before it was reported," Shames said.

In a statement, B'nai Brith executive vice-president Frank Dimant suggested the graffiti might have been triggered by recent anti-Israel events on campus.

"This despicable act follows on the heels of Israeli Apartheid Week events held on many Canadian campuses, including York University. Once a university had lent its premises to an event that promotes hate against one segment of its student body, it is predictable that other acts of hate will likely follow," Dimant said.

Canadian Jewish Congress issued a joint statement with Hillel condemning the graffiti and supporting Hillel.

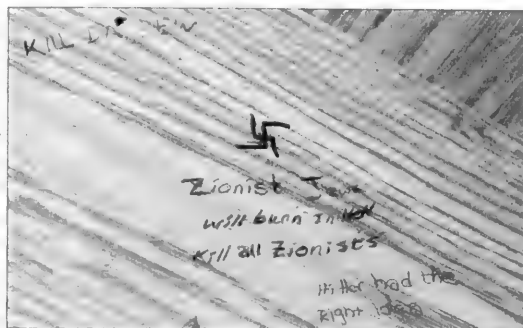
"Sadly, this graffiti clearly shows us that anti-Semitism has not, as some believe, vanished in Canada, particularly on our campuses," said Fredelle Brief, chair of CJC Ontario region's community relations committee.

"We have much work to do to ensure hatred finds no home either on campus or in the larger society. CJC stands with Hillel in these efforts," she added.

Shames said she is pleased with the response from the York Federation of Students (YFS).

"[The student council] took it very seriously and were very concerned when they saw it. They recognized immediately that this was anti-Semitic and hateful and they want to work with us on being more proactive on our anti-racism strategy on campus."

Eva Zucker, president of Hillel@York, plans to work with the YFS, other campus groups and the university to create a

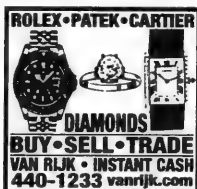


A Jewish student found anti-Semitic slogans on a library desk.

more aggressive anti-racism strategy.

She said she hopes that this will "bring forth awareness that this sort of blatant anti-Semitism is not welcome on campus... We are hoping to work with other campus groups to come together and create a unified voice against this sort of blatant racism."

York president and vice-chancellor Mamdouh Shoukri released a statement, signed by a number of campus groups and York administrators, that condemned "these cowardly and hateful acts unreservedly and in the strongest possible terms... The spreading of hate is a callous and cruel act, designed to isolate and frighten. There is no place for this kind of criminal behaviour at York and such individuals are not welcome here. We will give the Toronto Police Service every assistance in bringing the perpetrator(s) to justice."



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High-tech CEO has a heart of Gold

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to the CJN

Joshua Gold has just the right mix of non-profit chesed and corporate chutzpah. The 32-year-old Torontonian is CEO of his own dot-com, where he spends his days raising money for charities such as March of Dimes Canada, Ronald McDonald House and Special Olympics.

"Coming out of the corporate side, where it's just about making money, it feels really good sometimes," he says.

His company, Auctionwire (www.auctionwire.com), co-ordinates high-profile fundraising auctions, matching corporations and donors with eager bidders around the world - creating online alchemy for wonderful causes. Prizes include face-to-face meetings with celebrities, such as the production staff of *The Simpsons*, and Benito Mussolini's 1939 Lancia Astura (to benefit Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children).

It's comforting that a small business - Auctionwire has only 13 employees in Toronto and one in Los Angeles - can still succeed online. And thanks to Gold's vision,

Dell Computers recently awarded Auctionwire a Small Business Excellence Award for its "energy, focus and drive." The prize came with \$25,000 in technology and an in-person meeting with CEO Michael Dell and other top executives.

For Gold, the Dell award offers another reason to dream big.

Auctionwire is already playing in the big leagues, last fall hosting what Gold calls "literally the largest online auction ever in eBay history," auctioning seats on the historic first flight of Singapore Airlines' luxurious Airbus A380. The more than \$1.3 million (Cdn) raised will support causes such as Doctors Without Borders.

Although he's having fun and doing good, Gold doesn't hide the fact that "at the end of the day, you've made money off it." But at least his business is about more than just the bottom line.

Perhaps that's not surprising given his unusual background: after attending the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto and York Mills Collegiate, with aspirations towards social work, Gold graduated from York University with a BA in sociology.

From there, he went to the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, earning a degree in business and psychiatric social work.

"I want to go into the health care field," Gold says. However, on returning to Canada, he found few opportunities in social work, mostly dead-end casework jobs. Gold ended up doing what many new graduates are forced to do: "looking for something that could kind of tie into what I'd studied."

That brought him to Ward Associates, a high-tech staffing firm, where he began in recruitment and quickly branched out into marketing. Later, he moved on to Christian & Timbers, the world's largest technology-based executive search firm, which at the time was expanding into Canada. After two years, Gold decided "it was my time to jump out and start my own thing... and here I am."

Now, with a new website, The Giving Room (www.givingroom.com), ready to launch early this year, Gold is busier than ever.

Gold calls the new site a "portal for individuals who want to give back to community organizations," offering an element of fun to add appeal. "We're making charity cool... selling once-in-a-lifetime experiences, celebrity auction items."

He says The Giving Room is "Auctionwire's way to give back," pulling together sponsors and charitable partners and the public - ordinary individuals who want to support their community...

"That's part of being Jewish, to always give back." Locally, Gold has volunteered as a Big Brother with Jewish Family & Child, the Community Association for Riding for the Disabled and Sunnybrook Hospital. In Pennsylvania, he helped underprivileged



Joshua Gold

kids and volunteered in a hospital emergency room.

Although many of his clients are high-profile national charities, he enjoys even more helping local organizations such as Baycrest.

Despite recently ranking in *Profit* magazine's "Hot Fifty," Auctionwire's offices are surprisingly found far north of downtown's corporate glitz, on the third floor of a humble Bathurst Street office building better known for housing the Toronto Cheder, an Orthodox boys' school.

A member of Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, Gold feels inspired to be part of Toronto's Jewish community where he's "surrounded by so many successful individuals who always do give back."

B'nai Brith members expelled

Continued from page 14

Internal critics of BBC said its leadership has not complied with corporate rules and the organization's own by-laws that require disclosure of audited financial statements prior to annual general meetings. They said the organization is overly centralized and secretive, and that a new constitution was

declared passed even though a majority of members voted against it at an annual general meeting.

Senior B'nai Brith spokesperson Frank Dimant has responded to those allegations by saying that BBC followed proper governance procedures and that B'nai Brith International's court of appeal ruled the constitution was properly enacted.

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Greater Toronto Area



BBYO TEENS GATHER: Toronto BBYO teens recently joined fellow members from Ottawa and Montreal for a Fraternity/Sorority Weekend Conclave in the nation's capital. Clockwise from left, Oren Epstein, Michael Gallowitz, Josh Harendorf, Dylan Hennesy, Anya Boyko, Michelle Naftalis, Gillian Geller, Simone Tissenbaum, Maya Schonbach, Rochelle Derlick, Shannon Fox, Naomi Sand, Melanie Slapack and Samantha Garber.



BIG TALKERS: Grade 7 and 8 students recently took part in Bialik Hebrew Day School's annual public speaking contest. All students wrote and delivered original speeches in English and Hebrew, and presented prepared passages in Yiddish. Pictured, from left, are Grade 8 winners Nitzan Raor (Hebrew), Rotem Shalita (Hebrew), Jordan Chad (English), Ruth Chitiz (English), Maxine Grossman (Yiddish), Sydney Selznick (Yiddish), Shira Segal (Yiddish), Ira Halpern (English) and Mira Zuchowski (Hebrew).



COLLECTING FOR A CAUSE: Children at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre Nursery School combined their 100th day of school with a tikkun olam project. Their goal was to collect 100 food items for the Second Harvest Food Bank. They surpassed their goal by reaching 150 items. Pictured, back row from left, are Elena Abrams, Jackson Hughes, Stella Edney, Nicole Stein, Michelle Stein and Bianca Stovanovic; and, front row from left, Hannah Finlay, Ali Silver, Sophia Luo and Jamie Kirsch.

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish News

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Ruth & Norm Trachter, still loving life and each other 60 years later. Happy anniversary! Love, your children and your adoring 12 grandchildren.



Happy sixth birthday Alex. Mazel tov to your proud parents, Heidi & Paul Giannoulis. Love, Bubbie Leanna Starke and Great-Bubbie Trudy Kugelmass.



Sophie & Neil Frenkel of Ottawa are delighted to announce the engagement of their son Howard to Amanda, daughter of Sabina & Gerry Green of Montreal.



Happy second birthday Logan. Love from Mom, Dad and Riley, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins.

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What's New deadlines:
Monday, March 10, is the deadline for the March 20 issue, and Monday, March 17, is the deadline for the March 27 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Friday, March 7

SHABBAT ACROSS CANADA

Celebrate a Shabbat service and dinner with Jews across the country. Participating locations include Beth Emeth Synagogue, 416-633-3838; Hillel of Greater Toronto, 416-785-1465; Beth Torah Congregation, 416-782-4495; Temple Kol Ami, 905-709-2620; Am Shalom Synagogue, Barrie, 705-792-3949;

Shiaarei-Beth El Congregation, Oakville, 905-849-6000; Congregation Iyr Hamelech, Kingston, 905-762-0566. Info, www.njop.org.

Sunday, March 9

SINGLES WALKING GROUP

Join Walk and Talk Etc., a walking club for Jewish singles 50+, at the Sugarbush Maple Syrup Festival. Meet at The Kortright Centre, 9550 Pine Valley Dr. at 10 a.m. E-mail walkandtalketc@hotmail.com.

WACKY PURIM PARTY

The Winchevsky Centre hosts a Wacky Purim Party with YidRhythms; interactive games with musician **Brian Katz**, *Dr. Seuss-shan*, a twist on the Purim story; shalach manot art activity; costume parade and prizes; carnival games; raffie; graggers; and hamantaschen. 11

a.m. Adults \$10, children \$6. 416-789-5502

ISRAELI FILM: CUP FINAL

The First Narayever film series continues with the film *Cup Final*, set in 1982 during Israel's invasion of Lebanon. The World Cup of football is underway in Spain, and a captured Israeli soldier and a PLO commander are fans. Free. 3 p.m. 416-927-0546

SINGLES SEMINAR

The Jewish Family Institute presents a seminar for singles 25-35 on dating toward marriage. 5 p.m. at the Village Shul. Advance registration only, 416-785-1107, ext. 204.

ELKA KLEIN LECTURE

Darchoi Noam Congregation presents "Jews, Citizens and Slaves

in 18th-Century Suriname" with **Prof. Natalie Davis**. 7:30 p.m. www.darcheinoam.on.ca or 416-638-4783

Monday, March 10

LUNCH AND LEARN

Emanah Women of Toronto hosts a lunch and learn about Purim, 12 p.m. at the B'nai Brith apartments, 4300 Bathurst St. \$10; \$18 non-members. Pre-registration required, emunah@kwik.net or 416-636-0036.

CRITICIZING ISRAEL

Westmount Shul and Learning Centre presents a program launch of "60 Days for 60 Years: Israel," with **Rabbi Reuven Bulka** speaking on "Do Jews in the Diaspora Have a Right To Criticize Israel?" 8 p.m. at BAYT. 905-482-9488

Tuesday, March 11

BOOK CLUB

The Library Book Club of Holy Blossom Temple meets to discuss *The Yiddish Policemen's Union* by **Michael Chabon**. 9:30 a.m. All welcome. Info, **Anne** 416-789-3291, ext. 235.

BIKUR CHOLIM LUNCH

Bikur Cholim of Toronto's annual spring luncheon honours **Dr. Bradley Strauss** with the Rofeh of the Year award and **Esther Basser** with the Ahavas Chesed award. 12 p.m. at the Sephardic Kehila Centre. Reserve, 416-783-7983 or bikur-cholimtor@rogers.com.

LUNCH AND LEARN

Beth Tikvah Synagogue's series

Continued on page 27

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Avi Benlolo, President and CEO,

Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies

902-5075 Yonge Street, Toronto Ontario M2N 6C6

Email: stteyn@fswc.ca or Fax: 416-864-1083

What's New

Continued from page 26

continues with chiropractor **Elaine Dembe** on "Passionate Longevity." Lunch 12 p.m. Program 12:45 p.m. \$20/cash. By reservation only. 416-221-3434, ext. 352

'COMPARATIVE JUDAISM'

Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism presents "Comparative Judaism" with **Rabbi Eva Goldfinger**. 7 p.m. tonight, March 25 and April 22. Non-members \$15. 18 Wynford Dr. RSVP, 416-385-3910.

WHAT JUDAISM SAYS...

Rabbi Matthew Kaufman begins a five-week series on intermarriage, conversion, anti-Semitism, and homosexuality and marriage. 7:30 p.m. at the Lodzer Centre. Free. 416-636-6665

REVIEW: CLOSE TO HOME

Adath Israel Sisterhood Book and Film Review series with **Heather Cassel** on the film *Close to Home*. 8 p.m. \$10, non-members \$15. 416-635-5340

Wednesday, March 12

FINDING JEWISH ROOTS

Darchei Noam Lunch and Learn presents "Finding Your Jewish Roots." Learn how to explore your family tree with **Bill Gladstone**. 12:30-1:30 p.m. Bring lunch; beverages and cookies provided. www.darcheinoam.on.ca or 416-638-4783

SUPPORT GROUP

Baycrest Centre offers the Caring For Your Loved One support group, for people caring for an elderly parent with dementia. Today through April 16, 6-7:30 p.m. This support/education group will teach caregivers about dementia and how to deal with related issues. Info and registration, 416-785-2500. Nira, ext. 3587, or **Elaine**, ext. 2998.

CHRISTIAN-JEWISH TALKS

The Christian-Jewish Dialogue of Toronto presents "Season of Freedom, Season of Rebirth," Christian and Jews in candid conversation. 7:30 p.m. at St. Philip-the-Apostle Anglican Church, 201 Caribou Rd.

WOMEN ON WOMEN

Beth Tzedec Congregation continues "What Does the Midrash Say About Women's Issues?" with **Rachel Adelman**. Tonight, "Serah bat Asher: Songstress, Poet and Woman of Wisdom." March 19, "Women on the Edge: The Call for Divine Intervention." 7:30 p.m. 416-781-3511

PROSTATE CANCER 101

Dr. Roger Buckley, chief of urology at North York General Hospital, lectures on the topic "Prostate Cancer 101: The Journey" at a meeting of the support groups Man to Man and Side by Side. 7:30 p.m. at Toronto Botanical Gardens. 416-932-8820

JEWISH VIEW OF ART

Darchei Noam Congregation presents **Rabbi Tina Grimberg** on "Ken Anachnu B'Yadcha: Seeing Art Through Jewish Eyes," the world of art and creative design as seen through Jewish eyes. 7:30-9:30 p.m. 864 Sheppard Ave. W. 416-638-4783 or www.darcheinoam.on.ca

Other News

ISRAEL & HEBREW

The Westmount Shul & Learning Centre offers two courses: Israel: The Land of Judaism: A Historical Perspective with **Rabbi Yossi Michalowitz**, beginning Tuesday, March 11, 8:30 p.m.; and "Learn to Read Hebrew," a free six-week course beginning Wednesday, March 12, women only, 10 a.m., men and women, 8 p.m. Pre-register, 905-482-9488.

WINE TASTING

She'arim Hebrew Day School hosts an evening of wine tasting with prizes and boutiques. Thursday, March 13, 7:30-10 p.m. at the Borochov Cultural Centre. \$18 in advance, \$25 at the door. Tickets, 416-633-4783 or Na'amat, 416-636-5425.

PURIM PARTIES/CARNIVAL

The **Temmy Latner Forest Hill Jewish Centre** hosts Cookies and Costumes: A Family Purim Party, with magic show followed by costume parade, balloons, face painting, live music, refreshments and more. \$10/person or \$30/family in advance, \$12/person at the door. Sunday, March 16, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. 446 Spadina Rd. Suite 206. Call **Luci**, 416-483-0883.

Zichron Yisroel Congregation of Associated Hebrew School presents Purim Carnival 2008. Games, prizes, jumping castle, face painting, costumes, pizza, popcorn and more. Sunday, March 16, 12-4 p.m. at 300 Atkinson Ave. Admission \$2, \$4.

CHASSIDISM

Join **Aaron Nussbaum** for "Chassidism: The Early Masters" and study the lives, legends and teachings of the early masters through their writings. March 17-April 7, 8-9:15 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. \$50. Register, 416-877-2050 or www.mekorot.ca.

PURIM CARDS

It's not too late to order **Emanah Oriah** Purim cards and support needy children in Israel. Card packages are six for \$18; additional cards for \$3 each; personalized with your greeting, \$10/card. To purchase, call 416-636-0036.

FLOWERS AREN'T ENOUGH

Jewish Women International Canada presents **Naomi Ackerman** in *Flowers Aren't Enough*, the story of a young woman from an upper-middle-class family who finds herself in an abusive relationship. Wednesday, March 26, 8 p.m. at Beth Tzedec Synagogue. \$25, includes dessert reception. Tickets, 416-630-9313, or info@jwicanada.com.

WINNIPEG EDUCATORS

Did you or anyone you know teach/work in Winnipeg's Jewish school system from 1907-present? Gray Academy of Jewish Education is installing a plaque with a list of educators and administrators. To include a name, contact www.100years gala.com.

TRIP TO ISRAEL

The **Bernard Betel Centre** is sponsoring a trip to Israel May 13-25 in celebration of Israel's 60th anniversary. Members \$3,200; non-members \$3,400. Call 416-225-2112, ext. 123, for info.

JIAS TORONTO

Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, 4600 Bathurst St. #325. www.jias.toronto.org. To register, volunteer, or for more information on these programs call 416-630-6481.

Shindman/Sharna Scholarships provide financial support for new immigrant Jewish students pursuing post-secondary degrees or upgrading their skills. Application deadline

is April 20. Complete terms of eligibility and applications are available in JIAS office and can also be downloaded at www.jias.toronto.org.

Passover seder hosts wanted: If you would like to welcome a newcomer family to your seder table, please contact **Joanna** at ext. 30.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. Information/registration, 416-638-7800 or www.jfandcs.com. Call **Shawna**, ext. 215, for info and registration. • Developing a Successful Parenting Relationship with Your Ex: a workshop, Tuesday, March 18, 7-9 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building. • Living With Teens: A six-session group. Begins Wednesday, March 19, 7:30-9 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

FOR SENIORS

Beth Tikvah Friendship Group hosts singer and entertainer **Mickey Lewin**. Sunday, March 9, 2-4 p.m. \$5. 416-221-3434

55+ Forward at the **MNJCC** offers "Difficult Family Situations Seniors May Encounter," a dramatic presentation and discussion about how to address a variety of situations and where to get help. Thursday, March 13, 1:30 p.m. Info, **Phyllis Fien**, 416-944-6211, ext. 155.

The **Association of Jewish Seniors** hosts **Frank Dimant**, of B'nai Brith Canada, on "An Analysis of Israel's Strategic Position." Thursday, March 13, 9:30 a.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. Guests \$2. Reserve, **Tammy**, 416-635-2860, ext. 458.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the **Park**. Casino Rama, Thursday, March 13. Info, Tuesday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 416-395-7881

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE. 1003 Steeles Ave. W. 416-225-2112.

Arthritis management by appointment, Monday, March 10, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Call ext. 381.

Russian Samovar Day, Wednesday, March 12, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

JCC Maccabi Spin-a-thon to support Maccabi athletes. Sunday, March 30, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

JVIAnetwork, connecting active vision-impaired Jewish adults in a program that allows for socialization and networking. For information, call **Bess**, 905-508-2892.

"Thin Air" by **Nina Levitt** at the Koffler Gallery.

School and day-care registration is now open for the 2008-09 school year. Info, ext. 248.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www.mnjcc.org.

Great Jewish Composers Music Lecture with **Jordan Klapman**. "Yiddish American Swing in the Postwar Era." Sunday, March 9, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. \$9, includes bagels and coffee. Ext. 0.

Jacobs Lounge Visual Arts Space presents "Neighbours Who Disappeared," a project of the Jewish Museum in Prague and Forgotten Ones Civic Association through March 28.

2008 Canadian Jewish Playwriting Competition submission deadline May 31. For info and guidelines, contact **Esther Arbeid**, ext. 606, or esthera@mnjcc.org.

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SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 30

OBITUARIES and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Kelman, Molly	Feb. 14/08	5937 Bathurst St
Silverman, Hersz	Feb. 15/08	7 Townsgate Dr
Generich, David	Feb. 15/08	4383 Bathurst St
Klar, Saul	Feb. 15/08	Private
Dattner, Joseph	Feb. 16/08	Private
Sedley, Leo	Feb. 14/08	
Nightingale, Dorothy	Feb. 16/08	3560 Bathurst St
Shor, Maya	Feb. 17/08	Private
Gotfried, Tola	Feb. 17/08	90 Pepperberry Rd
Varnovitski, Iakov	Feb. 19/08	Private
Vainer, Hasia	Feb. 19/08	5430 Yonge St
Slome, Arnold	Feb. 20/08	135 Antibes Dr
Oziel, Esther	Feb. 20/08	800 Sheppard Ave.
Khazina, Bronia	Feb. 20/08	Private
Kramer, Isaac	Feb. 20/08	

**HEDREW
BASIC
BURIAL**

Rene Ashley	Feb 17/08	43 Baynards Ln
Estelle Nepom	Feb 20/08	351 Christie St
Malika Kolpak	Feb 21/08	850 Steeles Av W

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Richard Kline	Feb 12/08	146 Rose Green Dr
Hessie Unger	Feb 12/08	426 Dufferin Rd
Ida (Horn) Levine	Feb 13/08	651 Woburn Ave
Blima Waxberg	Feb 13/08	22 Evanston Dr

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Belle Weinman	Feb 13/08	55 Skymark Dr
Harry Kamrad	Feb 12/08	740 Centre St
Toni Rosenfeld	Feb 13/08	3560 Bathurst St
Sylvia Aronovitch	Feb 14/08	535 North St
Wolfe Magder	Feb 15/08	645 Castlefield Ave
Naomi Tarlow	Feb 14/08	91 Townsgate Dr
Nathan Hurwicz	Feb 14/08	3705 Bathurst St
Max Goody	Feb 15/08	665 Roselawn Ave
Stella Levine	Feb 16/08	3560 Bathurst St
Mary Gelbard	Feb 15/08	215 Searle Ave
Jacob Bailin	Feb 16/08	8 Edmund Seager Dr
Ted Waldman	Feb 16/08	155 Marlee Ave
Linda Altman	Feb 18/08	1 Glenis Gate
Jean Lerman	Feb 18/08	3705 Bathurst St
Stephen Shanoff	Feb 18/08	31 Peter Andrew Cr
Rabbi Jordan Pearlson	Feb 19/08	55 Ravenscroft Cir
Sylvia Krieger	Feb 20/08	355 St. Clair Ave W
Adele Liederman	Feb 20/08	1555 Finch Ave E
Jacob Leidner	Feb 22/08	20 Lyonsgate Dr
Celine Szcchory	Feb 22/08	55 QueensWay Ave
Stella Nirenberg	Feb 22/08	3560 Bathurst St
Edward Futerman	Feb 23/08	27 Montessor Dr
Gerald Wener	Feb 23/08	7601 Bathurst St
Harry Shendelman	Feb 23/08	161 Banbury Rd
Ida Blum	Feb 23/08	11 Cedar Springs Gr

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Coast to Coast

Lawyer pleads guilty to child porn charge

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Special to the CJN

WINNIPEG — Lawyer Gary Dolovich has pleaded guilty in provincial court here to possessing and distributing child pornography.

When arrested in July 2006, Dolovich was charged with 17 counts of distributing child pornography over the Internet. The charges related to the distribution of hundreds of images.

He pleaded guilty to one count encompassing offences that occurred between February and October of 2005. He will be sentenced this spring and could face a jail term.

Dolovich's lawyer, Josh Weinstein, said that in the upcoming sentencing hearing, he will be "asking the court that [Dolovich] not go to jail."

Weinstein is awaiting a report from a forensic psychologist that he said will consider whether his client is a risk to the community and detail steps that Dolovich, who did not profit monetarily from distributing the child porn images, has taken toward rehabilitation.

Born and raised in Winnipeg, Dolovich, an outwardly observant Jew, was called to the Manitoba bar in 1991 and immigrated to Israel in 1998. In Israel, he worked as a lawyer and lived in the small settlement of Talmon in the West Bank, about 18 kilometres east of Modin.

In 2001 Dolovich left Israel and returned to live in Winnipeg, where he worked as the executive director of a local kashrut organization.

When he was arrested, Dolovich was working as a legal researcher for the Manitoba Court of Appeal, where he had also worked prior to making aliyah.

Winnipeg Police began to investigate him after receiving a tip from a national police body that deals with child exploitation.

The extensive police investigation led to the search and seizure of several computers and hardware, including ones used by the province's highest court.

Dolovich was arrested at Pearson International Airport in Toronto after police had issued a Canada-wide warrant for him.

He is divorced from his second wife and is the father of two children, who at the time of his arrest were aged seven and one. His second ex-wife and two children returned to live in Israel in 2007.

Det.-Sgt. Richard Lemire of the Manitoba Integrated Child Exploitation Unit said that his unit "will often be asked [by the Crown] to do a presentation to the judge at the sentencing hearing and will show the judge a representative sampling of the child pornography images found. This [part of the hearing] will be closed to the public."

He added: "These types of charges using the Internet have become very pervasive. It is a worldwide problem. It knows no demographics."

Coast to Coast

Vancouver library draws fire for controversial speaker

By LAUREN KRAMER
Special to The C/JN

VANCOUVER — When the Vancouver Public Library agreed to host controversial author Greg Felton as a speaker during national Freedom to Read week last month, city librarian Paul Whitney says he had no idea the decision would generate such opposition and outrage.

Felton, a Vancouver-based journalist and teacher whose writings on Israel have been criticized as anti-Semitic, is the author of *The Host and the Parasite: How Israel's Fifth Column Consumed America*, published last May by Dandelion Books in Phoenix, Ariz.

His Feb. 25 talk drew some 90 people, many of whom were very engaged and vocal during his presentation.

"There's been a fair amount of correspondence, mostly but not exclusively from the Jewish community," Whitney told *The C/JN*. "I have found this whole issue very distressing, because I found myself in arguments with people for whom I have great respect."

Canadian Jewish Congress, Pacific region (CJC), had urged community members to call the library and contact Whitney to express their disappointment at Felton's appearance.

The thesis of Felton's book is that a Zionist "junta" operated on Sept. 11, 2001, and that Zionists collaborated with the Nazis to exterminate the Jews.

The 50-year-old writer said he became interested in Israeli-Palestinian politics after the assassination of Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995.

"I made the observation then that Israel can choose to be a Jewish state or a democracy, but it can't be both," he told *The C/JN* in a phone interview on the day of his talk. "I feel that much of what we know about Israel and Palestine is blatantly false."

"For example, I researched Israel's creation and found out that it was not created legally. A number of things brought me to realize that a massive war crime was perpetrated against the Palestinians by the Jewish immigrants after World War II, and I became quite upset by this. I got a lot of hate mail for stating what I thought was simply an obvious truth. But I felt it was my job to write about it."

Felton twice approached the Vancouver Public Library (VPL) about an opportunity to speak about his book.

"The first time, last June, the librarian [he spoke to] said she was not interested. When he returned in the fall,

she looked at his book again and thought she could fit it under the auspices of Freedom to Read week," said Jean Kavanagh, marketing and communications manager for the VPL.

The library's decision to give Felton a platform outraged many members of Vancouver's Jewish community and the community at large.

"What do you call it when the Vancouver Public Library decides to present Felton, an apologist for the book-banning, journalist-jailing Iranian theocracy, as the featured author on the evening of Feb. 25, and as the library's contribution to national Freedom to Read Week?" Terry Glavin wrote Feb. 12 in the *Vancouver Sun*.

"In Felton's words, Hamas is not an Islamist death cult animated by that classic anti-Semitic forgery, the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. It's the equivalent of the French resistance during the Second World War, the 'passionate defender of Palestinians,'" Glavin wrote.

"There are no suicide bombings in Felton's lexicon. There are only 'sacrifice bombings. Israel itself is a creation of the Nazis. It's the Zionist Reich.'"

CJC worked with the Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver and the Canada-Israel Committee to develop a response to Felton that it characterized in a letter to the Jewish community as "quiet but effective advocacy."

In a meeting with the VPL, Congress requested that the library condemn Felton's book and admit that it made an error in inviting him to speak. The library declined to cancel the event.

"We felt it would be a lose-lose situation to cancel the talk," Whitney said. "We believe very strongly in the principle of freedom of expression, and because Freedom to Read is so fundamental to the library, we felt we needed to adhere to this principle, distasteful as we do find some of Felton's arguments."

"I feel the best anecdote to hate literature is exposure, getting stuff out," Whitney continued, adding that the library ordered two copies of Felton's book.

Though some members of the community called for a public protest at his talk, Congress opted against this strategy.

"Public protest will only provide him with more legitimacy and a larger platform from which to spread his message," CJC wrote in its letter to the community. "There is no advantage to engaging Mr. Felton in a debate, as there is no debating what he has to say. To do so would only legitimize his views and opinions."

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Students flock to Holocaust program in Europe

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

More than 60 years after the last Nazi concentration camp was liberated, interest in the Holocaust continues to resonate among young people.

How else to explain the growing desire to visit, first hand, the sites in Germany and Poland where the Nazis planned and executed their fiendish designs?

Organizers of the March of Remembrance and Hope (MRH) were surprised by the large numbers of university students who applied to participate in this year's event, a one-week trip that runs from May 16 to 23 and immerses participants in the horrors of the Holocaust. A similar program, the March of the Living, is geared toward Jewish high school students.

Though they have budgeted for only 60 participants, MRH organizers received some 150 applications, meaning the majority will be left behind.

That's the unfortunate reality when working with limited means, though the number of students who can be accommodated would increase if "an angel" comes through with funds.

Carla Wittes, director of the Canadian Centre for Diversity, the main sponsor of MRH, held open the possibility of expanding the program to accommodate more than the original 60, but her organization is more concerned about creating a stable and sustainable funding base that will support the MRH for years to come.

As of earlier this month, fundraising efforts to support the 60 were still underway, but Wittes was confident that at



Visits to Nazi concentration camps have been life-altering events for some taking part in the March of Remembrance and Hope. [Yossi Zelig photos]

least that goal will be achieved.

The 60 students will gather in New York for an orientation session before travelling to Europe. In Germany, they will visit Wannsee, the Berlin suburb where Nazi bureaucrats devised the Final Solution – the systematic murder of European Jews. They will also visit the once-thriving Jewish centres in Warsaw, Krakow and Lublin, as well as the former death camps of Auschwitz-Birkenau and Majdanek, where

millions were murdered.

Participants will be accompanied by Holocaust survivors, who will share their experiences.

As the MRH makes clear on its website, "You will feel their pain, be strengthened by their courage and become a witness yourself by experiencing the Holocaust through the stories of these remaining survivors. Throughout your travels in Poland you will be encouraged to freely discuss your feelings and impressions."

Eli Rubenstein, director of education for MRH, said the program has touched many hearts and changed many participants, making them vigorous advocates for tolerance and opponents of anti-Semitism.

"They become transmitters of [survivors'] messages," he said. "These are non-Jewish students who have taken on the burden of remembering what the Holocaust survivors have undergone, experienced and suffered."

"It breaks my heart [that only 60 will go], because these are students expressing sincerity and dedication to learning about the Holocaust," he added.

The students hail from across Canada and come from a number of religious and ethnic communities. Successful applicants must

demonstrate leadership qualities, take part in extra-curricular activities and show a desire to spread the lessons they gather in Europe, Wittes said.

Alumni of the 2005 MRH, which embarked on a joint trip with the teen-oriented March of the Living, formed a student group on campus called SHOUT, Students Helping Others Understand Tolerance, she said.

MRH was launched as an international program in 2001, when only 15 Canadians applied, one-tenth the current number. The international program was dropped in 2007, but the Canadian program continued to operate that year with close to 60 students visiting European sites.

"We felt it was way too important to let it lapse," Wittes said. "We've taken it on as our program."

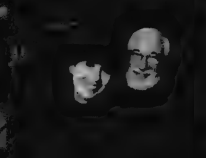
While the international program foundered due to lack of funds, interest outside Canada has continued.

Organizers were contacted by two New York universities – Nazareth College and Hobart and William Smith Colleges – which will join the 60-strong Canadian delegation.

Canadian students are asked to contribute \$1,000 each toward the trip. The remainder of the cost is subsidized. The Canadian Centre for Diversity is the main sponsor, while universities provide some financial assistance, as does National Jewish Campus Life.

For more information, Wittes can be reached at 416-597-9693, ext. 25.

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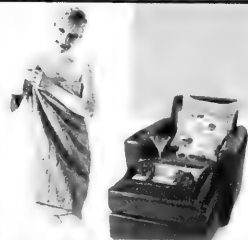
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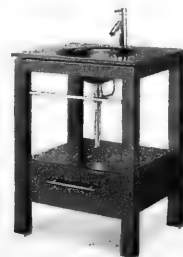
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Community welcomes federal aid

Continued from page 1

"A 2004 study produced by Statistics Canada showed that of the 928 hate crime incidents recorded in Canada in 2001-2002, 25 per cent were directed against the Jewish community."

Added CJC co-president Sylvain Abitbol: "We look forward to continuing our partnership with the government on this matter, and to a fuller expansion of the program to ensure that financial resources are sufficient to meet the needs of all communities who require this support."

David Koschitzky, chair of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, said, "Our community has for many years shouldered the responsibility of making security preparedness a necessary part of our communal life, so we are grateful for

this support."

Frank Dimant, executive vice-president of B'nai B'rith Canada called the announcement "an important step forward in what must be part and parcel of a sustained, long-term effort to provide for the safety and security of all Canadians."

According to Day's office, the program is intended to help "defray the costs of security infrastructure enhancements."

Communities can claim expenses on items such as security assessments, alarm systems, fences, contractor fees, and labour and training costs on new security equipment.

The government has set April 15 as the next application date for funding.

When the pilot program was announced last year, it was not without its detractors.

At the time, the federal Liberals called the Conservative program an "act of political desperation" and a "watered-down version" of a proposed Liberal security plan put forward by Liberal leader Stéphane Dion last March.

Dion's plan, they said, would have committed retroactive funding for organizations who had already paid for increased security measures to protect their communities.

Thornhill Liberal MP Susan Kadis, who chaired a Liberal caucus task force on security funding for communities at risk, told *The C/N* last year that the Conservative program did not allocate enough funding.

"It's just not enough money... it misses the mark," Kadis said. "We believe it shouldn't be a 'pilot' project, it should just be in place."

Kadis' task force consulted with affected communities and was to have finalized its report in late August of last year with its own recommendations for the funding amounts.

Calls to Kadis were not returned by *The C/N's* deadline. Bernie Farber, the CJC's chief executive officer, also told *The C/N* last year that he thought the program should contain funds in the \$15- to \$20-million range in order for it to be effective, but he credited the Conservatives for making good on the program nonetheless.

"I'm still of the opinion that [security funding] has to be expanded," Farber told *The C/N* last week. "But my belief is that this is something the government is seriously looking into doing."

ע'כר ב'נ'ט

גידי קורן וחברים



הגש הישראלי

אחת לאיזה זמן קורה בישראל גש קטן שמראה לי כמה מיוחד המקום הזה וכמה, למרות הקשיים האיוות החיים המסובכת שם, זה המקום הכי מיוחד בעולם.

רבת דובר על שדרות, על מצבה הענק, על זה שבתל אביב ממשיכים להיות כרגיל בעוד ששם לידים מפתחים מתחבאים מתחת לשולחנות בית הספר. ברור לכל שהפתרון הצבאי מסוכן ביותר ושהכנות רחילי צדל לזעה תעלה במחיר אנשי קשה מאוד.

והנה, כשנרמה ששדרות נגיבת לפניה, קמים עשרת אלפים ישראלים וטוענים מכל רחבי הארץ לשדרות לעשות שם קניות בסוף השבוע הדיעה האתר ריגשה אותי עצמותי המוסר לאצטי לשדרות-אנחנו אתכם ואנחנו באים לעשות אצלכם קניות למרות הקשיים. המסר נחמס-לא תוכלו לו כנור, נפשו חסונה האנחנו נתגבר עליכם כמו שהתגברנו על צאצאי היטל'ר לפנים.

הגש הקדי

ביום חורף קפא. אדינה הפדרציה אדוע תמיכה, ובאמצע השבוע הגיעו מעל לאלפים איש, אשה וילד לכנס הדרות תמיכה בשדרות האדוע שדר ישידות בליון בסודותו ובאשדור, שם ישוב שלוש בברק כמה שאת אורחים ראו את חום התמיכה מפורסנו.

וכשנראה מקלות הנער של שדרות "ח"י-שר איתם הקהל בסודותו, נעזרות דוגל ישראל נשאו באלם. מה לאמר-הרבה עיניים לוחות היו שם בשדרות מסר. הראשון של פרופ. אלן רושביץ, המצפן של עם ישראל, סחפה את הקהל בסערת רגשות-איש איש מדרגו.

ומכל דבריו חרדה והספידה אותי אותה נקודה מעיקר-השרושה סיפלה בסודותו בצי'הרחה היא החריבה ערים שלמות חרונה מאות אורחים חפים האיש לא הצה פה. משיראה דורשים יתו-אדורה מתקפים על ידי טורדוסטים שפועלים בחזות אכלוסיה אורחות-ישראל פוחות להגיב בהרעה אדורים.

אני אכן כבר דור שלם, ולא יכור לי אדוע כל כך מרגש-הרגשות גאווה אפסיות לוחות חלק מקהילה היהודית של טורונטו.

באותו עניין

בשנת 2002 הגיעה לסודות המדעיין הישראלי הדעה שהא'ר' טורדוסט סלחא שחאדה נמצא באזור מגורים. מטוס חל איר הטיל על הבית החדש פצצה במשקל טונה שממנה נרגש שחאדה, אדוע עוד 14 פלשתיאנים.

בעוד חסר תדקים הדיעה עכשו פרקליטות המדינה על הקמת ועדה בדיקות היטל, ואת עקבות לחי קשה של ארגוני אכיות אדור ישראלים. באותו עניין אבר נשביעות האדורים שר המשפטים פרופ. דניאל פרידמן, שמתנגד לצדדי הפרקליטות-וכיות אדור יש לא-לשפועלים ומשפחותיהם, אלא גם לחילי צדל.

אפשר להחמיר לישראל על שגם בזמן מלחמה בדרטולית כזו היא שומרת על צלם אנשי, אבל אפשר גם לטעון שהישראלים נפלו על הראש. אבל שישא בנינו.

ושבו באותו עניין

זה שאמצעי התקשורת חס אטומטאטית נגד ישראל הוא כבר דבר שבשינוי. אז הנה סיפור ששלה לי חברי שמחה:

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הישראלים נכנסו ללא היסוס ללבוש האדורה, ונתנו לו אגרוף באף, והאדורה הדחמה משמרת את הילדה. כשצאצא הישראלי מהכלוב הוא וזכה להכרעה כללית והשואת רמתו וזהו משה אלו עזבנו שובח במקום האומר לו זה מדרגים מה שעשית, והם אכפת לך שאדור את זה בעינינו שלם.

למחרת מופיעה כחורת ענק בעינינו:

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Coast to Coast

New DVD chronicles Jewish life in Hamilton

BY ABIGAIL CUKIER

Special to the CJN

HAMILTON — Edie Rochkin remembers helping her mother set the table for Shabbat each Friday night.

"We would never know how many [places] to set. Dad would go to shul and bring people home who had nowhere to go," she says in the DVD, *Jewish Hamilton, the Way We Were*.

Rochkin is one of about 40 people interviewed for the DVD detailing Jewish life in Hamilton in the first half of the 20th century.



Wendy Schneider and Billy Shaffir have volunteered many hours over the last three years to produce *Jewish Hamilton, The Way We Were*. [Abigail Cukier photo]

When Wendy Schneider, co-president of the Beth Jacob synagogue and editor of the *Hamilton Jewish News*, began gathering an oral account of her family's history, she had an idea — why not gather information from many families to paint a picture of Jewish life in the city?

Schneider asked her friend Billy Shaffir, a sociology professor at McMaster University, for his help — and his video recorder.

For about three years, the two have been volunteering their time to visit and interview Jewish seniors in the area.

"Everyone received us so warmly and thought it was a great idea," said Schneider. "It clearly resonates with the people we've met."

"It's important to capture that period of vibrancy. Hamilton was a great place to grow up. If you don't capture that, it's lost."

However, when trying to raise funds for the project, the two were at first greeted with a lukewarm reception. They held a public screening of the demo DVD this fall at Beth Jacob and crossed their fingers.

"We had a way bigger turnout than we expected. About 120 people of all ages came out," Schneider said. "It was an absolutely magical evening. People were talking and laughing. The response was so delightful, the joy and laughter. It was very fulfilling for us."

"Then we knew it was worthwhile. People really connected to this."

Shaffir moved from Montreal to Hamilton in the 1970s and raised his family here, and Schneider grew up in Hamilton, but neither knew very much about the city's Jewish roots.

"It was really an eye-opener to see where they shopped, who they dated and how vibrant it was," Shaffir said. "There were four [synagogues] built by people with no formal education. These institutions were established by people who were workers. It's a tremendous credit to them."

The synagogues were on Hunter, Hess, Ferguson and Cannon streets, and in the DVD, Helen Yellin remembers

the beauty of the Cannon Street synagogue.

"It was built of the finest woods. They had three chandeliers in there that were so magnificent. I think they're in some ritzy restaurants in Toronto now."

"The pedlars, the poor people built that shul."

She calls the Ferguson shul, the *broigasa* shul, the 'angry' shul.

"If somebody couldn't get along with people in their shul, they went there. You get three Jews, you get four shuls," she laughed.

Hamilton's present downtown area, bounded by York Boulevard and Barton, John to Bay streets was the centre of Hamilton's Jewish area with thriving kosher butchers, fruit companies and delicatessens like Boleslawsky's, which Rochkin said became like a club at night. Young people spent countless hours at the Jewish Community Centre, which moved from Vine to John to Delaware, producing plays, doing arts and crafts, exercising and going to dances.

About 2,500 Jews lived in Hamilton at that time. Even though the Jewish population has almost doubled to more than 4,000, the vibrant centre and many businesses are no longer here. The synagogues have moved west from the downtown.

Schneider says while it's a joy for the storytellers to reminisce, it's exciting for the younger generation to get a sense of what the community was like.

She and Shaffir are devoting their time "for the love of it" and have given the uncut interviews to each family to keep.

They are not always happy memories. Some remember when areas of Hamilton had covenants that barred Jews, and there was the teacher who could not advance to principal because he was Jewish. Jews could shop at Eaton's, but not work there.

But Shannon Shapiro has fond memories of being part of the early Hamilton Jewish community.

"It was a wonderful time. We weren't what I'd say, prosperous, but we were happy, very happy."

Those sentiments shine through in *Jewish Hamilton, the Way We Were*.

The completed DVD will include an interactive table of contents, allowing viewers to click to a specific area, archival photos, interviews and census data.

Schneider and Shaffir have raised about \$19,000 so far, with a goal of \$30,000 total. All funds raised will go toward production costs. Donors will receive a charitable tax receipt.

For information or to donate, call (905) 628-0058 or e-mail wendy.schneider@sympatico.ca



Abraham and Bella Freeman standing on either side of their niece Ruth Charney from Toronto. The child is Jeremy Freeman (called Jerry).

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New Yiddish festival coming to Winnipeg

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — A new Yiddish festival, Mameloshen: A Festival of Yiddish Entertainment and Culture, is coming to Winnipeg this spring.

It is based on Toronto's successful Ashkenaz program, said Laurie Mainster, spokesperson for the I.L. Peretz Folk School Endowment Trust, which is co-sponsoring the program with the Rady Jewish Community Centre.

The trust fund was created from the money earned from the sale of the last I.L. Peretz Folk School building. The longtime north Winnipeg Yiddish language school merged with the Talmud Torah Hebrew language school in the early 1980s.

The Talmud Torah — I.L. Peretz School was closed in 1997 and all students transferred to the new Gray Academy in the Asper Jewish Community Campus in south Winnipeg.

"This festival will be an opportunity for audiences to celebrate the richness and beauty of Yiddish while enjoying high calibre events featuring both local and out-of-town performers," Mainster said.

Since 1994, he said, the Peretz School Trust has funded many community initiatives aimed at perpetuating Yiddish language and culture. "For the past five years we have been working

with the Rady JCC to put in Yiddish programs," he said. "They have all been single shows or Yiddish films."

This year, said Tamar Barr, the Rady JCC's program director, "we decided to try something new. We will be having one program a week — starting on Tuesday, May 13 — for four weeks, featuring performers who have never appeared here before."

First up are the Sisters of Sheynville from Toronto, an all-female swing-klezmer sextet composed of singer/composer/bandleader Lenka Lichtenberg, creative director/fiddler/singer/songwriter Isabel Frysberg, pianist Fern Lindzon, string bass player Rachel Melas, clarinet player Kinneret Sagee and drummer Lorie Wolf.

On May 20, novelist and playwright Michael Wex is coming to town.

On May 27, Neshomah, Winnipeg's new Yiddish choir, under the direction of Richard Yaffe, will be making its debut.

Finally, on June 5, Mameloshen will be presenting The Three Jewish Divas. While Theresa Tova and Joanne Borts have appeared here before, this is the first appearance by Adrienne Cooper and the first time the three will be appearing here together.

"We hope that our programs will appeal to people of all ages," Barr said. "We are excited about this. There has been a lot of buzz in the

community. We have had a lot of phone calls already from people wanting to buy tickets or find out how to get involved.

"If we get a good response, we would consider making Mameloshen an annual event."

Mainster said that any profits made from the festival will be directed mainly to the Yiddish language program at the University of Manitoba. Some of the money would also go toward supporting other Rady JCC cultural programs.

Interfaith festival aims to promote peaceful coexistence

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Special to The CJN

WINNIPEG — Planning has begun for the first-ever interfaith festival in Manitoba, an idea conceived by Perry Kimelman.

Kimelman, who is Jewish, proposed that during a weekend festival, synagogues, mosques, churches and temples would be opened, and people would be invited to come in and learn about each other's faiths, in a celebration of peaceful coexistence.

"The festival will allow those who identify themselves strongly with their faith traditions an opportunity to share this aspect of their lives with those that would like to learn and experience another's faith traditions in an open-house environment," Kimelman says.

"This celebration will invite open dialogue, which is not customarily available during traditional faith services."

About a year ago, Kimelman, who is a dentist, presented his idea to the Manitoba Interfaith Council, which responded favourably. He then put together an advisory committee.

"We have a really good quality steering committee made up of people from different faiths," he says. "I believe they have the stature and connections necessary to make this vision a reality."

Asad Khan, a retired internal medicine specialist who represents the Muslim community on the Interfaith Council, has joined the steering committee. Khan, who was born in India, was honoured last year by the Canadian Centre for Ecumenism for his interfaith work. He is now chair of the Islamic Education Foundation of Manitoba, which promotes higher education for Muslim women by granting university scholarships.

"During the festival, the Grand Mosque, which I attend, would be opened, and people could visit at the time of

prayer, and then dialogue with Imam Shykh Hosni Azzabi... [who] originates from North Africa and has a degree in education," Khan says.

Joyce Milgard, the mother of David Milgard, spent decades fighting for her son's release from jail following his wrongful conviction for murder. She has volunteered to be on the festival's steering committee. Other members include Rabbi Alan Green of Shaarey Zedek Synagogue; James Christie, dean of the faculty of theology at the University of Winnipeg; and Karen Toole, provincial co-ordinator of spiritual care for Manitoba Health.

Toole, a Christian involved with the United Church, has "shared an interfaith round table with Dr. Khan... I think there is a will among people right now not just to know our neighbour, but to celebrate our diversity. We're living in

a time where the world has come to each other's doorsteps and we can celebrate the fact that we can walk through each other's doors."

She believes the festival will draw large numbers. "Already in Winnipeg there is an interfaith series where people can sign up to visit a religious site — a church, synagogue, mosque or other sanctuary. The series is drawing about 200 people per visit. Fifteen years ago, this series would have drawn only 15 people."

"Besides peaceful coexistence, it is my hope that this festival will explore the power of forgiveness as a meaningful step on the road to peace," Kimelman says.

"It's my hope that the festival can serve as an exportable model of interfaith cooperation for other cities," he adds.

Financing would come from groups who want to participate in the festival, Toole says.

"If the vision is good, the money will come," Kimelman adds. "Right now, the committee is focusing on choosing a suitable date for the festival, which we anticipate will run annually."



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Coast to Coast



Abe and Betty Corrin

Winnipeg couple enjoys 70 years of wedded bliss

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — At age 94, Abe Corrin can still thread a needle and ride a bicycle. His 92-year-old wife, Betty, still drives a car.

On Feb. 27, the Winnipeg couple celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary with family and friends at a party at the Gwen Senter Creative Living Centre.

In an interview at their north Winnipeg apartment, Betty Corrin was happy to bring out letters of congratulations from the Governor General and the Queen, the prime minister, the lieutenant-governor of Manitoba, the provincial minister responsible for seniors issues and Winnipeg Mayor Sam Katz.

"I married the girl next door," Abe Corrin says.

The couple grew up kitty-corner to each other in the north end of Winnipeg and met in 1936 through mutual friends.

Gertrude (Betty) Barlin's parents, Samuel Israel and Freda Barlin, were married in London, England, before settling in Winnipeg. Betty grew up in a family of four brothers and three sisters. Only she and one brother, who lives in Toronto, are still alive.

Abe Corrin is the oldest of six brothers and a sister — born to Samuel and Leah Corrin. All the siblings are still alive.

Shortly after the couple's only child, Doreen, was born in 1942, Abe shipped out with the Canadian armed forces. He served three years in Newfoundland and on patrol dodging U-boats in the North Atlantic.

Abe is a tailor by trade. For 30 years, he worked with his father in Corrin and Sons Cloak Manufacturing.

"My father was a tailor," he recalls. "He

taught all of us boys to sew, and we all worked in the factory. At one point, we employed about 100 people."

During the war, he says, Corrin and Sons did a lot of work for the military.

After the war, the company sent a lot of coats to Poland and Russia on behalf of UNICEF.

Abe also worked for several other Winnipeg garment manufacturers, and he spent many years working out of his home on contract. He says he had three sewing machines in his basement.

At 94, he is still working part time as a tailor replacing zippers and repairing linings for private customers. He also creates his own designs. He sews parts of old ties onto his shirts.

Betty worked for 25 years in accounting for three different companies.

The couple lived in their own house until 2004, when they moved into their two-bedroom apartment.

One of the highlights of their week is Wednesdays at the Gwen Senter Creative Living Centre. "We enjoy the lunch, the bingo, and I especially love the dances at Gwen Senter," Abe says.

Until recently, they travelled widely, with many trips to Hawaii, Palm Springs, Calif., and Florida.

"We used to have a wonderful group of friends we travelled with," Betty said. "We were like a family."

Abe added that "we have lived life to the fullest. We have always enjoyed ourselves."

As well as their daughter, Doreen, and her husband, Abe and Betty have three grandchildren and one great-grandson, who was recently bar-mitzvahed.



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Sderot vigil participants back Israeli government

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Participants in a downtown vigil held in the wake of the death of a Sderot man, pledged full support for the Israeli government in its response to the stepped-up rocket fire from Gazan Palestinians on the western Negev border town.

About 30 people gathered at the windswept corner of René Lévesque Boulevard and Peel Street, outside the office building that houses the Israeli consulate. They heeded a call for a spontaneous show of solidarity made a couple of hours earlier by rabbis Reuben Poupko and Chaim Steinmetz. "The Montreal Jewish community stands four-square with the government of Israel in whatever it decides to do," said Rabbi Poupko, spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Israel Beth Aaron.

The group was joined by Israeli Consul General Yoram Elron.

That day, Roni Yechiah, 47, a father of four, was killed by a Qassam missile that hit Sapir College, near Sderot, where he was a student. Hamas claimed responsibility for the attack.

Elron noted that Yechiah had undergone a successful kidney transplant a few years ago, and that his eldest son had recently begun his military service.

Those gathered also hoped to draw public attention to the plight of the residents of Sderot who they say have been terrorized by some 8,000 rocket attacks over the past seven years, more than 500 in 2008 alone.

Elron mentioned that some Quebecers have been critical of Israel's actions to defend itself. Nevertheless, he said Israel will "react strongly and forcefully, and Israelis will not be deterred from their daily lives [because of the attacks]."

"We have this stamina and courage, to a great extent, thanks to the support of people like you."

Rabbi Poupko said Israel should not be criticized for any disproportional response, as it has been in the past.

"For Israel to respond proportionally it would have to target civilians, and it would never do that."

He also noted that "some people have questioned why we should have a vigil like this. It is because it is the ethical and right thing to do. It's a simple statement that as Jews we feel the pain of the loss of every Israeli life."

Rabbi Steinmetz, spiritual leader of Congregation Tifereth Beth David Jerusalem, added: "We are here because it is our responsibility to show support for the State of Israel in its time of need. We are brothers and sisters of the citizens of Israel... We have an obligation to mourn."

The inhabitants of the Sderot area are being attacked "for the simple crime of walking in the land of Israel as a Jew."

The group concluded by singing the Israeli national anthem *Hatikvah*.

The Montreal Solidarity Committee has been established, under the chairmanship of

Dr. Lawrence Rosenberg, and Alice Lehrer who was present at the vigil. She said the goal is to raise awareness within the Jewish community and show solidarity with the people of Sderot by raising funds and sending missions to the town. Money collected will be sent to Israel through the Mizrahi organization.

Hillel, the Jewish students association, will hold an event called My Heart is with Sderot from March 10 to 13 at McGill University, Concordia University, the Université de Montréal and Dawson College. The guest speaker is Noam Bedein, founder of the

Sderot Media Centre, which manages a website.

Mount Royal MP Irwin Cotler, the opposition human rights critic, sent a message to the vigil extending his support for Israel's right to defend and protect its citizens without the condemnation of the international community.

"The tragedy is not only the continued assaults and relentless casualties — of which this tragic death is but the latest — but the international diffidence and indifference to the suffering of Sderot and the neighbouring areas all these years..."

"No country — and no people — should have to endure such a relentless assault, and then endure the ignominy of having its exercise of self-defence relentlessly condemned. Enough is enough."



Irwin Cotler

Canadian students added to StandWithUs team

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

In an effort to establish a stronger presence at universities in this country, StandWithUs, a non-profit Israeli education organization,



Dario David Hunter

selected three Canadian students to be Emerson fellows who promote Israel on their campuses.

The University of Windsor's Dario David Hunter, the University of Victoria's Andrea Sorin and McGill University's Shoshana Aronowitz are three of 40 students across North America who have been working this year to improve Israel's image on campus and to educate their campus communities about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

As StandWithUs Emerson fellows, Hunter, Sorin and Aronowitz plan events and campaigns, and host speakers on campus. They

also work to build networks and relationships with Jewish campus groups, as well as members of their campus' administration and media.

StandWithUs — founded in 2001 and based in Los Angeles with offices in cities including New York, Detroit, and San Francisco — offers website resources and materials to help students fight anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism on campus.

"In any given community there may be misinformation, there may be an anti-Israel presence on campus and our role is to make sure that people are aware of what is actually going on in Israel and why we should be proud of Israel's achievements," said Hunter, a third-year law student in Windsor's joint U.S.-Canada law program.

Continued on page 37



Andrea Sorin

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On Campus

McMaster rejects 'Israeli apartheid' banner

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

McMaster University's decision to back a student council ban on posters and banners containing the term "Israeli apartheid" has drawn praise from Jewish students and cries of censorship from anti-Israel groups.

Last month, Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights (SPHR), a student group, approached the McMaster Student Union (MSU), the school's undergraduate student council, for permission to print and hang a banner in the university's student centre to promote Israeli Apartheid Week, a series of lectures and events that's held on more than 20 campuses.

The proposed banner used the slogan "Israeli apartheid" and depicted a "soldier-like figure pushing a small child," the MSU said in a Feb. 20 statement.

The MSU, which vets and produces all posters by groups affiliated with it, said it denied the group's request to produce the banner, because the sign was "testing the boundaries of freedom of speech for one party, verses use of offensive and inflammatory language as interpreted by another."

The council added that the poster violated its printing policies concerning violence, and it raised questions about the propriety of using "Israeli apartheid" as a slogan on campus.

The MSU sought the arbitration skills of McMaster's Human Rights and Equity Services (HRES) office, which also deemed the poster to be inflammatory.

MSU president Ryan Moran said the groups advertising Israeli Apartheid Week were asked to "revisit the phrasing and language used on their poster to ensure that comfort and safety for all students of the university is kept a priority."

He added that the poster would not be approved unless it promoted a constructive and positive dialogue.

McMaster spokesperson Andrea Farquhar confirmed that the request to hang a large banner in the student centre was denied by the MSU, the HRES and McMaster's provost.

"Putting that banner there was not something that we felt was going to be helpful to the community, and it would be too inflammatory. That wasn't allowed, but [the organizers of Israeli Apartheid Week] did continue with other activities they had planned," Farquhar said.

The MSU noted that student groups, including McMaster Muslims for Peace and Justice (MMPJ) and SPHR, were not prevented from holding their events, nor were they prohibited from using the slogan in their talks and discussions.

But United for Student Rights (U4SR), an ad-hoc committee of McMaster and Hamilton community members that was formed to respond to the controversy, claimed that "MSU-approved clubs have not been able to get approval for various initiatives related to Israeli apartheid."

According to a U4SR press release advertising a public forum scheduled for last week to discuss "the recent shocking decision" to "unequivocally ban on campus the usage of the phrase 'Israeli apartheid,'" the move is an

attempt to "criminalize the views of students who oppose Zionist violations of the human and national rights of Palestinians."

But McMaster provost Ilene Busch-Vishniac said that the school "has not and will not abridge freedom of speech. I believe one of our student groups has misinterpreted our refusal to hang a large banner in a very public place. We have not banned the use of the phrase 'Israeli apartheid' and have informed the relevant student group claiming that we have that they are not correct."

Judy Schwartz, director of the McMaster Jewish Students Association (JSA), said she's pleased the administration adhered to the uni-

versity's student code of conduct, which she said aims to protect students.

"We believe that inflammatory language only serves to promote a toxic and hurtful environment on campus. It does not promote civil discourse. We also believe that there are many ways to bring this type of discussion to campus that promotes balance and room for discussion on both sides of the issue – not one that is a completely biased and one-sided and leaves no room for debate," Schwartz said.

"I can tell you that the Jewish students from the JSA that I have been able to speak to are very pleased and feel extremely comforted by the stand that the university has

taken to protect all students from the pain of intimidation. Nothing is more important than the dignity and integrity of the student body, and the students should be proud that the university has taken a principled stand to defend its own code of conduct."

Farquhar acknowledged the challenge that universities have when it comes to controversial issues.

"Universities are always perceived to be in a difficult situation on these kind of issues because we firmly maintain that there's freedom of speech and academic freedom... but we need to balance it with respect and tolerance," she said.

Helps promote Israel's side of the story

Continued from page 36

As a 21-year-old, fourth-year history and political science student, Sorin sees the Emerson fellowship as a way to be involved with Israel advocacy with an organization that is well known.

"For me, it's a passion. Anything that I do, I try to promote Israel's side of the story and just make sure that people know what's going on," said Sorin, who was inspired to promote a positive and accurate image of Israel after she spent a year studying at Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

Hunter, who is the Israel affairs chair for the Canadian Federation of Jewish Students and president of the Windsor Jewish Student Association, said that until now, StandWithUs hasn't had a strong presence in Canada, but now, having added three Canadians to its roster of 40 fellows, it's committed to tack-

ling anti-Israel sentiment on Canadian soil.

"It is an interesting choice to do it in Windsor, because it has a particularly small Jewish community. But we have experienced some anti-Israel activity."

He said that someone in the community erected a billboard in the summer of 2006, during the Second Lebanon War, that supported various Hezbollah leaders, including Hassan Nasrallah.

"It is something that really shocked the community, in and out of the Jewish community. I don't think a lot of people realized that this sentiment existed and that people would be brazen enough to express that kind of sentiment publicly."

Hunter said that although his campus didn't host an "Israeli Apartheid Week" – a series of events and lectures held at more than 20 campuses and organized by student groups such as Solidarity for Palestinian Human

Rights – his biggest challenge is dealing with apathy.

"Students are not interested in discussion – or dealing with the issues in Israel. Even amongst the Jewish community, they don't want to open that box, they don't want to go there. That's what we're dealing with on my campus," he added.

Sorin, who is president of UVic's Israel On Campus club, a new group she helped form in order to combat anti-Israel sentiments and to promote Israel beyond the conflict, is dedicated to her role as a StandWithUs representative.

"A lot of people are apathetic to what's going on, and just to see the news and media is so biased and one-sided, and especially at UVic, there are so many students who just have no idea what's going on, so that's where I find my role is – to just educate, educate, educate."

Dining Pleasures



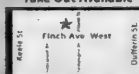
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Shul's healing service offers spiritual tonic

By BENJAMIN GLEISSER
Special to The CJN

No one who is ill should have to pray alone for his or her health, says Dalya Hakimi, co-chair of the chesed committee at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, where a new prayer service aims to make sure that doesn't happen.

Hakimi, who believes in the healing power of prayer, says that when you pray for the health of others, you strengthen your own well-being.

"Illness can be so traumatic for people and their family members," she says. "We want to create a compassionate place where people can come together, connect with each other and help each other feel better."

To realize this goal, on the afternoon of Feb. 24, Shaarei Shomayim held its first Jewish healing service, which was open to both members and people who don't belong to Shaarei Shomayim.

The Sunday-afternoon service was unlike a traditional prayer service, Hakimi says.

Rabbi Avraham Sultan, the shul's cantor, led worshippers in prayer, and music and song were also part of the observance.

During the *Amidah*, people were encouraged to meditate on their health, the

health of their loved ones and anyone else they wanted to include in their prayers.

"People sit in a circle so they can make eye contact with each other," Hakimi says. "This helps everyone feel more connected. We don't want this to come off as hokey or New Agey. The service is conducted under halachah - we don't do anything too wacky. We just want to go a little out of the box and make people feel welcome and comforted."

Hakimi likens the service to a meeting of a support group. "The healing service helps people connect socially, too. Sometimes it's good just to shake another person's hand, or put an arm around someone and say, 'I hope your loved one will get well.'"

If people also wanted to attend a more traditional Minchah service, the shul's regular one started after the healing service.

Rabbi Sultan hopes the healing service will become a monthly fixture. The rabbi pushed to offer such an event because years ago, when he served as a chaplain at several Montreal hospitals, he saw that healing services were appreciated by patients who were too ill to leave the hospital to attend regular services.

They were also popular among patients who didn't belong to a synagogue, but wanted to stay connected with Judaism. Patients' family members often made special

trips to the hospital to attend these services with their loved ones.

"People in hospitals going through difficult moments enjoyed praying not only for themselves, but for each other. After all, when we pray for the health of others, that makes us stronger," Rabbi Sultan says. "During our healing service, we join with all Israel and ask for a speedy recovery for everyone - even people whose names we don't know."

Hakimi also cites research that shows prayer not only makes people feel more optimistic, it also helps to boost the body's immune system.

"Prayer opens the heart and nourishes the soul," she says. "I don't know if this service will make people physically better, but it will definitely make them feel spiritually better."

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Bracelet sales raise \$25,000 for brain cancer

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

To nine-year-old Sydney Turack and her seven-year-old sister, Samantha (Sammy), their father Fred was "the best dad in the world... very funny, caring and loving."

"He made me feel happy," Sammy said. Quite a tribute to a very special dad. And so when Fred Turack, 57, a chartered accountant and avid golfer who was always healthy, was diagnosed with frontal lobe brain cancer, the girls wanted to help find a cure and help others like him by fundraising.

With some input from their mother, Robin Turack, they decided to make bracelets to sell at their school, Crestwood School in Toronto.

Turack said her daughters had done some beading as a craft before, but this was a much bigger project. They got some help from a wholesaler, John Bead, who helped her choose supplies.

Sydney and Sammy selected a bracelet design with a blue centre stone (their father's favourite colour) and a heart on each side, representing them. The band is made of tiny silver-coloured tubes separated by small blue beads, with the beads standing for their mother. The bracelets, which sell for \$10, come in child and adult sizes.

The Blue Brain Bracelet Project has so far raised \$25,000 for the Gerry and Nancy Pencer Brain Institute at Princess Margaret Hospital, where Fred Turack was first treated.

Robin Turack and her daughters thought that the project would remain small, but it took off when friends and family came to their home for bead-a-thons, and then even went on to hold their own beading sessions.

Sydney and Sammy's older half-brother, Matthew, got involved in the effort, too, and is now helping them create a website.

Unfortunately, Fred Turack died last December. But the project has carried on.

Several schools are holding bead-a-thons, including Valley Park Middle School. Teacher Florence Fajman was the first teacher to get on board, and her class made 600 bracelets. Crestwood School has sold some 250, Robin Turack reported. Grade 7 Leo Baeck Day School student Tiphara Ziner-Cohen plans to take the project to her school.

Participants receive a certificate of appreciation from the Pencer Institute and the Blue Brain Bracelet Project, signed by Sydney, Samantha and Nancy Pencer.

"We hope to make beading for brain cancer as big as the walk for a cure for breast cancer," Turack said.

Kits to make 100 bracelets will be available, so that patients and families can have "the same opportunity to bead in honour of a loved one," she said.

Sydney said that "the blue brain bracelet is so meaningful to us because it's the last great thing we did for our dad. If we could get this all over Ontario, it would make our dad so proud."

Samantha added that "this bracelet is important because it is helping people with brain cancer and their families."

The family hopes to set up the Fred Turack Palliative Support Unit to assist brain cancer patients and their families in the final stages of life.

For more information, visit the Gerry and Nancy Pencer Brain Institute website, www.pencerbraintrust.com, which has a link for the bracelet. The Blue Brain Bracelet Project website, at www.bluebrainbracelet.com, is currently under construction.



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Health & Lifestyles



Lisa Weinberg
About
Nutrition

Q. I would like to try to understand the amount of sugar in foods. How do I decipher the labels?

A. There are two things you want to look at – how much sugar is there, and what is the serving size? This may astonish you, but about four grams of sugar are equal to one teaspoon. Therefore, if the package says there are 20 grams of sugar per serving, that's five teaspoons of sugar. Also, remember to consider how realistic the serving size is. Will you only have one serving, or is it likely you will have more? For example, one cup of grape juice contains about 40 grams of sugar – that's 10 teaspoons, and many people pour a glass that is actually much bigger than one cup.

Remember, too, when it comes to high calorie drinks full of sugar, like juice and pop, it is so easy to drink 200 to 500 calories per day or more, that one cup of grape juice contains 180 calories, one can of pop about 160. If you were to substitute these beverages with water, you could lose one-half to one pound

per week doing that alone! We need to reduce our total calories by 250 per day to lose half a pound per week, and by 500 calories per day to lose one pound per week.

The way I decide if there is too much sugar is to ask: would I add that amount of sugar to this food if I was making it?

I recently wanted to buy a refrigerated green tea beverage, and I noticed that it contained 20 grams of sugar. First, I never add sugar to my green tea, but if I did, I certainly wouldn't add five teaspoons. So I bought sparkling water instead.

If you are, however, looking at a dessert or a jam, higher sugar content may be more reasonable, but by knowing the above information, you will be surprised now at how much sugar is in some packaged and processed foods. Also, when reading the ingredient list, usually words ending with "ose" are sugars – for example, sucrose, fructose, lactose and maltose.

Q. I would like to take a calcium supplement. Is there one that you feel I should buy?

A. There are certainly many calcium supplements on the market now. I think there are two very important things to try to get. First, look for calcium and magnesium in a 2:1 ratio. This helps with absorption of the calcium and prevents constipation. Also, look for one with vitamin D3, as I believe strongly that we should all be getting about 1,000 milligrams of vitamin D3 per day and about 1,200 milligrams of calcium.

However, calcium is not well absorbed; so it often comes in smaller doses and you take more than one tablet per day for optimal absorption. And avoid taking calcium within two hours of drinking tea, as tea will prevent its absorption as well.

Lisa Weinberg is a registered dietitian/nutritionist in Toronto, in private practice and at the Genesis Professional Group.

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'Shamelessly exuberant' Jewish student leader brings people together

By ABIGAIL BIMMAN
Special to The CJN

If Jewish student activism was equated with building a house, Samuel Konig would be simultaneously reinforcing the foundation, washing the windows and hammering in the last few nails.

The 24-year-old Carleton University student is the Ottawa advocacy co-ordinator of National Jewish Campus Life (NJCL).

His duties are diverse, he says, and include bridge-building between different clubs and organizations, identifying student leaders, organizing and supervising events, keeping in touch with the university's administration and monitoring anti-Jewish events on Ottawa campuses.

He mostly works with the Jewish Students' Association (JSA), the Israel Awareness Committee and the fraternity AEPI.

"I get the opportunity to work with students. Being a student myself, I get to see the changes (we effect) immediately," he says about his love for his job and for activism.

Konig seems to be everywhere at once, whether dancing up a storm at a JSA pub night or being a familiar face at all the events during the recent Israel Week.

That series of events, Ottawa's first annual Israel Week, was one of several that Konig has helped organize since he started his job with NJCL (and his master's degree in European studies) last September.

Of the events he has worked on, he is most proud of a January 2008 speech by Rabbi Steven Greenberg, the first openly gay Orthodox rabbi. It became a university-wide event, sponsored in part by the Carleton University Students' Association.

Konig is well-known throughout the Ottawa community. Third-year Carleton University political science student Elana Wall says she was thrilled to learn she would be working with the "shamelessly exuberant" Konig on the JSA after meeting him at a conference the year before.

"He's one of the best people that could have come

to work with us because he puts his all into anything he does, whether it be school, work or life," said Wall.

"He just knows that in order to make a place for yourself in a new city, you need to meet people. Instead of sitting and waiting for people to come to him, he stuck himself out there and found people to meet on his own."

Konig prides himself on his ability to take initiative in new situations and bring people together. He says he learned this from his grandfather with whom he was very close. The Holocaust survivor died three years ago, but left a legacy for his grandson.

"He told me that I have to be able to speak and to connect to anyone," Konig says. "I feel comfortable in any environment, and it's because of his preaching."

This comfort level was given a boost by Konig's United Nations-esque globetrotting. He was born in Vienna and spent his early years in Copenhagen. At 14, Konig moved into a Jewish boarding house of a non-Jewish boarding school in Bristol, England. There, he met Jews from all over the world, including Botswana and Hong Kong. Konig speaks English, German, Danish and Polish, and can read Hebrew, having visited Israel more times than he can count.

"This multicultural background made my identity stronger and taught me how to take initiative in an environment where everyone feels strange," Konig says. Though it is a shameless marker, his 1,995 Facebook friends is one indicator of how he brings people together.

Konig's path to activism began during his undergraduate degree at McGill University.

Canada's multiculturalism appealed to him, as did the vivacious city of Montreal. He began in non-Jewish activism, as president of the German Students' Association and as a council member of the undergraduate arts society.

Konig then got involved with the Ghetto Shul, a student-run synagogue in Montreal, and volunteered at the Holocaust assistance office at the Cummings Jewish Centre for Seniors, translating letters from Germany about restitution. For this work he was ho-



Sam Konig

noured last year by FEDERATION CJA with the Jon Roskies Memorial Award for New Leadership.

Once Konig moved to the nation's capital, he kept on making connections.

"When he got to Ottawa in the summer, he wasted no time setting up meetings with different people in the city; rabbis, members of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, community members and influential people in general," said Wall.

And he liked what he found among the Jewish students.

"They are very passionate about Israel, and they have the desire to make Ottawa is a very special place for students. This is something we have to build on and really embrace pluralism. They realize we have to be united," says Konig.

Though he labels himself a "traditional" Jew, he feels very strongly about embracing and respecting pluralistic Judaism.

Konig says the one thing that bothers him about student activism is when it takes an anti-Jewish or anti-Israel event to get things going.

"That should not make us active," he says. "It should come from our hearts. We should be flourishing throughout the year - it shouldn't come from the negative stuff."

Konig says the message he tries to send to students is to be proud of who they are, believe in themselves, help each other and, not surprisingly, take initiative.

"They can only change if they take things in their own hands - but only in unity," he says.

Konig is also recognized as a strong student, in addition to a leader. Last month, he received the David and Rebecca Zelikovitz Scholarship from Carleton, an \$1,800 award for a graduate studying Jewish culture.

After graduation in 2009, Konig isn't sure what he's doing next, he says. But he knows he wants to live somewhere in Canada and work in the Jewish community.

"Canada is what gave me my opportunity - it took me in and made me realize my love for Jewish activism. After I finish school, it's my time to give back."



Konig dancing on a bus this past December in Israel, where he was leading a student leadership mission for National Jewish Campus Life.

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JOE RIVETZ

The Gaza operation comes at a price

By AMOS HAREL
AND AVI ISSACHAROFF
© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

All those calling for a major military operation in the Gaza Strip must take into account its cost.

The Givati Brigade's limited operation in the outskirts of Jabalya on Saturday gave an indication of the expected scale of casualties. Two soldiers were killed, as were at least 63 Palestinians, including many civilians. More than 50 Katyushas and Qassam rockets were fired in response on Sderot, Ashkelon and other communities bordering the Strip. And all this was part of a dress rehearsal. The number of casualties in a major, drawn-out operation could be much higher.

Why did the casualty rates climb on Saturday? The main reason has to do with the area where the operation took place. The Israel Defence Forces operated at the edge of the area where Israeli raids are conducted — up to three kilometers from the fence surrounding the Gaza Strip. But this time the IDF hit a sensitive location: the outskirts of a built-up and crowded part of Gaza City, around Jabal Kasef, between Jabalya and Sa'ajiyah. Hamas rushed reinforcements to the area, from the start of the operation.

As in many of these incidents, the minute the IDF suffered casualties, they used massive gunfire to gain access to the wounded and dead, and to avoid more Israeli casualties. For their part, the Palestinian gunmen took up positions in homes, while the civilians were still inside. Under such circumstances, it is obvious that the number of civilian deaths, including children, will be great.

Moreover, the operation took place at the peak of a period of escalating fighting, which began last Wednesday morning with an IDF air strike in Khan Yunis, which killed five Hamas militants.

On Friday one had the impression that Hamas was trying to end the current cycle of violence, and therefore fired considerably fewer Qassam rockets (nine compared with about 40 per day over the previous two days). But the decision in Israel was to continue the attacks, the intention being to prevent Hamas from dictating the pace of the confrontation or its intensity.

After the operation in Jabalya and the high

number of Palestinian deaths, it will take longer to achieve relative calm. But even if calm is restored, through Egyptian mediation, it is likely to be temporary. Israel is quickly approaching the point at which it will embark on a major ground operation, which may happen in a few weeks. Even before the operation begins, Israel may decide to assassinate Hamas political leaders.

The government has mostly bad options. Even a ground operation will not immediately contain the launching of Qassam rockets, and it is doubtful whether it will achieve a long-term solution.

The frequent Katyusha attacks on Ashkelon are accelerating the deterioration of the situation. The defence establishment found Ashkelon Mayor Roni Mahatzri's decision not to operate the Colour Red missile alert a convenient way of waving off the Katyusha attacks as "sporadic." But last Thursday, following two days of rocket attacks, Mahatzri changed his mind and asked Defence Minister Ehud Barak to make the decision. Barak had little room to manoeuvre: if people were killed in Ashkelon, without any early warning of incoming missiles, he would be blamed for their deaths. The decision to turn on Colour Red was therefore a no-brainer.

But Ashkelon is not really ready for Katyushas: a direct hit by one of them is significantly more damaging than a similar strike by a Qassam. Ashkelon, without any fortification to public buildings, with 25,000 pupils in the public education system (more than the entire population of Sderot), will find it hard to stand up to constant bombardment. Neither will the country. "Two weeks of bombing Ashkelon and we are at war," a senior IDF officer predicted last weekend.

It is a mistake for anyone in Israel to think that the high price that the Gaza Strip is paying will undermine Palestinian civilian support for the Hamas government. At least for the moment, the operation's impact is the opposite. The Gaza residents who spoke Saturday with Ha'aretz expressed their absolute support for Hamas and its activities. Gaza pundits said on Saturday that it is unlikely that Hamas will fire fewer rockets at Israel. They say the group is now focused on offering the Palestinians what they need most: revenge through rocket attacks or through suicide bombings from the West Bank.

rights charter, she was excoriated by Israeli and U.S. officials for failing to note that it equated Zionism with racism. When she revisited the charter last month and criticized its attacks on Zionism and its weak protections of women and children, Arab nations complained.

According to Reuters, she's not leaving because she was pressured. But the Montreal Gazette reported that she was frustrated by efforts by repressive regimes on the 47-nation council — led by Cuba, Algeria and China — to control her office.



Merri Dan-Gur, the mother of Eran Dan-Gur, reaches behind her to console her son's girlfriend Liron Shazu next to the grave of her son. St. Sgt. Eran Dan-Gur, 20, was one of two IDF Givati soldiers killed in action in Gaza last Saturday. [Isranet photo]



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Arbour to leave UN human rights post

JTA

GENEVA — UN Human Rights Commissioner Louise Arbour reportedly won't seek a second term.

Arbour, a former Canadian Supreme Court justice and war crimes prosecutor, will tell the UN Human Rights Council this week that she will leave the post when her current four-year term ends in June, Reuters reported.

Arbour, 61, endured criticism from multiple sides. Most recently, when she praised the ratification in December of an Arab human

Ashkelon on front line in new Gaza conflict

By DINA KRAFT

JTA

ASHKELON — Eighteen-year-old Eden Sharbane awoke before dawn last Saturday to the eerie sound of a "red alert" siren in her Ashkelon neighbourhood. Glancing outside her window, she saw a red-and-orange blur. A rocket was about to hit her apartment building.

Sharbane screamed and called out in warning to her mother.

Two floors above them, a rocket fired by Palestinian terrorists in the Gaza Strip, some 10 miles away, crashed through the concrete and steel rods of the building's roof and landed in a neighbour's living room.

Practically overnight, life in this quiet coastal city has changed dramatically. Thirteen rockets landed in Ashkelon over the course of four days, and with the Israel Defence Forces having launched a ground invasion into Gaza over the past weekend, shaken residents here suddenly find themselves in a war zone.

"All of a sudden I began to realize what a different reality there is now," Sharbane said.

After the attack on her building, Sharbane went out for a seaside walk to try to calm her frayed nerves, but another rocket fell in a nearby parking lot.

Less than a day later, the hole in the ground marking the spot of its landing had been paved over with fresh asphalt, but residents of this city of 120,000 know that despite quick clean-ups and reassurances, they are Israel's new front line in the battle against Palestinian rocket crews in Gaza.

Israel's internal security minister, Avi Dichter, who is himself a resident of Ashkelon, said Sunday that since last week the number of Israelis living under the threat of Palestinian rocket fire has jumped to 250,000 from 25,000.



Ashkelon resident in her bedroom after a Grad missile came through the roof of the flat above hers. [Edi Israel/Israel Sun photo]

After the first Katyusha-style rockets landed in Ashkelon late last week, the city activated the city's red alert rocket-warning system, which gives residents about 15 seconds to find cover. The system has been active for several years in towns closer to Gaza, including Sderot.

Chaim Ashtamker, a 36-year-old bus driver in Ashkelon, said he fears Ashkelon will share the same fate as Sderot, which has become a

ghost of its former self after seven incessant years of rocket fire. With Palestinian terrorists in Gaza using new, longer-range Katyusha-type rockets, the coastal city of Ashkelon has become their key target.

"Our routines go on as normal, but we are all a little in shock," Ashtamker said. "I have small children at home, so of course I am scared."

There were few people along the streets and beaches of Ashkelon on Sunday. Many children asked to stay home from school and parents tried to calm them even as they admitted to feeling bewildered themselves by their newfound circumstances.

Residents debated whether or not the new ground incursion into Gaza — which killed scores of Palestinians, including many civilians, and left two Israeli soldiers dead — was the right answer.

Liya Gil, a 32-year-old Ashkelon resident and a recent contestant on the Israeli version of the reality TV show *Survivor*, paused after a seaside interview with a local entertainment show to ponder the city's new circumstances.

"I came out of the reality show *Survivor* to the real survivor," she said with a laugh. Then, turning serious, she said, "There is the army and defence ministry to take care of things. I hope things will improve."

Writing in Israel's daily *Yediot Achronot*, columnist Nahum Barnea said Israel faces a dilemma, forced to choose between "the plague and cholera."

"Ultimately, the debate boils down to two possibilities: either the IDF seizes renewed control over the Gaza Strip or extensive parts of it, or Israel begins open, direct and serious

negotiations with Hamas," he wrote. "The choice between those two options is a choice between the plague and cholera. Nevertheless, it appears to be unavoidable."

As the army fought on in Gaza and Palestinian terrorists continued to fire rockets at Israel, Alan Marcus, head of strategic planning for Ashkelon, sat in his office surrounded by maps of the city. He described how officials were coping with the crisis — from fixing up bomb shelters to posting instructions in Hebrew, Russian and Amharic explaining how residents should protect themselves.

He showed some digital maps he designed that show where some of the weakest populations in the city live — among them the elderly, handicapped and recent immigrants — so teams can be dispatched quickly to help them in the event of an attack.

At an underground emergency control centre, he showed how city officials were staffing different desks: public information, logistics, engineering and education.

Marcus, who has lived in the city since immigrating here in 1975 from Boston, compared the current situation to what happened to northern Israeli cities along the border with Lebanon during the 2006 war with Hezbollah in Lebanon.

"I hope sanity will return," he said, expressing hope that the cross-border attacks soon will subside. He said he has been fielding calls from concerned Jews in Baltimore, which is a "sister city" of Ashkelon.

At a café at the city's train station, there were few commuters at rush hour on Sunday, the start of Israel's work week. Einat Azriki, 24, who works at a café inside the station, said she's still digesting the change of events.

"We are now learning what real fear feels like," she said.

CIC 'troubled' by minister's comments

Continued from page 1

Shimon Fogel, CEO of the Canada-Israel Committee, a pro-Israel advocacy group, said he was "troubled" by Bernier's comments. "There is no equivalent between what Israel is doing and seven years of rocket attacks from Gaza into Israel, he said. "The government is not paying enough attention to the nuances and the details. The department is more comfortable in what it sees as a balanced [approach]. That does not reflect reality."

Baker said he was "disappointed" by Bernier's remarks. "I think any statement equating Israel's actions in self-defence with acts of pure terrorism directed willfully against civilians in towns and villages is misguided and wrong."

Israel's operations in Gaza prompted condemnation from the European Union, while UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon accused Israel of employing "excessive" force. In Washington, White House spokesperson Gordon Johndrow said, "The violence needs to stop and the talks [between Israel and the Palestinian Authority] need to resume."

The fighting brought new challenges to Israel's strategy of containing violence from the Gaza Strip, and derailed peace talks

between the Palestinian Authority and Israel.

The latest surge in fighting began late last week when Hamas rocket crews fired dozens of rockets at Israel after the Israeli Air Force bombed a van carrying five Hamas militiamen who had recently returned to Gaza after undergoing specialized military training in Iran.

The Hamas rocket attacks claimed their first fatality in nine months: a 47-year-old father of four who was undergoing job training at Sderot's Sapir College after recovering from a kidney transplant. Hamas also fired several Katyusha rockets into Ashkelon. The fatality in Sderot and the Katyusha attacks on Ashkelon prompted Israeli politicians to call for a massive military operation in Gaza to counter what they described as Hamas' escalation of the conflict.

Israel stepped up its attacks in Gaza, increasing its air strikes, flattening the Hamas-run Interior Ministry and sending Israeli ground troops into areas of eastern Gaza City. Israeli officials described the crackdown as a "war," but said a full-scale invasion of Gaza was still a way off. The objective, it seemed, was to kill or capture as many Hamas rocket crewmen as possible and perhaps target the Islamist group's leadership as well.

"The ultimate objective is to bring an end

to the firing of Qassams," Defence Minister Ehud Barak said.

Though Israel said most of the Palestinian casualties were combatants, the dead included many children and other civilians, and television images of the violence drew censure in the Arab world and beyond.

Bernier said that "Canada is deeply concerned about the current escalation of violence in the Gaza Strip and Israel. It is clear that Hamas and other groups responsible for the growing number of rockets fired on Israel are determined to target civilians and create even more instability and misery. These actions are deplorable. Canada calls on those groups to stop immediately for the sake of those suffering both in the Gaza Strip and in Israel."

Fogel said the government was correct in condemning Hamas rocket attacks but, quoting Winston Churchill, he said it erred in finding equivalence "between the arsonist and the firefighter."

"We were pleased the government recognized Hamas as the source of violence. We were concerned the statement... [drew] moral equivalence between Israel and the Palestinians, which we don't believe reflects the government's position. We've asked for a clarification," he said.

Baker deplored the "double standard" in the international community and the international media. They ignore the "40 to 60 rockets that fall indiscriminately on Israeli towns and villages daily. That does not seem to bother the international community and media very much. But as soon as Israel responds, it's acting unduly harshly."

Nareh Raghubeer, executive director of the Canadian Centre for Democracies, a pro-democracy advocacy group, called Bernier's statement "unfortunate" and "naive."

"I find it sad and dismaying that the minister chooses to lecture Israel as it seeks to fulfil its sovereign right to protect its citizens. One would have hoped that the minister would have been clear and stood by Israel unequivocally," he said.

For its part, the Fatah-led Palestinian Authority in the West Bank announced it was scrapping a routine peace negotiators meeting scheduled for Monday.

Though Mahmoud Abbas' administration stopped short of declaring the peace process dead, the Palestinian Authority president irked Israelis by saying what was happening in Gaza was a "worse holocaust" than what befell the Jews in World War II.

With files from JTA and Ha'aretz.

Israel & the Jewish World

Hungarian Jews worry about growing racism, anti-Semitism

By MICHAEL J. JORDAN
JTA

BUDAPEST — For the first time in his 33 years, Peter says, a homegrown Hungarian movement is articulating a vision for how Hungarians can preserve their culture and traditions.

It doesn't matter that members of the new Hungarian Guard parade in black combat boots and uniforms emblazoned with a red-and-white symbol reminiscent of the local Nazi party, which killed thousands of Jews during the Holocaust. Or that the Guard's rallying cry to protect Hungarians against the "criminality" of Roma — Gypsies — stirs fear of inter-ethnic clashes. "I don't want to talk about the Jews or Gypsies, because that's what the media says the target is, and the media's a joke," says Peter, who withheld his last name. Dressed in black with slicked-back hair, Peter endured frigid weather to visit a Guard recruitment event late last month. "The real target is a better Hungary," he says.

That's no comfort to the thousands of Holocaust survivors who still live in Budapest, or to Hungary's 100,000 or so Jews, the largest Jewish community in central Europe.

It's not so much the possibility of violence from the Hungarian Guard that troubles Jews here — the Guard, which has 1,000 or so members, is unarmed — but the apparent receptiveness of a growing number of Hungarians to far-right ideas.

Jewish, Roma and human rights groups already are pressing the government to ban the Guard, and some Roma are talking about forming self-defence militias.

The Hungarian Guard was created in August 2007 by a relatively new far-right political party, Jobbik, seeking votes and credibility on the right wing, experts say.

Showing increasingly sophistication over the last decade, the right wing has successfully infused mainstream public discourse with distinctions between "Hungarians" and "non-Hungarians" — with Jews and Roma on the outside.

This has revived the historic insider-outsider question for Hungarian Jews who saw themselves as assimilated members of Hungarian society, not as outsiders looking in.

"Even young people who are not racist or anti-Semitic use the same terminology, that you can't be both Hungarian and a Jew," says Andrea Szonyi, who co-founded the Holocaust education group Zachor: Foundation for Social Remembrance. "It leads us back to the Holocaust, when people who defined themselves as Hungarian were taken to the gas chambers as Jews."

The rise of a far-right movement is not unique to Hungary.

Across central and eastern Europe, the revolutions of 1989-1990 that launched post-Communist transitions to democracy

also enabled extremist groups to gain a foothold.

In Hungary, they more or less remained on the fringe until 1998, when Viktor Orban, once a blue-jeans-and-carrying-wearing young member of the anti-Communist resistance, became prime minister and swung his party to the right, espousing nationalist, Christian values.

His party, Fidesz, formed a de facto coalition with the small ultra-nationalist Hungarian Justice and Life Party, whose playwright leader, Istvan Csurka, indulged in Jewish conspiracy theories.

Though he was never accused of anti-Semitism, Orban was criticized for not denouncing fellow Fidesz members who sometimes appealed to supporters with coded phrases viewed as anti-Semitic — for example, attacking rivals as "cosmopolitans," "Communist Jews" or for possessing "foreign hearts."

Many Hungarians rejected such rhetoric, but the genie was out of the bottle.

Zsidozas — a uniquely Hungarian term for "talking about Jews" — became more common in the media and in Parliament, and politics generally grew more toxic.

In September 2006, when Socialist Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsany was caught on tape admitting that he lied to voters "morning, evening and night" about the nation's economic health to win re-election earlier that year, Orban and Fidesz, now leading the opposition, branded the Gyurcsany government illegitimate.

Daily demonstrations ensued. A new version of the Arpad flag — the red-and-white stripes from an ancient royal coat-of-arms also adopted by Hungary's Nazi puppet regime in the Arrow Cross — began to appear at the demonstrations.

The new flag may have lacked the black Arrow Cross symbol that, like the Nazi swastika and Soviet hammer-and-sickle, is illegal to display in Hungary, but Hungarian liberals said nobody was fooled by what the new flag meant.

That flag has become a fixture at anti-government demonstrations, especially events put on by the Guard.

For some Jews here, the growth of the far-right movement has been startling.

"Thank goodness my mother has Alzheimer's," says Katalin, whose mother survived the Budapest ghetto at age 17. "If she were OK, she would be very afraid, remembering the dark days of the Holocaust." Katalin asked not to be identified by her last name.

Some Jews here say such fears may be overreactions, but the Guard's affiliation with a legally registered political party, Jobbik, is cause for concern, says the president of the Federation of Hungarian Jewish Communities, Peter Feldmajer.

Jobbik polls at about 1 per cent support, but the party shares seats with Fidesz on several local councils across the country.

"The Guard may be 1,000 or 2,000 crazy people who like to play soldier games, but on the other hand this party has a relationship with normal political life," Feldmajer says.

Perhaps for this reason, the Guard has been cautious about avoiding public talk of Jews in citing their litany of historic injustices against Hungary. Instead, the Guard focuses on a more populist target: the Roma, who are widely disliked here.

Fueling public hatred, fear and negative stereotyping of the Roma, who are mired in poverty and unemployment that prompts some to turn to petty crime, the Guard portrays them all as "Gypsy criminals." The Guard has been organizing weekly marches as shows of force in towns around the country with significant Roma populations.

Hungary's population of about 10 million includes some 500,000 Roma.

The Guard "recognizes they can't play the anti-Semitic card, because it will delegitimize them in a greater way than playing the anti-Roma card would," says Michael Miller, an American professor of Jewish history in the nationalism studies program at Central European University in Budapest.

However, Miller notes, crowds at Guard demonstrations often will yell things like "Down with the Jews" or refer to Gyurcsany as a "Jewish hireling."

Feldmajer says Jewish leaders are lobbying local mayors to ban the Guard from their cities. He told JTA he expects the state prosecutor's office to decide soon if the Guard has violated its registration as a cultural and educational organization.

Meanwhile, observers say, it's essential that mainstream Hungarian conservatives, led by Fidesz, publicly distance themselves from the right-wing extremists.

Several Fidesz officials already have done so, but Orban has not.

Andras Kadar, co-chairman of the Hungarian Helsinki Committee, a human rights group, says a hate-speech law Hungary passed on Feb. 25 — and which still may be challenged in court as violating free-speech rights — is key.

"This is an apt moment for state organs to deal with the issue of freedom of expression, freedom of association, and make clear that 'democracy' cannot serve to justify all sorts of racist acts," Kadar says.

After last month's Guard event, Peter, the potential recruit, said he wondered whether visible support for the Guard — such as driving members to marches — might hurt him professionally.

"I work for a big company," he said. "Maybe they wouldn't like that I'm a member, and it would cause some problems for me."

Egypt to supply Gaza power

Egypt is working on a plan to supply all of Gaza's electricity needs and wean it off its reliance on Israel for power, an Egyptian energy official said. Last month, Israel began reducing its supply of electricity to the Hamas-ruled coastal strip after the High Court of Justice ruled that doing so wouldn't



Israel Briefs

"things might be different in the coming stages." Israel and western powers have long pressed Abbas for renouncing terror and guerrilla attacks as part of the Palestinian national cause. His comments appeared to run counter to that image. In the interview, Abbas said that he had the "honour" of being the first member of

Yasser Arafat's Fatah group to fire a gun at Israelis, in 1965.

cause a humanitarian crisis. Israel is trying to prevent Qassam rocket fire from Gaza into southern Israel. So far, it has supplied most of Gaza's electricity. Under the plan, Egypt — which already supplies a small part of Gaza's power — would increase the number of power lines linking it to Gaza and provide Palestinians with 250 megawatts, said Izzat Ibrahim, a senior official of Sinai's National Electricity Power Company. "This capacity is considered as an alternative power for that Israel used to supply," Ibrahim said.

Resistance still an option

Mahmoud Abbas was quoted as saying he might support Palestinian armed "struggle" against Israel in the future. "At this time I am against armed struggle, because we cannot achieve it," the Palestinian Authority president said in an interview with a Jordanian newspaper, but he added that

Katsav plea deal upheld
Israel's High Court of Justice upheld ex-president Moshe Katsav's plea bargain. A five-justice panel decided to reject six petitions against the attorney general's decision last year to drop rape charges against Katsav in exchange for his confession to lesser offenses. The plea bargain outraged feminist and government watchdog groups, who said the state risked playing down the severity of sex crimes and inviting charges of favouritism toward public figures. Katsav, who resigned last year in disgrace, denied allegations by several former female staffers that he had raped or sexually harassed them. Under the plea bargain, he will get a suspended prison sentence and pay \$12,000 to two of the complainants. A rape conviction could have meant as much as seven years in jail.

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Rules of retirement have changed, economist says

By **SHELDON KIRSHNER**
Staff Reporter

The retirement game has changed, says high-profile economist Sherry Cooper. "Fifty years ago, many people didn't live long enough to retire, and those that did didn't live much beyond retirement," she explained in an interview.

Today, in the face of longer life spans and looming labour shortages, the retirement age has increased as employers ask employees to stay on to preserve continuity, experience and customer relationships.

In her third book, *The New Retirement: How It Will Change Our Future* (Viking), she focuses on the baby boomer generation — born between 1946 and 1966 — and contends that boomers will redefine retirement with great energy and creativity, working well beyond the traditional retirement age of 65.

She dedicates it to her father, Irwin Sussman, an attorney who died 16 years ago at 62 of heart disease and diabetes. "It broke my heart that he never lived long enough to retire. He was such a large force in my life."

Cooper, the 57-year-old chief economist of BMO Capital Markets in Toronto, typifies the new ethos of retirement.

"I'm a boomer and going strong," said Cooper. "I do not intend to retire soon or any particular time in the future. I love my job, feel fulfilled and would be bored and depressed without a major sense of purpose or

achievement."

She added: "Right now, I'm healthy, happy and at the top of my game. I will know when I've had enough, and then it won't be hard to leave."

But until such time, Cooper — an American by birth who has an MA and PhD in economics from the University of Pittsburgh — says she has no intention of slowing down or fading away.

And Cooper is as busy as ever. "The job of chief economist of a large bank and investment dealer is varied and demanding," she said.

Working as a global economic strategist with a team of 15 associates, she draws up projections of worldwide economic and financial developments.

She also counsels risk management teams, advises the chief executive officer, delivers more than 100 speeches annually and writes commentaries for clients.

Although she has been advising clients on retirement savings for years now, Cooper started researching and writing her latest book 18 months ago.

"I realized that most retirement advice is about money, while so much more is also important. BMO's surveys of Canadians uncovered boomer fears and concerns. The majority of Canadians want to continue working well beyond retirement age."

In her book, Cooper sets out the parameters of a successful retirement: "In the new retirement, we will not settle for personal diminishment, social isolation, dependency and

inertia. We will remain active in mind and body, and most of us will continue to be productive well into our eighth decade."

Judging by the body of research she examined, mid-lifers will likely age better if they don't have a record of substance abuse; have a good, stable marriage; engage in mental activity; exercise; maintain normal body weight; and project a positive attitude, sociability, a sense of humour, altruism and outside interests.

Uncontrollable factors that affect successful aging include parents' social class, family cohesion, longevity of ancestors and childhood temperament.

According to Cooper, most households will need about 60 per cent to 70 per cent of pre-retirement income to maintain their standard of living.

But there are ways of stretching your retirement nest egg. "Working a few extra years markedly improves your financial outlook," she said.

Apart from that, you should cut overhead costs and spend less after the first decade of retirement.

As a retiree, you will need more money than you think. "For every dollar of pre-tax income you desire from your portfolio, to be sure your money will last at least 30 years, you need \$20 in savings — less if you are willing to die broke, use annuities or reverse mortgages."

The Canada Pension Plan, she noted, is well funded and considered a model of its kind. But boomers with average median incomes cannot maintain living standards on

CPP alone, she warned.

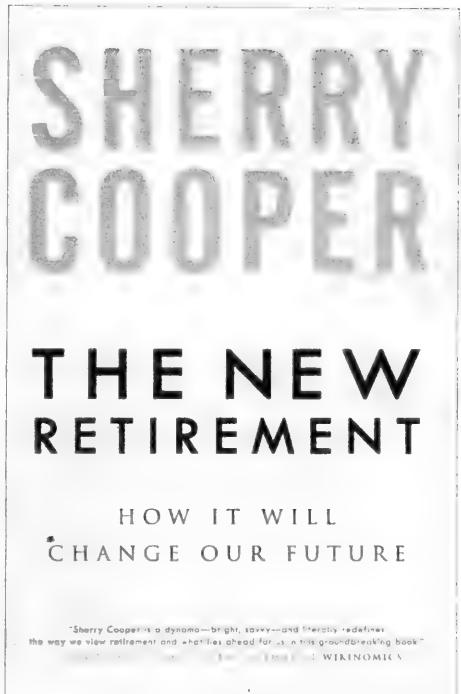
Despite her intention to soldier on indefinitely, Cooper is prepared to work more flexibly and travel a bit less one of these days down the road.

When retirement beckons, she plans to consult her 58-year-old husband, Peter, the chief executive officer of Scientia Health. Like her, he wants to continue working for years to come.

Once she retires, Cooper hopes to be an active volunteer. "I'm particularly passionate about health care, mentoring young and old, and Jewish causes in support of the community and Israel. And I look forward to having grandchildren."



Sherry Cooper



Sonny Goldstein, CFP
President

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Books & Authors

Zionist visionary produced Mideast's first comprehensive water maps

Aaronsohn's Maps: The Untold Story of the Man Who Might Have Created Peace in the Middle East by Patricia Goldstone, Harcourt.

By **SHELDON KIRSHNER**

Staff Reporter

Born in Romania, raised in Palestine and educated in France, Aaron Aaronsohn was a citizen of the world and a renowned agronomist and botanist.

He was also a Zionist visionary whose Nili spy network assisted the British in wresting Palestine from the centuries-long grip of the Ottoman Empire.



Patricia Goldstone

A linguist fluent in Hebrew, Arabic, Turkish, English, French and German, he was a figure of notoriety and admiration. Nearly 90 years after his sudden death in an airplane crash over the English Channel, his name barely registers a blip on the screen.

Patricia Goldstone, an American writer, rediscovers him in a thoroughly researched biography, *Aaronsohn's Maps: The Untold Story of the Man Who Might Have Created Peace in the*

Middle East.

Aaronsohn is best known today for two stellar achievements. He funnelled vital intelligence to Britain that enabled the British army to conquer Jerusalem and Be'er Sheva, and he discovered a wild hybrid wheat (triticum dicoccoides) that botanists consider the historical basis of agricultural in the region.

Yet, in her considered judgment, Aaronsohn should also be remembered for having drawn up a detailed plan for Palestine's national borders and for having produced the first comprehensive water maps of the Middle East.

Aaronsohn, a Greater Israel advocate, believed that the frontiers of Palestine should stretch northward to the Litani River in Lebanon and include the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt, large tracts of Transjordan and the headwaters of the Jordan River in Syria.

Proceeding from this assumption, he recommended that the water resources of the area should be shared by Jews and Arabs alike to create a foundation for co-operation and prosperity.

Water, in his view, could restore Palestine to greatness and support millions of new inhabitants once its economic development was assured. Until then, he observed, to the chagrin of Zionist purists, that Jewish immigration should be strictly controlled.

Aaronsohn's vision of a peaceful Middle East, in which Jews and Arabs would happily coexist, was a pipe dream, dashed on the rocks of reality.

Yet with Israel's seizure of the headwaters of the Jordan River during the Six Day War, Aaronsohn's conception of its northern border was partially realized.

Aaronsohn was brought to Palestine in 1882, when he was six years old. His Orthodox parents, part of the First Aliyah, were among the founders of Zichron Yaakov. What they found in Palestine — an Ottoman backwater mired in poverty and neglect — was not the biblical Land of Milk and Honey, but a forlorn nation of marshes, swamps, malaria and typhus.

Although he was steeped in the Talmud, Aaronsohn, a free-thinker, was irreligious, as was his sister, Sarah, who would play a pivotal role in the Nili espionage network.

As Goldstone points out, Aaronsohn's view of the Arabs was shaped by his close exposure to them. "He learned their language, responded to their friendship and entered their homes to partake of their holidays." As a result, he concluded that Jews and Arabs could and should be allies in developing Palestine.

After Aaronsohn finished his studies in France, Baron Edmond de Rothschild — a Zionist luminary to whom the 1917 Balfour Declaration was addressed — sent him to Metulla, a new agricultural colony in northern Galilee, to be an agronomist.

He did not remain there for long, soon being dispatched to conduct a comprehensive survey of Palestine's water resources. French surveyors, in vain, had attempted to finish a similar survey in 1801. He succeeded where they had failed because, being a

native born son, he had a much better grasp of the lay of the land. Aaronsohn next joined geological and botanical surveys of the Dead Sea and the Transjordanian desert.

In 1906, while on a field trip to the Jewish settlement of Rosh Pina, he found the wild wheat of his dreams, thus achieving international fame as a scientist. Impressed by his discovery, the American department of agriculture invited him to the United States.

With the support of American Jews, Aaronsohn established an agricultural research station at Atlit, near Haifa, the first such facility in the Middle East.

Within a few years, he improved the cultivation of cereals resistant to inclement weather, disease and parasites, and developed a new strain of sesame, five new types of barley, a gluten-rich wheat, a new table grape and an olive richer in oil. In addition, he perfected the ancient techniques of dry farming, which was suitable in regions of low rainfall, and pioneered the use of windmills to generate electrical power.

Stung by the Ottoman expulsion of Russian Jews from Jaffa in 1914, he and his associates, including his sister and assistant, Avshalom Feinberg, organized the Nili network. At its peak, it consisted of 23 active members and a web of collaborators.

When the Ottomans summoned him to Damascus to take charge of a campaign to eradicate a locust plague that threatened the breadbasket of Palestine, he accepted. Aaronsohn used his position and his access to Turkish military and civil authorities to gather intelligence material.

Armed with this data, he helped the British plan the invasion of Palestine. Working on a military handbook on southern Palestine, Aaronsohn showed them where to find sufficient water for their advance through the Sinai to Palestine. Not surprisingly, the British army's director of intelligence attributed Gen. Edmund Allenby's capture of Jerusalem in 1917 to Aaronsohn.

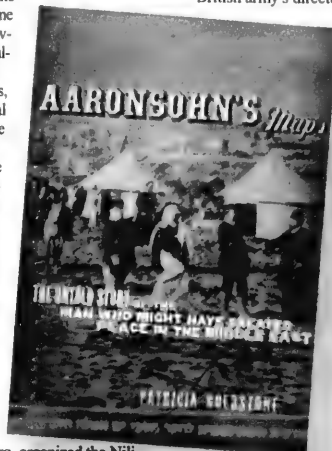
Aaronsohn's triumph was tempered by the death of his sister, Nili's chief of operations. Captured by the Turks, she committed suicide rather than reveal the names of Nili operatives.

He learned of her demise while in the United States on a mission to promote the political objectives of the Zionist movement. He was hired to do that job by Chaim Weizmann, who would soon become the president of the World Zionist Organization.

Aaronsohn, a member of the Jewish delegation to the 1919 Paris peace conference, was killed while flying to the French capital.

Had he lived a little longer, he would surely have been bitterly disappointed. In 1920, France and Britain agreed that all but one of the sources of the Jordan River would be in Syria rather than in Palestine. Aaronsohn apparently never understood that the imperatives of politics take precedence over everything else.

Goldstone, in telling Aaronsohn's story, draws a complex portrait of an extraordinary individual. But her feat is marred by a glaring factual error — the Baghdad Railway did not bring the first Zionists to Palestine, as she claims — and by rash commentary concerning current tensions between Israel and Syria.



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Arts & Travel

Kosher butcher shop and abattoir inspire dance piece

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

For most people, the thought of an abattoir conjures up rather "icky" images.

After all, an abattoir is a slaughterhouse, and one wouldn't normally have a fond perception of what goes on in there.

But for Allen Kaeja, director of the multidisciplinary production *Abattoir*, the word and the place stirs very profound and deep emotions.

"My father co-owned an abattoir and was a kosher butcher in Kitchener, Ont.," explains Kaeja.

"As kids, we all grew up working in it and going to

my dad's place of work was a joy. It was quite a beautiful place."

Kaeja's early experiences in the abattoir, which he describes as a rite of passage, forms the basis of *Abattoir*, a dynamic and intense dance creation that intertwines various art forms, including poetic text by Jason Sherman, classical singing by Fides Krucker and a diverse array of music by Edgardo Moreno.

"The abattoir is a metaphor for life," says

Kaeja, who co-choreographed the production with his wife of 18 years, Karen, who also appears as a dancer in *Abattoir*.

"It was a place where my rite of passage into the community occurred, and it is also a reflection of how we should treat each other. In Judaism, we cherish the life of an animal so when we kill an animal, it is a very sacred event and a lot of care is taken in it."

The production illustrates in a rhythmic and very physical way, how the abattoir instilled in Kaeja a deep respect for life, as well as the wonderment and innocence he experienced in the abattoir.

"Each one of us goes through our own growth and rites of passage," Kaeja says.

"This production takes us through the invigorating journey [of growing up], and I think audiences will gain a whole different insight into the mechanisms of an abattoir and mechanisms of growing up."

Before entering the world of dance, Kaeja was an esteemed wrestler and judo expert.

While at the University of Waterloo, he sought to improve his balance for judo and wrestling by taking a dance class. It was a decision that changed the course of his life.

"I realized that dance was my life, my focus, my future," he recalls.

"I love the physicality of wrestling and the competitiveness of judo, but dance has one additional thing that I truly love – the creative process."

In 1991, the Kaeja and his wife established Kaeja d'Dance, which has, ever since, been renowned for creating exceptional contemporary dance work and award-winning dance films, as well as education and outreach programs.

"We like to do things that are not part of the norm," says Kaeja, noting the company is not the only one to have made dance films based on the Holocaust.

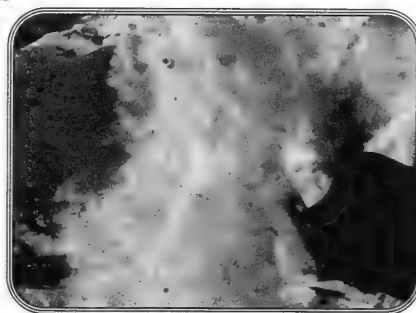
"Our work is very physical and very different."

Abattoir opens in Vancouver on March 19 and will be performed at Harbourfront Centre's Premiere

Dance Theatre in Toronto from March 25 to 29. For tickets, contact that box office at 416-973-4000. Website:

www.kaeja.org.

Allen and Karen Kaeja
[David Hou photo]



Karen Kaeja

[Allen Kaeja photo]

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Arts & Travel

TRAVEL TALK



BY BILL GLADSTONE

MANY JEWISH TOURS GOING IN 2008: TO POLAND, LITHUANIA, ITALY, GREECE, TURKEY, CHINA...

Many notices have reached Travel Talk of late, advising us of Jewish heritage tours to various attractive destinations. We wish we could go on each one. Here are details of some upcoming trips:

Poland, Lithuania, Latvia: In Search of Jewish Roots in Northern Poland, Lithuania and Latvia is a 14-day exploration of what was once the Litvak heartland. Participants take in Warsaw, Kaunas, Memel, Vilnius, Siauliai and Riga, and visit Holocaust sites such as Treblinka and various former ghettos. They may also arrange to visit their own ancestral shtetlach (villages), and those interested in genealogical research may visit the archives in Kaunas and Vilnius.

Simon Davidovich, director of the Sugihara Museum in Kaunas, is the guide in Lithuania, and Jacques Pauwels, a World War II historian, accompanies the tour in Poland. Participants may attend Shabbat services at local synagogues and meet members of local Jewish communities. Travel dates are May 19 to June 1. Please contact Maureen Price, 1-905-523-8067.

Jewish Greece & Turkey: Irwin Feuerstein, who several years ago retired from McMaster University, where he had been a professor of chemical engineering for 30 years, has led several Jewish educational tours to Spain, France and Italy for Pauwels Travel Bureau, a Brantford-based educational travel company. Under Feuerstein's guidance, the company is planning another trip to Greece and Turkey, Sept. 11 to 25.

The 15-day tour takes in many famous attractions, including the Parthenon in Athens, the Apollo-sanctuary of Delphi, and Istanbul's Aya Sophia, Blue Mosque and Topkapi Palace. Also included are visits to Jewish communities, synagogues, cemeteries and museums. \$4,950 per person. For details, please visit the website www.pauwelstravel.com.

Jewish Italy: Toronto-based Victorious is offering a Jewish Heritage Tour of Italy, to be escorted by classics scholar and novelist Dr. Nick Maes, Aug. 17 to 28. Maes, who is a high-school history teacher at CHAT Tanenbaum, is the author of

the 2007 novel *Dead Man's Float* and has a children's novel coming out in May. For details about the tour, please visit the website www.victorious.ca.

Jewish China: Toronto travel maven Harriet Morton of New Wave Travel is offering her eighth guided tour of China Through Jewish Eyes. The itinerary includes several days in Beijing and takes in the 2008 Olympic site en route to the Great Wall. Zhengzhou, Kaifeng, Xian, Yichang, the Yangtze River, Chongqing and Shanghai are also on the tour, which focuses on traditional Chinese beauty and history as well as the little-known panorama of Jewish historic sites in China.

Pre-Olympic China: A Journey Through Jewish Eyes departs May 6 on a 16-day tour that costs \$6,985 per person (double occupancy) and returns May 21. An optional extension takes in Guilin and Hong Kong for several additional days. For more information, please contact Harriet Morton or Joe Lupiani, 416-928-3113, ext. 274 or 265. E-mail harriet@newwavetravel.net.

Museum of Jewish Heritage: In the late 1930s, the Dominican Republic was one of few countries to welcome Jewish refugees from Germany and Austria. Several hundred who made their home on that Caribbean isle are the subject of a new exhibition at the Museum of Jewish Heritage in Lower Manhattan.

Sosua - A Refuge for Jews in the Dominican Republic brings to light the stories of Jews forced to leave home for a strange place they had never seen, other than on a map. They met only friendliness and acceptance on the island, and the exhibition "tells the story of Jews who found a haven, half a world away," according to museum director David G. Marwell. Also on view is a collection of photographs of the birth of Israel by Hungarian-born photographer Paul Goldman, marking the 60th anniversary of the state of Israel. 36 Battery Place, New York. www.mjhnyc.org

Travel Briefs

• A new exhibition in Boston examines the role of Roman-period mosaics in the development of synagogue decoration in the late Roman Empire. Tree of Paradise: Jewish Mosaics from the Roman Empire is on view at the McMullen Museum of Art at Boston College (www.bc.edu/artmuseum) until June 8.

• Star-studded performances have been arranged in New York City and Los Angeles in celebration of Israel's 60th anniversary. A show at Radio City Music Hall on May 7 features Israeli stars David Broza, Idan Raichel, Rami Kleinstein,

Habanot Nechama as well as American performers Matisyahu, John Zorn and others. The celebration continues May 10 at the Kodak Theatre in Los Angeles. Tickets to 60/60 are available at the website, www.60at60.org.

• The National Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, Mass., explores the world of the eastern European cheder in an exhibition opening this month, part of a larger series called The People's Book: The Bible in the Jewish Imagination. www.yiddishbookcenter.org

Israel Briefs

• The Ticho House in Jerusalem presents Homes of Others, an exhibition that explores, through photography and video art, the emotional echoes in homes whose occupants are absent. The exhibition includes works by Uri Gershtun, Noa Gross, Dana Levy, Ruti Nemet, Aya Ben Ron, Pavel Wolberg and Yuval Yairi. Until May 14.

• The Israel School of Tourism in Haifa is offering a new 10-month program - ITTE, Israel Tour & Travel Experts - beginning in October. Open to college or university graduates from all English-speaking countries, ITTE is a training program geared toward helping participants acquire an in-depth understanding of Israel in many different spheres of knowledge, and the ability to convey it to others. www.tayarut-school.co.il

• Amiron Travel is offering Two Ancient Civilizations, a tour of Greece and Israel led by Toronto Rabbi Gary Zweig on the occasion of Israel's 60th anniversary. Travel dates are June 16 to 26; \$3,290 per person, based on double occupancy. 416-630-5024, ext. 23, or www.amirontravel.com

• El Al's "early bird" summer fare is \$1,699 per person for travel between June 15 and Aug. 31. Tickets must be purchased before March 22 and are non-refundable, although changes may be made for \$200, after departure. Travel must be completed before Sept. 23 and the maximum stay is 45 days. www.elal.com, 416-967-4222 or 1-800-361-6174.

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Austria's *Counterfeiters* beats Israeli film to win Oscar

By TOM TUGEND
JTA

LOS ANGELES — Much of the Jewish Oscar buzz this year focused on director Joseph Cedar's *Beaufort* and the chances of an Israeli film picking up an Academy Award for the first time.

But it was another Jewish-themed film, *The Counterfeiters*, that ended up taking home foreign-language honours on Feb. 24.

Set in 1943, the Austrian film probes the moral dilemmas facing a special group of Jewish concentration camp inmates in a little-known and remarkable episode of World War II.

"There have been some great Austrian filmmakers working here," director-writer Stefan Ruzowitzky said during his victory speech, referring to Hollywood. "Most of them had to leave my country because of the

Nazis, so it sort of makes sense that the first Austrian film to win the Oscar was about the Nazis' crimes."

In an earlier interview with JTA, Ruzowitzky went further.

"My grandparents on both sides were Nazis, or Nazi sympathizers, so I felt a special responsibility to deal with the Holocaust era," he said. "I felt an equal responsibility not to exercise moral judgment on the Jews who collaborated in Operation Bernard."

In the film, as the Nazis realize that the war is going against them, they try one more ploy — to wreck the economies of Britain and the United States by flooding them with massive amounts of perfectly counterfeited pounds, sterling and dollars.

Under the code name Operation Bernard, the Germans combed concentration camps and assembled a team of more than 100 skilled Jewish printers, photographers and en-

gravers.

In Sachsenhausen, the prisoners are placed in two isolated barracks dubbed "The Golden Cage." They are given soft beds, good food, civilian clothes, first-class equipment and piped-in music.

Heading the team is Salomon Sorowitch, a character based on a Russian-born Jew named Salomon Smolianoff. Nicknamed "Sally," he lived high in the Berlin of the 1920s and early 1930s as "The King of the Counterfeiters."

Faced with the choice of instant death or producing pound notes so perfect that even the Bank of England accepts them, Sorowitch does the Nazis' bidding.

By the end of the war, the Sachsenhausen team had turned out 134 million pounds, three times the amount of British currency reserves, and was close to producing equally perfect dollar bills.

Ruzowitzky does not draw Sorowitch, portrayed by Karl Markovics, as merely a craven collaborator. Sorowitch protects a fellow prisoner who is trying to sabotage the operation and uses his skills to acquire medicine for an ill inmate.

The Counterfeiters retains the tension of a top thriller, but it goes deeper. It probes a haunting moral question — given a chance at life, even temporary life, at the price of aiding the enemy, what path will a person choose?

The actual Smolianoff survived the war and soon resumed his old occupation, adding the "rediscovery" of Old Master paintings to his repertoire. He died in Argentina in the 1960s.

The film's ending, building on hearsay evidence, has Sorowitch after liberation toting a suitcase full of fake currency and heading for Monte Carlo, where he purposely loses the entire fortune at the gaming tables.

Ruzowitzky's background and motivation is as interesting as the movie itself.

The Viennese filmmaker's grandparents on both sides were Nazis or Nazi sympathizers who, like most Austrians of the war and postwar generation, saw themselves more as victims than perpetrators of the German atrocities.

"My grandparents would acknowledge to me the facts of the Holocaust, but considered it a collateral damage to the war," Ruzowitzky said in a phone interview.

One reason he closed the film with the scene at a Monte Carlo casino "was to give Sally some redemption, or atonement, at the end," Ruzowitzky said.

From his considerable research on concentration camps, he concluded that "the system was designed so that the inmates would harm each other."

Ruzowitzky cited one survivor, a doctor, as saying, "If you tried to do anything good, it would lead to catastrophe."



Scene from *The Counterfeiters*

Meanwhile, disappointed but not downcast, Israeli filmmakers and their supporters vowed to come back strong next year after *Beaufort* lost for best foreign-language film.

"We have shown that Israel can make very good movies and we will prove it again next time," Eli Eltonoy, one of *Beaufort*'s actors, told a cheering crowd of some 350 attending an Oscar party Feb. 24 at the Hollywood night club Avalon.

An ebullient Yaakov Dayan, Israel's consul general in Los Angeles, went further, shouting, "We'll have a bigger party next year and we'll take the Oscar, I promise you."

From its arrival three days before the Oscar ceremony, the *Beaufort* contingent became a rallying point for the large Israeli expatriate and general Jewish communities in Los Angeles.

At the Oscar party, hosted by the Israeli consulate, the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles and the StandWithUs organization, guests included Israeli pop idol Ninette Tayeb and 10 teens from Sderot here to participate in a benefit concert for the Negev town targeted by rocket attacks from Gaza.

Beaufort director Joseph Cedar, lead actor Oshri Cohen, and producers David Silber and Moshe Edry were accompanied by more than a dozen Israeli television reporters and hosts.

The intense coverage reflected the country's pride that after a hiatus of 23 years, an Israeli film made the list of five finalists among 63 foreign entries, as well as in the contents of the film itself.

Beaufort depicts the windup of the first Lebanon War in 2000 not in the glory of a 1967 victory, but in an indecisive and exhaustive ending — a small Israeli unit evacuates the medieval *Beaufort* fortress. The film's strength lies in presenting its protagonists not as super warriors, but rather as young men who acknowledge and face their fears.

A *Beaufort* victory would have put an exclamation point on what is frequently described as the "renaissance" of the Israeli movie industry.

The renaissance has been certified by a slew of awards at the most prestigious European and American film festivals, including Cannes, Berlin, Venice, Sundance and Tribeca for pictures such as *The Band's Visit*, *Jellyfish*, *Lemon Tree*, *Walk on Water* and *Jossi & Jagger*.



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Arts & Travel



Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

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Musica Beth Tikvah presents the world premiere of **Eyal Bitton's** *Miss Persia: The Musical*, a Purim-themed show that has been described as "a cross between *Aladdin* and *My Fair Lady*." The musical is presented in concert format, similar to a radio play – the actors perform in character, without costumes, sets or choreography.

Book, music and lyrics are by Eyal Bitton, the acclaimed young composer who is the synagogue's music director. The musical features **Michele Tredger** in the role of **Hadasah**. Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 3080 Bayview Ave. Sunday, March 16, 7:30 p.m. \$36, \$25, \$18, \$10. 416-221-3433, ext. 354, www.musicabethtikvah.com

Golem Screening: Rogers MusicStore is screening the silent German expressionist horror film *The Golem* as part of a film festival it is hosting during Canadian Music Week. *The Golem* tells the story of **Rabbi Jehudah Loew**, who according to legend, fashioned a man from clay in 16th-century Prague to save the Jewish community from annihilation. Music composition by **Gary Lucas**, who has performed his acclaimed score live with this film in more than 20 countries to date. The screening is at the Royal Theatre, 608 College St. Thursday, March 6, 6:30 p.m. \$10. www.ticketmaster.ca, 416-870-8000

Names in the News: **Lauren Segal**, the young mezzo-soprano who sang in the Canadian Opera Company's production of *From the House of the Dead* at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts last month, is the featured performer in *Cherubino*, a short film-in-progress by writer-director **Paola Marino**.

Segal, a former university-level physics student until she opted for a career in opera instead, is singing at a \$100-a-plate dinner this week to help raise funds for the completion of *Cherubino*. The dinner is being held at Grano, on Yonge Street near Davisville Avenue, on Thursday, March 6, 7 p.m. To reserve a ticket, please phone 416-440-1986



Lauren Segal

or e-mail rdm@grano.ca

More Names in the News: Toronto author-composer **Charles Heller** has composed *The Trials of Leopold Hilsner*, a song cycle for soprano and piano to be premiered in Prague, Czechoslovakia, on March 9, with Heller in attendance. The work is also being performed in the historic town of Cesky Krumlov.

Heller is the author of the 2006 book, *What to Listen For in Jewish Music*, and the choir director at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda synagogue. His grandfather, **Siegfried Heller**, was the guardian of the unfortunate Jewish man at the centre of the notorious Hilsner affair. **Leopold Hilsner**, a 23-year-old Bohemian vagrant, was convicted of a blood-

libel-type ritual murder just over a century ago.

For more on Heller and his book, visit the website www.ecanthuspress.com.

Arts in Brief

• **Jordan Klapman** continues his lecture series on Great Jewish Composers with the topic "Yiddish American Swing in the Postwar Era." \$9 admission with bagels and coffee. Sunday, March 9, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 0

• The third annual York Fine Arts Festival offers 40 public events, including theatre and dance productions, visual arts and multimedia

exhibitions, films and concerts such as Baroque Magnificence, the choral performance that opens the festival on March 11. It runs to March 31. All events take place in the Fine Arts complex at York University, 4700 Keele St. Admissions range from free to \$15. 416-736-8888, www.yorku.ca/finearts/festival

• Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company presents *Rose*, the play by **Martin Sherman**, starring **Lally Cadeau**. "A joyous tale of love and humour" that was nominated for an Olivier Award for Best New Play. On stage this week at the Jane Mallett Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-366-7723, www.hgjewishtheatre.com

• Studio 180 presents the Canadian premiere of *Stuff Happens*, a play by **David Hare**, directed by **Joel Greenberg**. At the Berkeley Street Theatre Downstairs, 26 Berkeley St. until March 29. 416-368-3110,

www.stuffhappens.ca

• **Klezfactor** performs two sets at the Bella, Did Ya Eat? Brunch at Free Times Cafe, 320 College St., Sunday, March 9, 11:45 a.m.-1:45 p.m. Free with brunch. The band also plays at The Trane Studio, 964 Bathurst St., on Wednesday, March 19, 9:30 p.m. Admission \$10.

• This week in New York, the 57th annual National Jewish Book Awards honours **James L. Kugel** for *How to Read the Bible: A Guide to Scripture, Then and Now* (Free Press), and **Rabbi Harold Kushner** for his important body of work, which includes the international bestseller, *When Bad Things Happen to Good People* (1981). Eighteen other winners in as many categories are also to receive prizes at a gala ceremony at the Center for Jewish History in Manhattan.

At the Galleries

• The sixth annual Toronto Art Expo features more than 350 established Canadian

and international artists and galleries from 12 countries, exhibiting their wares at the Metro Convention Centre. In addition to visual art, the expo features performances by 35 dance and musical artists representing

cultures from around the world. March 6 to 9. Opening Gala, Thursday, March 6, 5 p.m. \$10, \$6. www.torontoartexpo.com

• Gallery 133 and the Israel Art Source host an Israeli Art Show & Sale, March 12 to 24. Gallery 133, 1260 Castlefield Ave. Phone for details about the opening reception. 416-504-6099.

• There is to be an exhibition of works by guests of the Out of the Cold program who participate in art classes on Thursday evenings at Holy Blossom Temple. The pieces include drawings and paintings on paper. The exhibition runs March 17 to 19, 7 to 9 p.m. The opening is March 18, 7 to 9 p.m. Holy Blossom Temple, Cecile and Harry Pearl Art Gallery, Philip Smith Hall, 1950 Bathurst St. A portion of sales will be donated back to the Out of the Cold program.



Charles Heller

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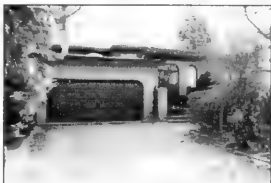
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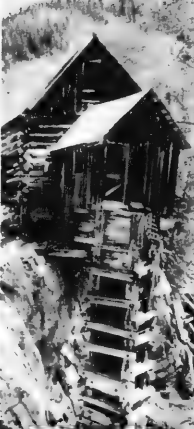
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The Canadian Jewish news

Israel & the Jewish World

Orthodox rabbis aim to counter rightward shift

By BEN HARRIS
JTA

NEW YORK — To its architects, the agreement reached between the Rabbinical Council of America and the Israeli Chief Rabbinate offers a way out of a long-running dispute over the recognition of conversions performed by American Orthodox rabbis.

But a small group of liberal Orthodox rabbis are unhappy with the deal, which was formally announced last week. They say it represents a broader pattern of what they describe as surrender on the part of the RCA, the primary association of Orthodox rabbis in the United States, to the dictates of a religious establishment in Israel increasingly under the right-wing sway of haredi authorities.

Under the terms of the agreement, the Chief Rabbinate approved a list of about 15 RCA rabbinic courts and approximately 40 rabbinic judges whose conversions would be recognized by state authorities in Israel. Courts wishing to be added to the list would need the final approval of Rabbi Hershel Schachter and Rabbi Mordechai Willig, two leading rabbis at Yeshiva University, who some liberal Orthodox figures blame for the school's alleged rightward drift.

"Conversion is just symptomatic of the increasing 'hardening' of the establishment of the Orthodox community," said Rabbi Marc Angel, rabbi emeritus of New York's Congregation Shearith Israel, the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue. "It's like building higher and higher walls between the Orthodox world and the rest of the world."

It is that belief which, in part, has led Rabbi Angel and another New York rabbi, Avi Weiss, to move toward the creation of an alternative network of rabbinic courts that would operate on "non-haredi standards." The courts would be associated with a new rabbinic organization that rabbis Angel and Weiss are establishing, to be known as the Rabbinic Fellowship.

Rabbi Reuven Tradburks of Toronto's Kehillat Shaarei Torah, a modern Orthodox congregation, debated Rabbi Angel on the issue at a Torah in Motion program in Toronto two months ago.

"I respect that he's a knowledgeable person," said Rabbi Tradburks. "I happen to feel on some of these issues that he's wrong."

Rabbi Tradburks said that when it comes to issues of personal status such as conversion or Jewish divorce, it's "not fair to the people involved, to future generations and to the rest of the community" to proceed with a ruling that is not going to be accepted by others.

As a member of the RCA committee that implemented the agreement with the Israeli Chief Rabbinate, Rabbi Tradburks said the decision was made in consultation with "all the major authorities in the modern Orthodox community" including Yeshiva University leaders and Rabbi Aharon Lichtenstein.

Rabbi Basil Herring, executive vice-president of the RCA, told JTA that his organization has not taken a formal position on the fellowship.

However, he characterized as "false and misleading" Rabbi Angel's characterization of the Orthodox rabbinate.

"The standards that have been adopted overwhelmingly by the rank and file and the leadership of the RCA are certainly very mainstream," Rabbi Herring said. "They reflect standards that have existed not only over the last decades, but indeed for centuries. The RCA, if anything, has been very moderate in terms of its expectations of converts."

Rabbi Tradburks explained that "because of the erosion of observance, it got to a point where

it was very difficult to demand [full commitment to observance] of people.

"Now, it's a different world," he said. "In Toronto, it's not a hard thing to keep Shabbos. Today it's much, much harder to justify not committing to a complete observance."

Motivated by concerns about the rightward drift of

American Orthodoxy, others have tried — and failed — over the past decade to create more liberal Orthodox institutions, including attempts to establish alternate rabbinic courts. But the Angel-Weiss effort is the first to unite a grassroots association of rabbis with an alternative network of courts and a kind of think tank, the Jewish Institute for Ideas and Ideals.

In October, the fellowship hosted an initial gathering of 33 rabbis — among them Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, a former New York rabbi and now the spiritual leader of the West Bank town of Efrat, and at least two members of the RCA's executive committee. An inaugural conference is slated for April in West Palm Beach, Fla., that Rabbi Angel hopes will attract 100 rabbis.

Participants in the October meeting cite a number of motivating factors behind the fellowship. Among them are the desire to resist what Rabbi Angel calls the "authoritarianism" of the Orthodox rabbinate; to create a "safe space" where rabbis can speak their minds freely; to empower local rabbis to make independent halachic decisions; and to provide some organizational umbrella for graduates of Yeshivat Chovevei Torah, Rabbi Weiss' liberal Orthodox seminary.

Chovevei graduates have not been granted membership in the RCA, and Weiss told JTA the seminary withdrew its membership request more than a year ago, citing the "arduous" process.

But it is the establishment of the new courts that is likely to generate the most controversy.

Though rabbis Weiss and Angel stress that the fellowship is not meant to replace or compete with the RCA — a body in which both continue to retain membership — creating new courts most directly infringes on an area where the RCA has long held sway.

"On the issue of the alternative batei din, that does seem to me like more of a direct conflict than fellowship alone," said Rabbi Daniel Cohen

of Congregation Agudath Sholom in Stamford, Conn., and a participant in the October meeting. "That's something that's evolving, to be honest. It's unclear where that's going to go."

For its part, the RCA stresses that for innovative legal changes to have any credibility, they must be endorsed by a recognized living halachic luminary, a position Rabbi Angel describes as a "classic statement of the authoritarianism in Orthodoxy."

Rabbi Herring also warned that establishing alternate courts can have a negative impact on the very people they are seeking to help — particularly if, in the case of so-called agunot, or "chained women," whose husbands refuse them a religious bill of divorce, the woman in question goes on to remarry and bear children.

"What happens if a beit din is not a recognized beit din, without wide acceptance in the Orthodox rabbinic community?" Rabbi Herring asked. "Has the new beit din helped these women or not helped these women? There is absolutely no question that they have grievously harmed these women."

Rabbi Weiss and Angel are not the first rabbis to recoil against the perceived rightward drift of Orthodoxy.

In 1997, a group of Orthodox rabbis and laypeople founded Edah, an organization to advance a liberal Orthodox view under the slogan "The Courage to be modern and Orthodox." The organization folded in 2006 and its director, Rabbi Saul Berman, took a position at Chovevei Torah.

Yeshiva University's Center for the Jewish Future, established in 2005 at the initiative of President Richard Joel, also was seen by some as an attempt to balance the perceived shift of Orthodoxy and the university to the right.

Rabbi Tradburks would argue that the shift is "a matter of shifting to what the *Shulchan Aruch* always demanded," rather than a shift to the right.

He attributes what he terms "an ascendancy of the more right-wing Orthodox world" to an increased birthrate in that community.

The conversion standards of demanding full commitment to observance — including Shabbat, kashrut and daily prayer — have been part of the RCA for 25 years, he said.

The batei din that are approved by the Israeli Chief Rabbinate include those in Toronto and Montreal, said Rabbi Tradburks. In other cities, people can work with their local rabbis in consultation with rabbis where there is an approved beit din.

More recently, a group of religious Zionist rabbis in Israel, Tzohar, faced off against the Chief Rabbinate over the use of a religious loophole allowing farmers to work their land during the sabbatical year.

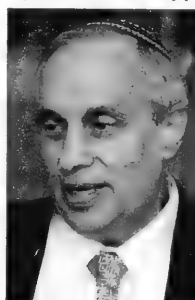
"We're not starting at the end of the process. We're starting with a grassroots movement," Rabbi Angel said. "And we're going to do it slowly, methodically, and on very solid halachic grounds."

"We're not interested in making headlines. We're interested in doing that which is correct for the Jewish people."

With files from Frances Kraft



Rabbi Tradburks



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Coach cleans house, turns team around

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

When Phil David was plugged into the head coaching job in Peterborough, England, he was faced with a last-place team full of underachievers.

There was some talent on the squad to be sure, good skaters and a scorer or two, including one of the league's best. But the team's main goal-getter was also a prima donna who put himself first.

David knew something had to be done in his first game behind the bench when the player ignored his signal to come off the ice during a power play. Everyone in the crowd saw the insubordination, and though he was on the job for only a day, David realized he'd have to pull the plug on the team's top player. Within a month, he was gone.

David faced a firestorm of criticism in the newspapers, but he could see in the dressing room and on the bench that the team's mood changed. It was like a huge burden had been

lifted off players' shoulders, and they responded by going on a 16-1 streak. By last week, Peterborough had amassed a 29-8-3 record since David's arrival. They were 4-4 when he took the job.

For David, 42, it all went to show that the lessons of hockey are universal, whether they're applied in Toronto minor leagues or with professionals in England.

To succeed, you need talent, speed, finesse, hard work and a good attitude, he said. That's how he builds his teams, whether they're midget squads in Toronto or the semi-pro Phantoms in Peterborough, a city of 150,000 that's 86 miles north of London.

The Phantoms play in England's Premier League, the country's second tier that includes Chelmsford Chieftains, Slough Jets and Bracknell Bee's.

For David, the call to coach the Phantoms came out of the blue and was something of a blessing. In August 2006, he had been diagnosed with colon cancer and underwent emergency surgery. During the subsequent

chemotherapy, complications arose and he was hospitalized for weeks. He lost his job in marketing, but by September

2007 he was running his own business and was serving as an assistant with his old team, the Toronto Junior Canadiens, when an old friend from Camp Kadimah, near Halifax, called and told him about a job opening in England.

David, a native of Sydney, N.S., was flown over for the interview. He was offered the job, but given only five days in which to start. He hurried back to Toronto, put his personal affairs in order and rushed back to England.

Given all he had been through, he felt it was the right thing to do. The cancer scare "was a life-changing event. It put a lot of things in perspective."

He was no longer as interested in pursuing materialist objectives. Instead, getting back full time to a profession he loved held all the allure he wanted.

Last week, as the season wore down, the Phantoms had secured a playoff spot and were jockeying for position in the post-season seedings. They defeated the Chelmsford Chieftains 8-5 on home ice to vault into third place.

David came to the Phantoms after many years of coaching in Toronto. Like many in the dwindling Jewish community of Cape Breton (it dropped from 150 families in the 1970s when he was growing up to 30-35 today), David left to pursue better opportunities. He cut his coaching teeth in the Toronto minor hockey system.

Starting in 1993 as a goalie coach for a

Select team in north Toronto, he caught the coaching bug, or what he calls "a healthy addiction to it."

An avid student of the game - he tries to attend at least one coaching seminar every year - he moved from Select to AA hockey, registering some success with the Scarborough Young Bruins, a midget team (16 and 17 year olds) and the North Toronto Midgets. He coached the North York Midgets as well, and two of his three midget teams finished first in their leagues.

In 2003, he moved up to AAA, taking a job with the Junior Canadiens, at the time, a last-place team.

In three years, they improved from 12th, to 7th and then to 4th in the league. During the 2005-06 season, they were league and provincial champions and competed nationally at the Telus Cup.

They lost in the semifinals to the eventual national champions.

Over the years, David developed his own coaching style that demands puck pursuit and forechecking. He looks for good skaters who employ finesse, and he requires his players to put hockey ahead of everything except family and school or work.

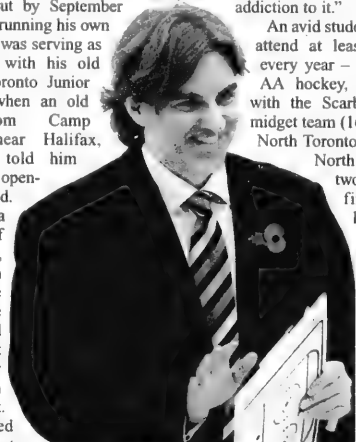
"That's the kind of player I love," he said. "On top of that, I look for strength on the puck."

Though physical skills are key, equally important is the right attitude - a willingness to learn and take instruction, to put the team first and work hard.

A goalie of no mean skill in his own right, as a youth he played AAA hockey for some very good teams. His midget club went to the national championships, and he notes with pride he was named tournament all-star ahead of the legendary Patrick Roy. After that, however, their careers diverged. Roy went on to the National Hockey League, Stanley Cups and an award as playoff MVP, while David played intramural hockey at Dalhousie University.

"I peaked at 17," he quipped. What's more, looking back, he realizes he didn't have the kind of attitude he now demands of a player. He acknowledges he was too focused on himself and was "an uncoachable kid."

"I would have kicked myself off the team within a week," he said.



Phil David

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Inside Back

There's nothing to fear in Holocaust education

By YONI GOLDSTEIN

In mid-February, French President Nicolas Sarkozy became the first French head of state to attend the annual dinner of the Representative Council of Jewish Institutions in France (CRJF), the country's Jewish umbrella organization.

Previous French presidents have always used the bogus – and entirely French – excuse of not wanting to be seen as supporting “sectarianism” in explaining why they have stayed away from the CRJF dinner. In parting with this absurd policy, Sarkozy emphasized his support for French Jews and the State of Israel.

During his address, Sarkozy pledged to intensify Holocaust education among French schoolchildren by initiating a program in which 11-year-old students will “adopt” a Holocaust victim of the same age. To a standing ovation, he explained, “Nothing is more exciting for a child than the story of a child of the same age, who played the same games and had the same dreams, but was unfortunate enough to be born Jewish in the 1940s.”

This is, of course, exciting news. An increase in Holocaust education is welcomed anywhere in the world, but in France, the epicentre of Europe's current cultural war, Sarkozy's words were a revelation. Considering France's historical ambivalence towards its own Jews and the country's struggles with a bullying Muslim population, a display of sentimentality for the Jewish story of the Holocaust is a risky political move.

Predictably, Sarkozy's proposal has drawn angry responses. Jean-Marie Le Pen, head of France's far-right National Front party and a borderline Nazi sympathizer, predicted that, “The poor children will feel guilty and break down,” under the weight of a Holocaust education. Echoing Le Pen, Simone Veil, a Jewish Holocaust survivor and former French government minister, claimed, “It's impossible to ask a child of that age to relate to a dead person. It would be unbearable for them.”

This “what about the children?” argument is nothing more than a shameless ruse. Regardless

of their claims, Le Pen, Veil and their ilk are not particularly interested in the psychological threat to young French kids. What they truly fear is a project that would alter the French far-right's narrative. Singling out the greatest Jewish tragedy for intense study quite simply belies the nationalist cause.



New Views

These political manoeuvres hide a simple, undeniable truth: Holocaust education and psychological hardship in children are un-linkable. There is, in fact, documentary proof that children not only can handle learning about the Holocaust, but can also produce something constructive from what they're taught.

Indeed, the award-winning 2004 documentary *Paper Clips* showed how a group young of people could be affected positively by Holocaust education.

The film shows how students at the public middle school in Whitwell, Tenn., population 1,600, were motivated to produce their own tribute to victims of the Holocaust after their principle introduced a mandatory Holocaust education class at the school. The students collected 11 million paper clips to represent the six million Jews and five million other victims of the Nazi genocidal campaign. The paper clips are housed, along with various other tributes, in a vintage Nazi transport rail car.

These children – who knew nothing about the Holocaust and, if Le Pen is to be believed, stood to be damaged by the painful experience of studying the Holocaust – were actually drawn into the tragic story and were sufficiently motivated to add their own unique perspective to the Holocaust storyline.

There is absolutely no reason to fear that learning about the Holocaust might damage children. If anything, studying the Holocaust has the potential to be a positive educational experience for today's children, who, no doubt, will come into contact with more recent, even current, campaigns of genocide as they become more and more aware of humanity's ugly side.

That the Le Pens of the world would put hateful, nationalist politics before the education of French children is truly appalling.

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- 1/2 c. raisins
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 7 oz. poppy seeds
- 1/4 tsp. saffron, dissolved in 2 tbspl. hot water, or turmeric
- 1 tsp. sugar
- 1/2 c. orange juice

Rinse chickens with cold water, pat dry. Heat oil in a non-stick skillet; brown onion & garlic. Add prunes, apple, apricots, raisins, pepper, cinnamon, saffron water (or turmeric), pepper & sugar. Mix well. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Stuff chickens with fruit mixture and truss cavities shut. Place stuffed birds in a greased roasting pan; pour in orange juice. Cover and bake 1 1/2 hrs. basting with pan juices. Spoon juices over the chicken. Serve with rice.

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REMEMBERING OUR YESTERDAYS



By BILL GLADSTONE

TERAULAY STREET SYNAGOGUE: This City Public Works photo (1923) preserves a rare view of the former Teraulay Street Synagogue on the east side of what is now Bay Street, a few doors south of Dundas Street, with the clock tower of Old City Hall in the distance. Machziki Hadas, a breakaway faction of the Shomrei Shabbas congregation on Chestnut Street, built and occupied the sanctuary in 1907. Inset, a frontal portrait of the shul and its longtime spiritual leader, Rabbi Yosef Weinreb. Known as the “Galitzianer Rebbe,” Rabbi Weinreb died in 1942. The synagogue was demolished in 1943.

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

\$168,000. That's what I paid for my condominium, a place with two bedrooms, a self-cleaning oven, an innovative tool closet, and a view overlooking the captivating and ceaselessly moving Highway 401.

Despite what Mordecai Richler said through his character Duddy Kravitz's grandfather: “A man without land is nothing,” I never felt compelled to buy my own place. That is, until now.

First, I have always been domestically challenged and have no idea how to repair my broken electrical fireplace. Further, after spending \$300,000 on rent, I always figured owning a dwelling is not a financial investment. One rarely, if ever, sells their home and cashes in; instead they move into bigger place with a larger mortgage and more floor space to fill with additional furniture.

Does real estate always appreciate? Ask



URBAN
WRITER

the woman who bought a place in Miami Beach a couple of years ago, how she is feeling today. Lousy is my guess. Purchasing my place was not as a financial investment. So why did I finally take the real estate plunge and become a home owner?

I am now a father, and my reality has shifted with Noah in it. The world with Noah seems safer. It seems more dangerous. I now view life as a parent. I want to share with Noah the Tao of the 401 traveller who passes before us and experience the hardy sense of happiness and security that comes with every giggle and laugh as we watch. I want to open our windows and doors, step outside, and invite the world in.

I now view life as a parent and am petrified at hearing the news of a child dying anywhere. It makes me ill, sick to my

‘Home-full’?

stomach, and I want to lock the three bolts on my front door to keep the bad away and protect my little boy in our home.

Owning a place and being Noah's father encourages me to think about my personal space in a different way. The earth is ultimately not ours at all. I know that. It is God's. Yet I believe it does exist for me, and for you. I believe the leaves, the dust and the rocks call out to us to plant our garden or build our fence, to buy a place so we can control our environment in a way that reflects who we are; enables us to plant a tree, which nobody can uproot, for generations to come – for Noah.

Could I be as good a parent renting instead of owning? Of course. I have friends who prove this in a big way. But now that I own my condo, now that Noah's bedroom is truly his, I have this notion we are just a little bit more alive.

When considering why I finally bought

a place, I wondered why it was important for the Jewish people to have a homeland – the State of Israel. Clearly, Israel is our safe zone, a haven for any Jew. It is also there, and nowhere else, inside Jerusalem-stone hovels, that Jews can actualize our spiritual and creative way, to blossom in our own place, which nobody can take away.

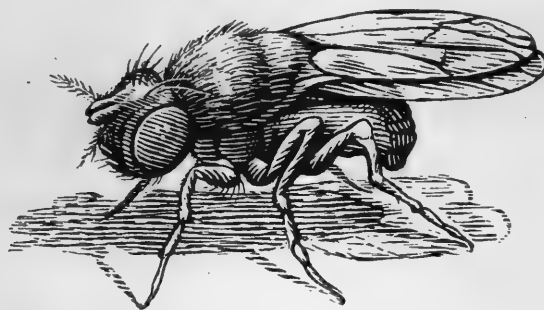
And then, you know, I thought about all of these reasons just a little bit more and remembered the Jews of Poland, Hungary and Germany who also had warm, cozy homes and likely felt the same thing as I do today, until someone else felt otherwise. My belief in ownership, it seems, is an illusion. It is then a daydream that has prompted me to buy a condo, to own a place of my own.

I am 47 years old and just bought my first property. Something about it feels right. Something about it seems very temporary. Unlike the homeless, I am now “home-full.” \$168,000 later, what does that mean?

Avrum@veahavta.org Sderot/Sudan? The address of my blog is: avrumrosensweigideas.blogspot.com.

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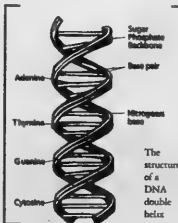
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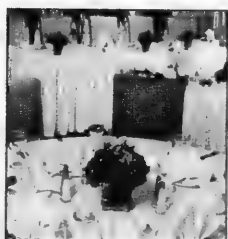
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Brides

No one could steal my bridal thunder

By MARNI BRINDER BYK

Special to The CJN

When it rains, it pours. I waited 912 days for Russ to propose, and 1,187 days from the day we met until the day we got married.

Russ jokes that I was planning the wedding on our first date, and he may be right, because on that first date I knew I'd met my match.

Do you have any idea how long 912 days is? It's 21,888 hours of waiting, 1,313,280 minutes of hoping, and 78,796,800 seconds of looking your beloved in the eye and wondering, "What the heck is taking so long?"

But on that wonderful day when he finally proposed, I was on top of the world. It was my time to shine, and no one, not even Russ, could get in my way.

He wouldn't have dared to even try.

I remember the phone calls, e-mails, notes of congratulations. Everyone wanted to talk colours, take me dress shopping and celebrate. I picked a date, about 10 months away, and continued to ride the bridal wave.

But a funny thing happened on the way to the altar: life.

The unexpected thing about getting married is that although everyone around you is thrilled, their lives continue on while you plan every detail of your wedding.

One month after my — um, I mean our — blessed engagement, Russ' sister, Jacky, got engaged and planned to get married a

mere three months later.

In the blink of an eye, my future sister-in-law and maid of honour was going to be one of two matrons of honour at my wedding! Then she got pregnant! My very good friend Shawna also got engaged, planned her wedding and got married all within my 10-month engagement.

About three months before my wedding, my brother asked me to help him choose a ring for his girlfriend. David assured me that he would wait to propose to her until after my — I mean our — wedding.

However, sitting there with the jeweller, seeing my little brother willing to spend every penny he didn't have on his future wife, I couldn't make him wait. She deserved her day, too.

So I encouraged him to propose whenever he was ready, and two weeks later, they announced their engagement. Jen was thrilled, and so was I, because like me, Jacky, and Shawna, she had met her perfect match and was ready to start a life with her bashert. Who was I to stop them?

In the end, my wedding was everything I could have ever hoped for, and I would not have changed a single thing.

I have spoken to other brides who have experienced the same bridal wave, with their friends and relatives seemingly stealing their thunder, but in the end, on day 1,187, there was only one person in white.

Oh yeah, and Russ was there, too.

And the day was that much better because we were surrounded by people who were happy.



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Brides

Luckily, it doesn't snow in September

By JENNIFER PETERS
Special to The CJN

Every girl waits to find her Prince Charming, and when he finally arrives, you don't want to let him go. My prince won my heart by drinking a two-litre bottle of root beer, which would get me into the next round of our camp-wide morning program. When it was announced that he had won the competition for me, I knew I had met my match – someone who would drink something I hated.

It all began at Centre Camp, at the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre, in the summer of 2004. Three years after the root beer, he proposed – he did everything a girl could dream of. He got down on one knee, asked my father's permission – not to

mention he got me the most stunning ring. We chose the location right away and booked the wedding.

Little did we know that the day after our wedding was the first night of Rosh Hashanah. We thought about it for a quick second and realized unless we were going to make the first night of the holidays at our house for 250 people, the date would have to change. I called the synagogue to switch the date, except the next date I wanted was on hold, and I was forced to wait four very long days until I heard that we could book that date. You would think after that we would have learned to plan more appropriately.

With the date secured, I began my search for the perfect wedding dress. I couldn't wait to start trying them on. I found my perfect dress in the third store I went in to – well, it seemed

perfect. I called my best friend as I left the store to tell her I had found it; she is getting married in June and already had her dress. I described the dress to her and at the end she said it sounded beautiful... almost like hers. She said there was no possible way it was the same dress, that there were a million dresses in Toronto, and we went to two different stores! But I had to be sure. So I dragged her to the store, and when she saw the dress, her face turned white – it was the same dress! I couldn't believe it. We normally have had completely different taste in just about everything! So the search continued...

After the date change and shopping for another wedding dress, I started getting excited about our engagement party. A few days before the party, I turned on the TV to check the weather and found out that there was supposed to be a big snowstorm. This was not just any snowstorm. This was supposed to be the biggest snowstorm in 40 years!

I woke up the day of the engagement party at 7 a.m., looked outside and felt so much better. The weather was perfect. Obviously, the weather would be on my side... wrong! I went to the hairdresser, and when I left there, it was a white-out. I thought for sure no one would come to the party. Thankfully, we got there in one piece and without incident, and while we were waiting at the party, slowly but surely everyone started coming in. The party was perfect – everything we wanted and more.

I made myself crazy for absolutely no reason. After everything that happened – wrong dates, the same dress, and poor weather – I realized that everything is meant to happen for a reason. Whatever the reason was, I knew in eight months I would be marrying the man of my dreams. Lucky for us, it doesn't snow in September.

Everything happens for a reason



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Brides

My brilliant honeymoon plan 'crashed and burned'

By MARNI BRINDER BYK

Special to The CJN

I decided quite early in my wedding planning that I wanted to leave for my honeymoon immediately after my reception. I had this romantic notion that if my new husband and I slipped out of our wedding clothes into our travel clothes, the magic of our wedding day would continue onto the plane and throughout our honeymoon. People warned me that we were in for a long night, we were going to be sooo tired, but I shook my head at the naysayers – they didn't realize how brilliant my plan was... they didn't realize how brilliant I was.

With my wedding scheduled for the middle of hurricane season, our honeymoon options were limited. We were taking a chance by booking anywhere in the Caribbean, which is, of course, the most affordable place to book. With the help of my travel agent, I explored my options. My first inclination was a Mediterranean cruise, but we would leave 10 days after the wedding, which didn't suit my vision. Who wants to go back to work for a week and then leave again? I planned on leaving my office a single gal and returning two weeks later a sunburned married lady. (Please note: I am not a sun goddess but instead a very fair, very freckled woman who can still burn



Russ Byk and Marni Brinder Byk on the beach in Hawaii.

wearing 30 sunblock while sitting in the shade.)

Finally we picked Hawaii – the honeymooner destination of choice! We decided on a seven-day cruise around the islands. On the days leading up to the wedding, we packed, got organized, got married, danced, forgot to eat, opened the gifts, changed and left for the airport. And we were tired... really tired. In the process, my loving

husband was starting to get a little cranky.

Russ couldn't get comfortable enough to sleep, not on the flight to Chicago, definitely not on the three-hour stopover, and we still had a whopping nine hours ahead of us. Once we boarded in Chicago, Russ finally fell asleep, and I stopped contemplating filing for divorce. About an hour later my new husband awoke, a touch less miserable, looking a little more like the groom who

pledged his love to me a mere 18 hours earlier. But when he learned he had only slept for one hour and that there were another eight hours still to go, I had to put on my earplugs to drown out his complaining, mumbling and ranting. At one point, Russ decided he just needed to get off the plane. Had it been a viable option, trust me, I would have let him.

What happened to my bliss? The wedding was magical, the gifts generous; however, as the plane headed toward paradise, my plan crashed and burned. The mood didn't change much once we landed, but once we finally found our suite, ate from one of the many buffets and took showers, we were finally the Mr. and Mrs. Byk I had imagined in the months before our wedding. What did I learn? One, listen to your friends, family and travel agent. We could have waited a week, a month – perhaps our first 12-hour trip should not have been on zero sleep? And two, next time be better prepared – I should have had his favourite magazines, a portable DVD player in case the movies were awful on flight (they were), and if all else failed, some sleeping pills to slip in his food. Hawaii was beautiful, by the way, but we never went to see any volcanoes or waterfalls. We spent the rest of the cruise napping, eating and napping some more. The flight was altogether too tiring to do anything else.

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Brides

Wedding mishaps: all's well that ends well

By EILEEN GOLTZ
Special to The C/JN

As a caterer and event planner, it's been my pleasure – and sometimes waking nightmare – to help create and co-ordinate weddings. Some big, some small, some complicated, others, not so much; but all vitally important to the families of the happy couple. One thing that they all have in common is that no matter how exact the planning is or how carefully the seating charts are put together, I know, to a certainty, that something probably will go wrong.

I've found that the key to a successful wedding is knowing when to "fix" the problem, complain like hell, punt, or when to just shrug your shoulders and say, oh well, if this is the worst thing that happens today, this is still going to be the best wedding ever. People too often lose sight that the commitment of two people, in front of their family and friends, is far more important than the colour scheme, any canapé served or the size of the sweet table. That being said, some fun and funny things do happen whenever people get together to celebrate.

As food is my forte, several fondest memories of wedding feasts and fiascos revolve around what was served, or as the case may be, not served. There was the wedding cake that fell over as the bride and groom were cutting it and trying to force-feed each other. The cake hit the four-year-old flower girl on the head and covered her and the ring bearer with butter cream and chocolate ganache. There was the outdoor sunset dinner at

a harbour club that was attacked by a battalion of mosquitoes and other assorted bugs, despite the area having been fogged and the five-dozen citronella candles strategically placed around the dining area. The meal was moved indoors, with all the guests joining in to pick up the plates and conga-line it into the hastily redecorated dining room. Surprisingly, this was one of the happiest wedding receptions it was ever my privilege to co-ordinate.

Food isn't the only aspect of a party that can be problematic. There was the time when the truck delivering the plates, glasses, silverware, chairs and tables, rented for a luncheon following a morning wedding, showed up three hours late and managed to back into the portico of the front entrance of the synagogue (why the driver went to the front instead of the back where the deliveries are supposed to be made is still a mystery to me). I'm happy to say that with the help of my hastily called "extra" staff – my son and six of his friends – we got the tables and chairs set with about 30 seconds to spare. Then there's one of my favourite memories of sitting down to dinner for 300. Just before the dinner was to be served, the father of the bride, wanting to have wine served for a toast to the happy couple, had two lines of waiters, who were carrying bottles of champagne, enter from different sides of the room. When a misstep caused the two lines to collide, the term "bridal shower" took on a new meaning. No real harm other than an up-do that turned into a down-do. Everyone laughed, and after a quick trip to the powder room for the bride to redo her do, everyone toasted and

the party went on.

The old saying, "man plans and God laughs," is absolutely true when it comes to weddings. Let's take my own for example. I ordered cream flowers for the chupah and the aisle, but purple flowers were delivered. Now, purple is a fine colour, but when the colours you've chosen are cream and gold, purple is not your second or even third choice as a substitute. Luckily, the wedding co-ordinator was able to contact the florist, and by some magic still unknown to me, was able to have the purple turn into white (alas, not cream, but who's complaining 30 years later) and the march down the aisle went on as scheduled.

Several years ago, when I was helping a very young bride and her mother decide which florist would best suit her taste and budget, I happened to notice that she kept looking sideways at her fiancé and mouthing the words, "help me." Surmising that there was something that needed to be discussed, I distracted the mother and discreetly pulled the bride aside to ask what the problem was. She confessed that her mother-in-law was allergic to all kinds of flowers, and she didn't know how to tell her mother that the garden wedding she had been planning since the bride was conceived would probably land her future *machatunim* in the hospital. Telling the bride that honesty – and the desire to avoid anaphylactic shock – was the best scenario, we called the groom's mother. She came over to the florist – and was thrilled to be asked – and the choice was made to go with silk. This kind of willingness to share planning information for a

wedding has saved more than one reception (and life).

Surprisingly, one of my favourite wedding stories doesn't involve food or flowers or even wine – it involves gym shoes. Several hours before the wedding, as the photographer was artistically posing the bride and her retinue on some wrought-iron stairs, the heel of the bride's "dyed to match" stilettos broke. It didn't just come away from the shoe – it literally broke in half. Most brides would be hysterical. Luckily, this one had a great sense of humour. She sent her best friend and maid of honour – in full bridesmaid regalia – to a Target store several blocks away from the synagogue and had her purchase five pairs of matching wedge-style gym shoes (they were all the rage then) in the assorted sizes of the bride and bridesmaids. Total grace under pressure. No panic, just acceptance of what was, and the ability to go with the flow and march down the aisle with style.

I know that the best advice I can give to any bride or groom or member of the wedding party is that while the food and band and flowers are important, they should pale in comparison to the reason for the party. Focus on what's truly necessary to make your wedding special and meaningful – the commitment to your future together, celebrating with the family and friends that are with you and remembering those that aren't. You and your family are the core of what a marriage should celebrate, not the colour of the napkin rings. Oh, and have fun. This is supposed to be the best party of your life. Enjoy it.



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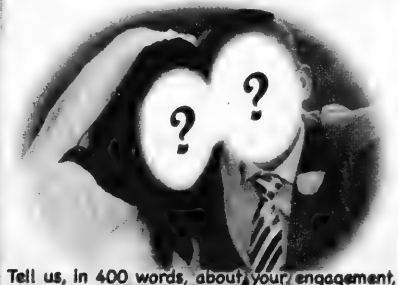
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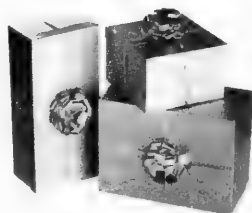
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Brides

Travel agent can help firm up honeymoon plans

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL

Special to The CJN

In the midst of the chaos that is wedding planning, honeymoon planning can actually be a welcome reprieve.

To kickstart this fun process, I recommend you sit down in private with your spouse-to-be, don't even mention the word "wedding," and start to visualize a beautiful destination where the two of you can begin married life.

When considering the perfect place, think about whether you are looking for relaxation, adventure or a blend of both.

You should also give solid thought to finding a location or series of locations that are couples friendly.

In other words, a destination teeming with teenagers or toddlers is probably not ideal.

My wife and I did most of our preliminary research on the Internet.

We were looking for a vacation that mixed adventure with chill time, was somewhere neither of us had been before, catered to couples and was warm and not rainy at that time of year, so we focused on finding a resort in the Caribbean.

One thing that was very helpful throughout our quest was online reviews.

People who have been to the resorts will generally be quite frank about how good or bad it is, so we did our share of checking out what patrons had to say.

The reviews painted a clear picture of all kinds of important details, including food, amenities, activities, staff, ambience and the overall honeymoon experience.

We also spoke at length with our friends and acquaintances for their tips.

While online booking is very popular these days, I still feel that dealing directly with a travel agent, who has expertise in trip planning, is the best way to go.

So armed with a good sense of what we were looking for, we approached a travel agent to firm up the plans.

This was exceptionally helpful and led us to decide on our destination — the Body Holiday at Le Sport, a hotel, spa and resort nestled along the coast of the Caribbean Sea on the mountainous island of St. Lucia.

With the tag line of "give us your body for a week and we'll give you back your mind," the Body Holiday has 60 health and wellness offerings, in concert with a vast array of water and land sports, fine dining and evening entertainment.

Each day, every person is entitled to at least one spa treatment, including a special treat for honeymooners — a hands-on lesson on how to give your husband or wife the ultimate massage.

Fortunately, many activities that usually require extra fees at an "all-inclusive" are included. For instance, water-skiing lessons, golf green fees, tennis coaching and introductory scuba diving are all part of the package.

The restaurants are ideal for romantic dinners, and if you venture off the resort as we did, there is plenty to see.

With the aid of a hired driver and guide, our rugged road trip included stops in the capital, Castries, followed by Marigot Bay and the fishing village of Anse La Raye, all of which provided breathtaking views of St. Lucia's hilly, verdant landscape.

We stopped near the west-coast town of Soufriere for a stunning vista of the Pitons, twin cone-shaped mountains that soar 800 metres. Soufriere is also home to a volcano, where bubbling mud, water and steam render a fascinating natural wonder.

Our final destination before the two-hour drive back to the resort was the Enbas Saut Waterfalls Trail, a remote expanse in the Central Rainforest Reserve. Climbing up and down steep, dirt steps, we found the five-kilometre trail invigorating.

If you plan a fun honeymoon, that's exactly what you'll feel, too.

For more information, contact Carol at 416-789-7020, ext. 341, or e-mail carol@thetravelnetwork.com.



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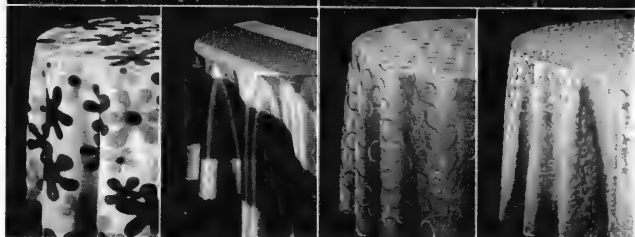
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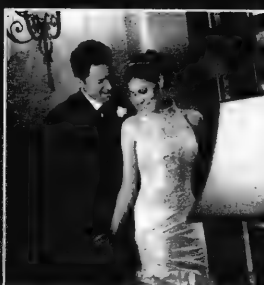
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Brides

Pamper bride and guests at shower

By FELISA BILLET
Special to The C/JN

With the wedding around the corner, a shower is a perfect time for the bride's family and close friends to spend a relaxed afternoon together before the big day, says Brooklyn-based party planner Zahava Fisch of Dazzle by Zahava.

"At bridal showers, not only are you supposed to pamper the bride, it's a great time for a hostess to go all out and give her guests a memorable afternoon," she says.

Follow these steps to celebrate the woman-of-the-hour – and please all the assembled guests.

- Make the food shine. Whether the meal will be catered, pot-luck or prepared

by the hostess, the food should be fun. Give the bride and guests a culinary experience they don't get every day.

- Prepare a variety of toppings for a delicious salad bar. Place cut-up fruit, milk, yogurt and ice next to a blender for guests to make their own fruit smoothies. Assemble spreads, cheeses and vegetables, and have the hostess and a few friends alternate preparing made-to-order panini or omelettes for the guests. And who doesn't love make-your-own sundaes?

- Pick a theme and co-ordinate the décor, invitations and games. Themes can revolve around the bride. If she is a theatre buff, design the invitation like a playbill, scatter ticket stubs on the tables, and prepare trivia games about plays and musicals.

Does she have a green thumb? Plan a garden-themed shower by using flower motifs on the invitations, paper goods, and decorations. Other themes include cooking (have guests include a small kitchen gadget with each gift), Jewish holidays (guests bring gifts appropriate to assigned holidays), or household (guests bring creative gifts appropriate to specific rooms).

- Present the bride with a personalized memento. In the invitation, request submissions for recipes that can be turned into a special cookbook and presented to her at the shower. Brief messages or anecdotes should be included with the recipes to enhance the collection.

Alternatively, create a scrapbook of pictures and messages from the shower participants. This can be done before the shower or have guests bring the materials and have a fun time creating the scrapbook at the party. Another idea is to pass around a notebook and have guests write brief words of advice for the bride.

- Give her the ultimate gift. Once the basics are covered, have the hostesses or a few close friends present the bride with an outstanding gift not from her registry. Think out of the box. A gift certificate for floral arrangements to brighten her new home, theatre tickets for the couple to enjoy during the first year or pre-paid dinner certificates to their favourite restaurants are presents that touch the heart. Arrange monthly visits from a local cleaning service to help her as she gets used to keeping house or treat her to premium beauty services the day before her wedding.

- Everyone loves a present – not just the bride. Stretch the party's budget to include favours for all the guests. They should be small items and preferably revolve around the shower's theme. Classic items everyone can use are picture frames, decorative boxes, magnets, soaps, fragrances, lotions and chocolates. These are best presented at each place-setting or left in a basket by the door for guests to take on their way out.

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Adjusting to married life

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The C/JN

Getting married is one of life's greatest milestones. It is the start of a union like no other and ushers in an entirely new way of living.

In my case, before I ceremoniously crushed the glass with my heel not long ago, the life I knew was vastly different from the one I was about to begin.

Aside from my immediate family, I had never lived with another person. My cooking credentials didn't expand beyond toast and pasta. My house-cleaning capabilities were halting. And in general, I marched to the beat of my own drum.

Marriage was therefore a whole new world to me, and to make it work, both of us would have to, shall we say, adjust our lifestyles.

One of the most significant adjustments was reconciling our respective domestic habits.

I am not neat and have an aversion to tidying up. I learned quickly that my wife likes the house spic and span.

So our first endeavour was to figure out how to divvy up house chores and attain a level of neatness that was acceptable to both of us.

It didn't happen overnight and was not always a peaceful process, but we made strides – it's called hiring a cleaning professional!

Another issue was food. We have very different tastes and preferences, and as I mentioned earlier, cooking was for the most part, foreign to me.

If you're thinking we hired a chef, sorry, that was not in the budget.

But I took it upon myself – with my wife's assertive en-

couragement – to discover things like an oven, frying pan, wok, spice rack, cooking oils and recipes. She did the same. And in time, we established a bit of a meal routine for the week.

I should note this includes random pop-ins at the in-laws during the dinner hour.

Time and space are precious things that you have plenty of when you're on your own. Once you're married, that changes.

I suddenly found myself without the freedom to scream, shout, jeer and cheer at the Leafs on TV for several hours each week.

Instead, I now had to make time for fun and exciting things like buying groceries, shopping for furniture and folding laundry.

The solution was to share time, space and responsibility relatively equally.

However, it is also important to ensure each spouse gets a fair share of independence.

Last but not least is the challenge of co-ordinating two schedules.

Married people have multiple obligations, commitments and the like, so a schedule, or series of schedules, is imperative.

This requires planning, organization and forethought – all skills that are, well, underdeveloped in my arsenal of talents.

That is to say that flying by the seat of the pants has long been my motto.

Conversely, my wife is all about what are we doing tomorrow, the next day and the coming weekend.

I would venture to say this was the biggest adjustment I made, in that I was suddenly making lists and schedules, and arranging plans with friends who don't normally think beyond an hour from the present.

There is no magic prescription for a perfect start to marriage.

But as newlyweds, you need to make concepts like accommodation and compromise front and centre in your life.

If that means you give up some free time, get your hands dirty scrubbing a filthy toilet, watch movies you hate and think about someone other than you, then that's what it takes.

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Historic and romantic wedding settings abound in Israel

By TOBY KLEIN GREENWALD
Special to The C.J.N.

When I got married 30 years ago in the enchanting courtyard of Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai in the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem, our "music" was two friends on guitars and another on an accordion, playing in different corners. This was due to the custom of not having live bands within the Old City walls since the destruction of the Temple.

The groom's table, veiling of the bride, dancing and reception were scattered among the historic synagogues and small halls within the complex. Of special note was the quarter of a chicken that the waitress dropped onto my father's plate. When I tried to apologize for the simplicity of the affair, mortified, he said, beaming, "I love it! It's so... heimish!"

We loved that setting, but today a bride and groom have many more options. Israel offers some of the most evocative, historic and romantic settings for weddings on the face of the earth. Wedding planning companies will arrange a wedding anywhere—in the desert, in a forest or on the beach.

Thinking about a wedding in Israel? A representative sampling follows.

The Caves of Beit Guvrin

South of Beit Shemesh, these caves, a favourite location for hikers and tourists, are also a popular area for concerts and weddings. There are niches in the wall for homing pigeons, and caves once used for water cisterns and granaries are open to the stars. One moves from cave to cave for the chupah, dinner, bar and dance area. The main cave seats 450, and if you want to move tables outside, it can accommodate up to 700. The catering is \$52 a person, or you can rent the hall for \$5,000 and bring in your own caterer.

Large and rustic, with the smell of grass

Many moshavim and kibbutzim are dedicating a part of their lands to wedding areas. The cost per plate at kibbutz weddings can be as low as \$38. Among kibbutzim and moshavim that host weddings are Tzora, Opera b'Kfar (literally, "Opera in the Village") and Neve Ilan.

Kibbutz Kfar Etzion

David Ben-Gurion called this kibbutz the watchman of Jerusalem. It was so significant that the internal army code used when it fell to the Jordanians in 1948 was, "The Queen has fallen." The children who had been evacuated then returned to settle it in 1967. In recent years, it has opened its reception areas to people from outside the kibbutz.

A huge grassy area under spreading fir trees and a number of places appropriate for a wedding ceremony are available there. Couples who are members of the kibbutz are driven to their private reception room after the ceremony on a tractor. Seats up to 600. Telephone: 972-2-9935145

Ramat Rachel—elegance and history

One can watch a spectacular and eternal sunset through the poles of the chupah from a hill overlooking Bethlehem and the Etzion Hills at Ramat Rachel, a kibbutz whose members fought to maintain the southern border of

Brides

Jerusalem in 1948. Surrounded by bunkers, the kibbutz had new life breathed into it after the Six Day War in 1967.

The décor of its huge wedding hall includes Jerusalem stone and a

large dance floor, and the catering is sumptuous. The kibbutz was founded in 1926 and named for Rachel, who is interred in the nearby Tomb of Rachel, a destination for pilgrimages and prayer. Seats between 500 and 600, depending on how much room you want to leave for a dance floor. Price: About \$42 a person. Telephone: 972-2-6702555; fax: 972-2-6733155; e-mail: arline@ramat-rachel.org.il

Kibbutz Nir Am—duck pond, restaurant and Bedouin tent

Nir Am, located in the western Negev and recently the target of Qassam rocket attacks, was founded in 1943 by Ukrainian Jews who were joined by pioneers from Argentina, France and South Africa. Horses and donkeys graze in the nearby fields.

Nir Am has both outside and inside dinner areas, including a Bedouin tent, a chupah frame of logs, and a large beautiful duck pond filled with lily pads and bulrushes. The ducks wander freely among the guests. There is a fascinating water museum on a nearby hill. The Nir Am area used to supply the water to the settlements of the Negev and also hosted various army divisions who fought and hid there during the War of Independence. The outside seats up to 320 comfortably.

New boys on the block

Two new wedding venues are Bustan Ha'ela (The Orchard of Elah) and Bustan Abu Ghosh (Orchard of Abu Ghosh). Bustan Ha'ela is located not too far from Kiryat Gat, Beit Shemesh and Jerusalem. Bustan Abu Ghosh only offers outside weddings. Cost: About \$38 a plate.

Small and elegant in Jerusalem

Two popular venues for weddings or affairs for less than 200 people are Shulchan David and the Taverna restaurant, both in Jerusalem.

Shulchan David, on Mount Zion, can accommodate between 50 and 250 people for events, and there is a sukkah option for up to 250, as well. The setting feels like one is within the walls of the Old City, which is only a few hundred meters away. There is an outside courtyard and two inner rooms, one with a roof and the other with a tent-like ceiling constructed over it. Meals (meat or dairy) are usually served buffet style, and because the venue is outside the walls, many people hire bands. If the timing works out, you can visit other attractions on Mount Zion and within the walls before the event begins. Costs approximately \$45 per person. Telephone: 972-2-6732770.

The Taverna restaurant, which seats up to 150, has a large, magnificent patio with a view of the Old City and the hills around it, which are visible through its arched, ancient windows. It has a gourmet daily menu and wine list. Taverna is both a regular restaurant and a favourite location for small weddings and other similar affairs. Tel: 972-2-671-9796; website: www.taverna.co.il; e-mail: tavernar@walla.com.

Wedding halls in industrial areas

Most wedding halls that are located in industrial and commercial areas do their best

to turn their interiors into magical wonderlands. But it is hard to escape the fact that upon entering and leaving, one is faced with parking lots or falafel joints. However, when cost is a major consideration and one doesn't want to limit the guest list, wedding halls are good options. These can run as low as \$25 per person at the Palace in the Talpotei neighbourhood, or as high as \$50 for a location like the Pavilion, a new hall and conference centre in Jerusalem.

Hotels

David's Citadel, the King David, the Inbal, the Renaissance and the Sheraton Jerusalem Plaza, like most hotels, have different-sized rooms for different-sized affairs.

The Plaza has rooms that seat from 50 to 350 people; Tel: (972)(2) 6298666; Fax: (972)(2) 6231667.

The Inbal: Telephone: 972-2-675 6666; fax: 972-2-675 6777; e-mail: hotel@inbal.hotel.com.

The Mount Zion Hotel is for smaller affairs and has a wonderful view of the Old City walls, which are lit up at night, and the Valley of Hinnom below. It can seat up to 200 in the winter and between 250 and 300 if one adds the patio in better weather. Telephone: 972-2-5689555, 972-2-6731425; e-mail: hotel@mountzion.co.il; website: www.mountzion.co.il.

David's Citadel is an elegant hotel, with a view of the Old City's walls and a gourmet menu. Outside, it can seat between 100 and 150, and the large inside dining room accommodates approximately 300. Telephone: +972-2-621-2235; fax: +972-2-621-2323; e-mail: banquet@tdchotel.com; website: www.thedavidcitadel.com.

The Ramada is a favourite for those who want to have large weddings in a closed hall that has a touch of opulence. It has a separate hall for the ceremony and the wedding feast. There is also the option of having the ceremony in a stunning outside setting with lots of foliage by the pool. Inside, the hotel seats up to 500 people, depending on how much space you want to leave for dancing. There is also the option of seating for 400 outside, by the pool. Telephone: 972-2-659-9999; fax: 972-2-651-1976; sales: 972-2-659-9970, ext. 1970.

There is a selection of hotels in Tel Aviv. The David Intercontinental, which is very luxurious, can seat up to 600 people.

The cost per plate for a hotel wedding can range from \$50 to \$80 or more, depending on the hotel, the number of guests and the menu.

Some of the information quoted here comes from wedding and event planner Aviva Yisraeli, but she warns that prices change and may fluctuate, depending on the number of people. Thursday night weddings are usually 20 per cent more expensive and Friday morning weddings are discounted by 20 per cent. Caterers offer different prices at various halls. As the number of people attending increases, the price per-plate charge usually decreases.

Aviva can be reached at aviva.sutnick@yahoo.com, 011-972-523-406481.

On the beach

Beautiful weddings are held on beachfronts near Ashkelon and Caesarea, but my favourite beachfront wedding was that of our eldest daughter. The chupah was set at the edge of a lush, grassy lawn, the sun was low in the sky, the air was crystal clear, and the turquoise waves of the sea almost drowned out the sound of the blessings. But I don't know when that venue will be available again. It was at the seashore on the Gaza Strip.

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Brides

No more ugly bridesmaids' dresses

By HARRIET P. GROSS
Special to The CJN

More than a dozen years ago, one brave bride-to-be scandalized southern Jewish tradition by telling her bridesmaids to select their own dresses – providing they were the colour she specified. Even in the early 1990s, she was way ahead of her time.

"Back in my generation," says Linda Kahalnik, recalling her traditional synagogue wedding in 1976. "I was told, 'This is how it is done.'" Her kids still laugh at pictures of their father's ushers in



With today's array of choices, every bridesmaid will love her gown



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white suits with shirts ruffled in the same purple as the bridesmaids' frilly gowns.

One of those kids, Yael Kahalnik, did things very differently when she and her future husband, Bar Twito of Israel, planned their December 2007 wedding in Dallas, Tex.

"I didn't feel comfortable telling my friends what to wear and how much to spend," Yael says. "I wanted to choose the material and the colour, but they could each choose their own styles." Since none of her eight bridesmaids lives in Texas, she selected the readily available Alfred Angelo line: "reasonably priced and a lot of cute style choices in the wine colour I picked." Each found a shop in her own area that sold Angelo dresses and placed her own order.

According to Yael, "Some of them were a bit shocked that I didn't seem to have any strong opinions, but I really just wanted them to feel good and be happy."

Today's wide array of choices means that no bridesmaid will wind up with something expensive and ugly mouldering unhappily ever after in the back of her closet.

Spaghetti-strap styles and strapless gowns with cover-up shrugs are losing out to what's most flattering for all body types: something that doesn't show too much bust, has a bit of softening at the waist and features a wider shoulder strap.

"Iridescent taffetas are popular now, but chiffon is falling away," says Sarah Burton, a buyer for a Dallas store. "Satin is still the classic fabric." Calling in all measurements at once assures that every dress will be cut from the same dye lot for exact colour co-ordination.

Debbie Forkowitz had an unusual challenge while planning her January 2008 wedding in Austin to Arturo Karakowsky – but the solution turned out to be a choice much the same as Yael's.

"Because Arturo's family is from Mexico, we ran into a bit of a culture difference," she said. "When I asked his two sisters to be bridesmaids, they were really upset by the idea of wearing the same dress as four other girls, much less as one another. It was clear that 'matchy-matchy' was NOT an option!"

The compromise: Debbie chose the designer (Bill Levkoff), colour (midnight blue), length (full) and fabric (European satin). "Within those parameters, there were about 40 dress styles for my six attendants to select from," she said. "They were all able to choose cuts that accentuated what they love about their bodies and flattered what they don't. One girl doesn't love her arms, so she ordered extra fabric to have a jacket made to match her dress. Two chose two-piece dresses, really flattering to their figures. When the dresses came in, the girls really liked them, and I loved them!"

"Uniformity is just supposed to make the pictures look beautiful," Debbie says, "and that can be achieved in a number of different ways beyond 'matchy-matchy' dresses."

One thing is sure: when the Karakowskys' children look at their parents' wedding album 30 years from now, they will not be laughing!

'I really just wanted [the bridesmaids] to feel good and be happy.'



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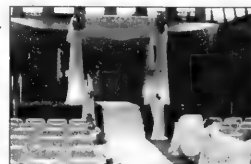
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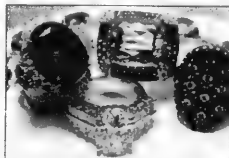
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Brides

Even an expected proposal
can be a surpriseBy SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Before Isaac and I got engaged in April 2007, we had been dating for more than four years. After a year of dating, it was no secret to anyone that we had every intention of spending the rest of our lives together.

Once we hit our mid-20s, getting married was the logical next step – we loved each other, we had long become familiar with and (reluctantly) accepted each other's annoying habits and we were ready to start a new life together.

Of course, we had talked about getting married and discussed when would be the best time for us. I wanted to be out of school and working full time and Isaac wanted to do the same.

In fact, we had talked so much about getting the timing just right, that I was sure the spontaneity had been completely taken out of the equation. I had even given him tips (read: sent him images) of the kind of engagement rings I liked. And still, in the back of my mind, I hoped that he'd still be able to come up with some plan that would throw me off course. But I knew that it was nearly impossible.

"Poor Isaac," I said to my girlfriends, who were just as expectant of the any-day-now proposal as I was. "There is no way he's going to be able to surprise me."

I've always been a hard person to surprise. I've always been pretty good about anticipating the outcomes of certain scenarios, so I knew that Isaac had his work cut out for him. I had really given up on the idea of a surprise proposal when Isaac, who is known among friends and family as being a terrible liar, spent months reminding me that there was no way he would be able to get a ring until July or August at the earliest.

"I know what that means," I thought. "He's telling me we won't be able to get engaged until July, so that must mean he's planning to pop the question in June."

I'm so smart. Too smart for my own good.

But clearly, I didn't give my husband-to-be nearly enough credit.

Last March, while I was feeling sorry for myself because I would be deprived of the kind of proposal that would put preposterous scenes in romantic comedies to shame, Isaac was hard at work putting together a plan.

Life for me was progressing as usual. I was busy at work, getting a steady flow of assignments, and meeting up with people all over the city to conduct interviews.

My editor, Mordechai Ben-Dat, asked me if I could take on one more assignment for the week.

He asked me if I would meet up with Joel Solish, who works for El Al, to talk to him about some new developments. As is consistent with most out-of-office interviews I have, we were to meet at a café.

"He's going to be downtown in meetings all day. Is it OK if you meet him at the café at the Four Seasons Hotel in Yorkville?" Mordechai asked.

I agreed, completely unaware that this supposed routine interview was a total ruse. Isaac had written my boss a letter, asking him to play a role in his elaborate scheme.

I did my research, prepared a list of questions, packed my recorder and on April 18, I was on my way downtown to meet Solish for our interview.

The hostess showed me to our reserved table by the window.



Sheri and Isaac

[Isaac Dykoff photo]

"He'll be right back. He just went to the restroom," she said.

While my head was buried in my notebook, going over my notes and prepared questions, someone approached me from behind and placed a bouquet of roses on my table for two. I looked up. It was Isaac.

"Babe! What are you doing here? I have an interview!" I said.

Now, you'd think that the second I saw him, something would have clicked, but Isaac had been relentlessly drilling it in my head that he wasn't ready to propose, so that I couldn't even fathom it.

He got down on one knee, looked into my eyes, opened the ring box to expose the most beautiful, sparkling round-cut diamond ring and said, "I want to spend the rest of my life with you. Will you marry me?"

I'd like to say that I screamed out, "Yes!" but instead, I sat there, mouth agape, speechless, unable to move a muscle.

"Take the ring," Isaac said, trying to jolt me out of shock. After a couple of tearful kisses and "I love yous," Isaac and I were (finally) engaged.

Out came the champagne, the chocolate-covered strawberries and the avalanche of mazal tov's began.

It was an absolutely perfect day, and it meant so much to me that despite the difficulty in surprising me, he made every effort to make this once-in-a-lifetime event special for me and a moment I will never forget.

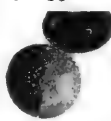
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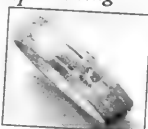
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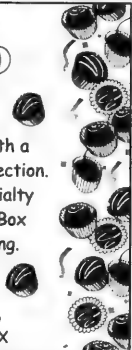


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Brides

What to do before you say 'I do'

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

You've got the ring you can't stop staring at, you've finally gotten over the weirdness of calling your boyfriend your "fiance," and you've told the story of "how he did it" countless times.

Now all you have to do is plan the wedding.

Whether your guest list is 100 names long or 1,000, the process of planning a wedding can be overwhelming to some brides.

There's so much to think about: the venue, the menu, the dress, the flowers, the music – I could go on and on.

In fact, since I got engaged last April, the question I hear the most – other than "do you have a date yet?" – is "are you stressing?"

"Actually, everything's been really great," I assure them. "It's been really easy."

"Oh, you just wait," say those who have been through the process. "You'll see."

But it's been 11 months since I've started planning. I've booked all the major stuff, and since I came to terms with the fact that my guest list consists of about 400 people, it's been a breeze. With only three months until my June wedding, I'm still waiting to see what all the fuss is about.

I don't want to downplay the fact that there are many details

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to stay on top of, but as long as you stay organized, tackle one task at a time and stay flexible, there is no reason for anyone to have to develop a "Bridezilla" attitude.

For me, staying organized was my saving grace. Without my to-do lists, my budget excel spread sheet and my easy-going attitude, I'm sure I'd be a mess.

And staying organized doesn't mean you have to compile a colour-coded, 14-inch-thick binder à la obsessive-compulsive *Friends* character Monica Geller.

Grab a piece of paper and a pen. Jot down what you expect out of your wedding. Roughly how many people will be on your guest list? What are your top three choices for a venue? What do you want the décor to look like? Do you want a band or a DJ?

Sit with your parents and in-laws and determine a budget. Then write a checklist so you can stay on top of what needs to be done. Keep in mind that many wedding-industry services suggest that to ensure you get your first choice, you book about a year in advance. If you don't have that kind of time, flexibility will be your friend.

The first thing that you need to do is book a hall or a synagogue and set a date. This is the jumping off point.

From here, it's up to you which important decision you want to make next, but I would suggest that at least eight months before the wedding, you book the entertainment, the florist, the photographer, videographer, the rabbi and order your wedding dress.

If you are worried you're forgetting an important detail, the Internet is littered with websites that offer tips on planning a wedding and helpful checklists.

If you need some inspiration, find out when the next local bridal show is taking place, and take some notes about what you like and what you don't. Grab some bridal magazines, and if you see something you like, rip out the page to show your service providers exactly what you want.

The next step is to make sure you're staying within budget and keep track of who you owe money to. For instance, if you paid a deposit for your dress when you ordered it, make sure to keep your receipts, record what you paid and what the balance is.

Last and most important: relax.

No one is going to care if you went with light pink roses in your bouquet rather than peach. No one is going to remember if your wedding cake had three tiers rather than four.

In my humble opinion, it simply isn't worth having a nervous breakdown over a party.

I understand that some girls spend years fantasizing about being a princess on their wedding day, and that it only happens once (hopefully), but if they're obsessed with making sure every minor detail is "perfect," they'll be robbed of truly experiencing their fantasy wedding.

I think it is so tragic when brides talk about not remembering a thing about their wedding day because they were so nervous or stressed about making sure everything went perfectly.

My advice: have an open mind, don't sweat the small stuff and enjoy the engagement period.

And boys, stay out of it.

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The body of Segev Pnuel Avihayil, one of the eight students murdered last week at Mercaz Harav Yeshiva in Jerusalem, is carried by mourners toward his burial place on the Mount of Olives. Please see related stories on page 4, 8, 9 and 40. [Israelnet photo]

A cry 'not to lose faith'

By DINA KRAFT
JTA

The one with glasses and a wide smile was the brother of a friend, and the one with blue eyes and side curls was the son of another.

In the close-knit world of religious Zionism, no one feels removed from the grief for eight young people gunned down while studying Gemarah in their Jerusalem yeshiva.

The images of blood-soaked prayer shawls and glass doors riddled with bullet holes, then the eight coffins lined up in a row, have horrified an entire country. But the pain cuts especially deep in the national religious Zionist community, having

been specifically targeted.

Now its members search for a way their faith can guide them through the mourning.

"Since the attack there is a sense that a darkness has fallen over Jerusalem when usually there is joy in our neighbourhoods," said Tal Weider, 17, a high school student and leader in the local Bnei Akiva youth group.

"The key is not to lose faith — one must find meaning in this," said Rabbi Yuval Sherlow, the head of a national religious yeshiva in Petach Tikvah. "In the various eulogies, everyone did so in their own way — some calling for unity, others saying this was a punishment or a warning bell. As soon as you can put some kind of

meaning to an event, it is not seen as having happened for nothing."

It was not by chance that the attacker targeted Mercaz Harav, the main yeshiva of national religious Zionism and a birthplace of the settler movement.

"It is a central place because it is a symbol of religious Zionism, and so it feels like we have been attacked personally," Weider said. "It feels like everything has changed. They [the terrorists] knew the meaning of Mercaz Harav, and they wanted to show that the power is in their hands. But as one of the rabbis said, nothing will shatter us. We will not let this break us."

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said the gunman struck the yeshiva as a

deliberate ideological blow to Israel.

"It was not a place the killer just happened upon while looking for would-be victims," he told his cabinet in broadcast statements Sunday, calling the seminary "the flagship of national religious Zionism."

Olmert, a former Jerusalem mayor, who after joining the government angered many religious Zionists by arguing that the Gaza Strip and parts of the West Bank should be ceded to the Palestinians, said Israeli national outrage at the gun attack transcends politics.

"The yeshiva is a special place in Jerusalem," he said. "I know the yeshiva and its students well, and Israel has great appreciation for it."

Continued on page 39

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Health agency pulls notice for anti-Israel essay contest

Students invited to write about 'ethnic cleansing of Palestine'

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

A government-funded health agency that serves gay and lesbian youth has removed an Internet posting that publicized an essay contest on the "ethnic cleansing of Palestine."

The Sherbourne Health Centre announced last week that it had removed notice of the contest following complaints from activist Joanne Cohen.

Cohen complained to the Sherbourne Health Centre and George Smitherman, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, that an employee of Supporting Our Youth (SOY), a program run by the centre, had

advertised the contest on a SOY e-mail list. The contest, which is open to students ages 17 to 27, is sponsored by the Canadian Arab Federation (CAF), Palestine House and the Canadian Islamic Congress (CIC) and is timed to coincide with the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the state of Israel.

Cohen contended that a government-funded agency that serves people of all backgrounds should not use its resources to promote "an explicitly biased anti-Israel essay contest."

She said SOY employee Suhail Sameed, who co-ordinates the agency's newcomer/immigrant project, sent a letter to a SOY newsgroup inviting participation in the essay contest. Cohen said Sameed's posting suggested that SOY endorsed the contest.

Within 24 hours of learning of the incident, Smitherman asked Sherbourne Health Centre to "take appropriate action," said the minister's spokesperson, Laurel Ostfield. "We won't tolerate any inflammatory or offensive language."

Denny Young, director of community relations for Sherbourne Health Centre, said once the agency received Cohen's letter of complaint, it held internal discussions that led to the removal of the Internet message.

"This gives us an opportunity to review how we post things on that forum," Young said. The Sherbourne Health Centre received \$6.9 million in provincial funding in the 2007-08 fiscal year; 71 per cent of the agency's budget in 2006-07 originated with the Health Ministry.

A longtime gay rights activist, Cohen fired off a letter to a number of SOY employees, as well as senior management of the Sherbourne Health Centre, Smitherman and Barbara Hall, chief commissioner of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, when she learned of the essay contest.

Her letter asks "why our public funds are now apparently being used to endorse only one side of the relatively irrelevant issue of politics in the Middle East, in relation to your GLBTQ (gay, lesbian, bisexual,

transgendered and queer) youth programming and in a way that is patently intellectually biased, if not dishonest."

Participation in the contest would cause Jewish or Israeli clients and staff of the agency to "feel marginalized," and could lead to an unsafe work place in which those who hold other views of the Mideast conflict feel intimidated, she stated.

Cohen told *The C/JN* she learned of the contest through a non-Jewish colleague who has been "offended by the discourse and apparent political bias of the organization for years."

Young said SOY encourages "lively debate within a respectful atmosphere." It also stresses good interpersonal relations and conflict resolution.

However, Cohen's letter noted "the absence of Jewish referral listings on SOY Toronto's 'links' page, despite the existence of many supportive Jewish GLBTQ groups and welcoming liberal congregations and associations in the Toronto area."

Continued on page 6

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Greater Toronto Area

Desultory thoughts after a slaughter

In describing the war crimes of World War II, MP Irwin Cotler has often written that they were too horrible to be imagined, but not too horrible, alas, to have happened.

Cotler's description applies with equal sorrowful force to the murders last week of the eight young men at Mercaz Harav Yeshiva in Jerusalem.

Many commentators have pointed out that the perpetrator very specifically targeted Mercaz Harav because it is considered the spiritual centre of the Gush Emunim, the Bloc of the Believers, that sprang up after the Six Day War.

Gush Emunim were instrumental in translating the credo of religious messianism into the political activism of Jews being entitled to live on all of the Land of Israel. In the euphoric aftermath of the Six Day War, most Israelis, including the leaders of the Labor government, agreed with this – that a Jewish presence on some parts, at least, of the West Bank, and certainly in a reunited Jerusalem, was historically, nationally, politically and religiously legitimate, if not also, necessary.

But to "understand" the murderer's malicious motive against Mercaz Harav Yeshiva on the basis of the yeshiva's place as the theological anchor of the belief system of Gush Emunim is to put too fine a point on the matter of the man's hatred.

Mercaz Harav is, first and foremost, a house of Torah, a house of study and of prayer. As such, it is thus very visibly, very palpably and very manifestly a house of Judaism.

In his ugly, deadly assault on the helpless students of Torah, Ala Abu Dhaim, the murderer, considered himself to be on a religious, rather than a political, mission.

In the hate-filled mind of Ala Abu Dhaim, of those who trained and sent him and of those who share their radically extreme outlook, the struggle against the Jews is not for territorial supremacy, but rather for religious supremacy.

From the editor's desk

This should worry the western world. For, as history has proved, anyone who targets Jews because of prejudice against the Jewish faith, will soon also target Christians and non-Jewish Muslims because of prejudice against their respective faiths too.

As if to underscore the point that the conflict is, unfortunately, more religious in nature now than it is political and territorial, the Palestine Media Watch group (PMW) reported that the official Palestinian Authority's (PA) daily newspaper honoured the killer of the eight students with the status of *shahid*, a holy Islamic martyr.

The daily *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida* prominently displayed a picture of the killer on the front page, with the caption: "The *shahid* Ala Abu Dhaim." In an accompanying article on page 1, the multiple murders are defined as a "shahada-achieving" action.

PMW correctly points out that in using such religiously charged language to describe Abu Dhaim and what he did, "the PA is sending its people a straightforward message of support for the murders and the murderer. According to the PA interpretation of Islam, there is no higher status that a human being can achieve today than that of *shahid*."

Perhaps PA leader Mahmoud Abbas did not see or know about the page 1 story. But given the close control he exerts over the PA and its related organs, that is not likely.

More than likely, he agreed with the sentiment. And that should bother the West too.

Merely days before the massacre, the United Nations Security Council convened to debate a resolution condemning Israel's military operation into Gaza. Israel went into Gaza, of course, to try to stop the Grad and Qassam rockets being fired at its citizens.

The language of the resolution that ultimately passed was tempered, in comparison with what its Arab nation sponsors had hoped for.

The day after the massacre, however, the Security Council demurred from condemning the attack against the Jews.

The Anti-Defamation League denounced the council's inaction.

"It is shocking that the Security Council could not bring itself to condemn this heinous terrorist attack on Israeli teenagers at a Jerusalem yeshiva," said Abraham H. Foxman, ADL national director, in a statement the American Jewish organization released Friday.

According to reports in the press, Libya, currently the chair of the Security Council, prevented a condemnation of the killing as a "terrorist attack" because the language failed the test of being "balanced."

Foxman astutely pointed out that "formal action by the Security Council would send a powerful message that the Palestinian cause is not served by wanton acts of violence and terrorism, and that such attacks against civilians run counter to the interests of peace."

"Where are all the calls for UN resolutions condemning the murderous acts of terrorism against civilians?" Foxman asked. "Why should those who seek to thwart the cause of peace not be condemned?"

Why not indeed?

—MBD

See|N



PESACH IN CUBA

Fredelle Brief, left, chair of the community relations committee of Canadian Jewish Congress' Ontario region, and Elena Aleinikov, a UJA Federation of Greater Toronto board member, help load a truck full of kosher-for-Passover food that will be sent to Cuba as part of an annual initiative that provides Cuba's 1,500 Jews with holiday items such as wine, matzah, matzah meal, gefilte fish, horseradish, tea and cooking oil.

[Marsha Knoll photo].

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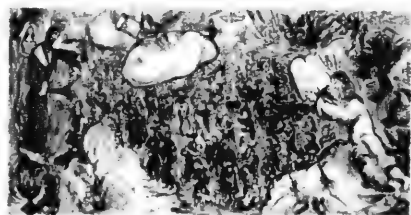
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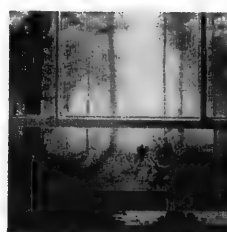
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INVITATION



Greater Toronto Area

Anti-Israel group formed for high school students

Continued from page 3

She said Jewish organizations and individuals have supported equality rights pursued by the agency while, "I note with regret the absence of any meaningful legal intervention for same-sex marriage from members of the Canadian Arab or Muslim community... To my knowledge, no meaningful contributions to same-sex rights in Canada have been made by the CAF, Palestine House or the CIC, the last of which was vehemently hostile to same-sex marriage. So why would SOY Toronto or Sherbourne Health Centre endorse them?"

Cohen goes on to note that Israel, while a flawed democracy, "offers immigration protections for GLBTQ citizens fleeing persecution in surrounding Arab countries, whose Supreme Court and NGOs have repeatedly protected women's and GLBTQ and minority rights, where a transgendered artist won the Eurovision song contest in 1998, where same-sex common law status and benefits entitlements are protected by law, and where same-sex couples are now permitted to register same-sex marriages performed abroad, as well as to register same-sex couples as parents for the purposes of Israeli law. Has this record been matched anywhere in the Arab world or Palestinian territories? I think not. Perhaps SOY Toronto and Sherbourne Health Centre have more to learn from the Israeli example."

CAF executive director Mohamed Boudjenane said he was unaware a SOY employee had publicized the essay contest. The essay sponsors publicized the contest by notifying subscribers to the organizations' mailing lists and the news media. Educational institutions or other agencies that work with youths were not sent notice of the contest, he said.

Boudjenane questioned the claim that the topic was inflammatory or offensive. The same term — ethnic cleansing — is widely used and has been employed by former South African archbishop Desmond Tutu, former U.S. president Jimmy Carter and Israeli historian Ilan Pappé, he said.

Furthermore, contestants need not agree with the essay's premise. "We're not asking anyone to take sides. We're asking people to bring their perspective to the issue... We didn't put out the contest to generate one side of the story."

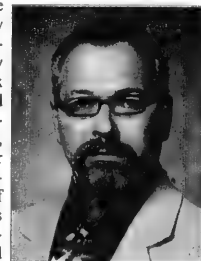
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Meanwhile, B'nai Brith Canada (BBC) called on schools and universities to refuse to participate in the essay contest. The contest "is based on the false assumption that the Jewish presence in the Jewish people's ancestral homeland is illegal," and is "a blatant propagandistic initiative that distorts reality, delegitimizing the existence of the Jewish state in any shape or form."

"The contest, directed at Canadian youth, intentionally distorts reality and serves only to engender hate against Israel, its Jewish citizens and supporters here in Canada... We call on Canada's academic establishment — from heads of universities to faculty members and trustees and directors of school boards — to issue clear directives to staff that the contest... is contrary to the equity and human rights policies of these institutions."

The BBC news release was followed by one from the three essay sponsors, who condemned BBC's "scurrilous attack."

"This call to shut down academic research and free speech is typical of B'nai Brith's contempt for the basic principles of academic institutions. These tactics of intimidation are becoming an all too common refrain of pro-Israel organizations and are simply designed to stem the growing public awareness of Israel's apartheid policies."



Len Rudner

On a related matter, Len Rudner, director of community relations for Canadian Jewish Congress, said a new organization, High School Students Against Israeli Apartheid, was created last month at Israeli Apartheid Week, an annual event held on university campuses.

Congress is concerned that "outside agents provocateurs" would attempt to radicalize high school students and create "a hostile and harassing environment for students who are Israeli, or pro-Israel or who don't agree with the Palestinian narrative."

Congress has brought its concerns to the attention of Ontario school boards and has asked Jewish agencies across the country to do the same in their regions.

"This is not about the right of students to pick sides but about the potential of people with no business in the schools of mixing in the schools," Rudner said.

These people, he continued, are promoting a political agenda "and don't have the welfare of the students at heart but want to turn the schools into incubators for radical politics at the universities," he said.

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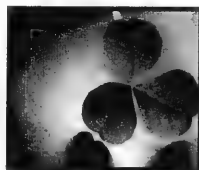
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Greater Toronto Area

Federation offers grants for first-time campers

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto recently announced a new program that will provide grants of \$1,250 each for Toronto-area children who are first-time campers at Jewish summer camps this year.

CampRight funding is available for 200 first-time campers in grades 2 through 7 who enrol in a designated Jewish summer camp for a minimum three-week session. Registration in the pilot project is limited to those who sign up this month and is not based on financial need.

For families who cannot afford to send their children to summer camp, the federation provides more than \$750,000 a year in subsidies, said Ron Polster, the federation's director of Jewish camping initiatives.

Parents who are old hands at sending their children to overnight camps know it's a good idea to submit their applications early – usually the preceding fall – but there are still available spots at participating camps, according to Polster. "Some are almost at capacity, but others have empty beds across the board. It depends on session, gender and age," he said.

CampRight was announced at the end of February, and as of last week, 50 applications had been received. Parents must apply to the program and the individual camp separately.

The project's name – and concept to a certain extent – derive from birthright israel, which provides free 10-day trips to Israel for 18-to-26-year-olds with the aim of strengthening Jewish identity and connection.

Unlike birthright, however, the CampRight grant only covers a portion of the registration fee, about a third of the cost for a month.

Based on experience in other cities, the amount "seemed to be the tipping point" that encouraged families to consider Jewish camps, said Polster, who was hired by the federation in November.

CampRight, which was included as part of the federation's annual fundraising campaign for this year, was originally set to be launched this fall for the 2009 camp season.

However, because two local donors came forward with funding for the project, "we decided we needed to get more kids in this summer," said Polster.

The project is supported by a \$125,000 grant from the New York-based Foundation for Jewish Camping, which funded similar pilot projects in seven American locations last summer and has expanded to 21 communities this year.

The Foundation grant, which is underwriting the multi-city project with a \$15 million donation from an American donor, matches local funds one-on-one for the first year, and for an undetermined amount the following two years. Toronto is the first Cana-

dian city to launch a program.

Money that has been collected toward the project as part of UJA Federation's annual campaign will be used toward the fall roll-out of the program, said Polster. This summer's launch is being run as a pilot project.

"Each Jewish child should have a right to go to camp, to this place that creates such a joy in celebrating their Judaism," said Jerry Silverman, president of the Foundation for Jewish Camping. The experience results in increased pride in being Jewish, stronger Jewish identity and Jewish continuity, he said.

He noted that camps generally retain at least 75 per cent of their campers each year. "Our mission is to double the number of kids that go to Jewish camp some time in the next five to seven years."

Studies show that alumni of Jewish camps are 50 per cent more likely to join a synagogue, 90 per cent more likely to join a Jewish community centre, and twice as likely to engage in Jewish philanthropy, according to a federation news release.

But, noted Ted Sokolsky, president and CEO of UJA Federation, CampRight is "part of a multi-pronged approach. We don't believe Jewish camping alone is a silver bullet."

"There are a variety of efforts on the part of Federation to reach out to Jewish kids and get them excited about their Judaism and connected to their Jewish identity and Jewish

community, and each reinforces the other."

Neil Nisker, co-chair of CampRight with Joseph Lebovic and Ab Flatt, said there is a difference between sending kids to a Jewish camp and sending them to a "camp for Jews" where most of the campers are Jewish but the programming lacks a Jewish context.

He believes it's important that the grants be equally accessible to everyone in the Jewish community, including children from wealthy families. If the result is a switch to a Jewish camp, and – down the road – the camper ends up becoming involved in the Jewish community, raising Jewish children, and contributing financially to Jewish causes, then Nisker will feel he has sustained the community, he said.

"Enrolment has been stable, and that's not good enough. We're raising the bar," he said.

Participating camps are all non-profit; approved by the Ontario Camping Association or its equivalent, and affiliated with a synagogue, movement or the federation.

The list of camps includes – in Ontario – Camp Agudah, Camp George, Camp Gasher, Camp Moshava, Camp Northland-B'nai Brith, Camp Ramah, Camp Shalom and Camp Shomria. Camp Kadimah in Nova Scotia is also part of CampRight, because it serves many campers from Toronto, said Sokolsky.

Further information is available at campright.org.


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Battle the murderers

It was somehow incongruous that the burial, before the start of Shabbat last week, of the eight students who were murdered at Mercat Harav Yeshiva in Jerusalem, took place under high blue skies and warm sunshine. The sheer beauty and idyllic tranquility of the Mount of Olives, where three of the murdered boys were laid to rest, were no balm to the raw rage and aching anguish of the final, horrible moment when the shrouded corpses were placed in the earth and the words of the Kaddish were sobbingly intoned.

There is no balm to soothe the gash in the heart wrought by the frenzied, hate-driven slaughter of innocent youngsters.

As of this writing, no Palestinian or Arab organization had claimed responsibility for the attack, although some media reported over the weekend that the Palestinian Authority believes the murderer, Ala Abu Dhaim of east Jerusalem, acted on instructions from Hamas leaders in Damascus, in coordination with Hezbollah.

Rampaging fire from an automatic weapon aimed at unarmed students in a house of study, prayer and worship is perversely depraved. And yet it is of a piece with tying suicide belts on children; hiding bombs in school yards; using ambulances, baby carriages, and pregnant women as smuggling redoubts for weapons; constantly and deliberately aiming rockets at civilian populations; or using private homes as storage depots for rockets and bases of operation for fighters.

Thus, we are not really surprised at the nature of last week's atrocity by the Israel and Jew-hating terrorists. But we are deeply revolted nonetheless. And all the more so because, as the world saw, the streets of Gaza were filled with joyous crowds celebrating the slaughter of the yeshiva innocents, laughing in twisted consonance with the official statement by Hamas that they "bless[ed] the operation. It will not be the last."

Those who would apologize for, justify or explain the yeshiva murders as a desperate act of reprisal for the civilian deaths in Gaza earlier in the week should know that the attack against Mercat Harav had apparently been planned for some time. Abu Dhaim had a large stockpile of weapons and ammunition in his home, and he had prepared for his "mission" with long hours of surveillance.

Israel's Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni succinctly, and not for the first time, alas, summarized the situation: "The murderous rampage against students... exemplifies all too well the heinous extremism of the fundamentalist foundations Palestinian terrorism is built upon... Despicable attacks such as this must strengthen the free world's understanding of the terrorist threat, in the face of which we must stand resolute and without compromise. Israel expects the nations of the world to support it in its battle against the murderers of students, women and children."

We are gratified to note that Canada is among those nations of the world who publicly and demonstrably support Israel in this vital, destiny-determining battle.

25 years ago in The CJN

Harold Buchwald, chairman of the Canada-Israel Committee, spoke to the Canadian Senate's foreign affairs committee and reported that his reception there was "hostile," with much sympathy being expressed for the Palestinians. Meanwhile, a Gallup Poll commissioned by the American Jewish Committee, said that Israel has regained the support it lost among Americans after the Sabra-Shatila massacre in Lebanon in 1982.

Dry Bones

AMERICAN POLITICIANS
ARE EAGER TO EXPLAIN
WHY EACH OF THEM
WANTS A NEW JOB



BY REPLACING
THE CURRENT
LEADERSHIP.

OBAMA
HILLARY
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WHILE ISRAELI
POLITICIANS ARE EAGER
TO EXPLAIN WHY EACH
OF THEM WANTS TO
KEEP HIS OLD JOB



BY NOT
REPLACING THE
CURRENT
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Angered by Bernier's reaction

My blood boils as I read "Canada 'concerned' over Israeli measures," (CJN, March 6). It is not surprising to me that Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier would respond in this way. He has not responded nor acted in the case of Saul Itzhayek who has been in prison in India for 10 months. [Itzhayek is a businessman who was taken into Indian custody when he attempted to cross into the country from Nepal last May.] Neither has Bernier done anything to protect other Canadians who are in jail around the world for no just cause. How could he possibly imagine that any country would want to protect its citizens? It makes me wonder what would happen if someone stood outside his house day after day throwing firebombs at it. Would he want to retaliate and try to stop the perpetrators, or would he simply ask them "to comply with their obligations under international law"? Give me a break, Mr. Bernier.

Peggy Pardo
Montreal

Qassams are devastatingly accurate

In the article "Canada 'concerned' over Israeli measures," (CJN, March 6), Hamas' missiles are referred to as "homemade" Qassam rockets. This suggests that these are primitive devices that are constructed in the homes of the terrorists and the inference having been made, launched into Israel in the hope that they will arrive. These are far from "homemade" and are reaching their designated targets with devastating accuracy.

If you are going to report on events in and around Israel, please ensure that, at the very least, objectivity is achieved.

Neil Nathan
Toronto

Response to editorial (1)

Congratulations on your publishing the editorial "Israel's options in Gaza," (CJN, March 6), which promotes the idea of ceasefire in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Hamas has often proposed ceasefires, which Israel has rejected. By publishing editorials and articles such as this, you contribute to the pursuit of peace, rather than a continuous bloody killing spree that never did one thing in changing the rockets fired on Sderot.

Mira Khazzam
Montreal

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Response to editorial (2)

Yasher koach to The CJN for carefully analyzing the limited solutions to the Hamas-Gaza-Israel conflict ("Israel's options in Gaza," CJN, March 6).

Bernard Katz
Toronto

Palestinian propaganda affecting youth

I could scarcely believe that I was reading a CJN opinion column in the Feb. 7 issue ("Israel should re-think policy in Gaza"). Jesse Mintz's dilemma of whose side to take in the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians is shocking. The mere fact that he has difficulty in discerning between the various sources for accuracy is alarming to me. While I am admittedly a partisan for Israel, I do believe in balanced freedom of speech.

The Palestinian public relations campaign, which started after the second intifadah, has had a profound impact on the worldwide opinion, as evidenced by Durban I and Durban II, to name but two examples. This liberally funded campaign is intended to rally the support of the global community for the Palestinian misfortune and the oppressive nature of the Israeli occupation. The believers are not relegated to the non-Jewish community, as evidenced by Mintz's article. If the Palestinian propaganda has started to have an impact on the outlook of Jewish youth, then the Canadian community must act without delay in educating the next generation before it's too late.

I also hold The CJN accountable for printing of such misguided thoughts. As a proud and longstanding supporter of Israel and the Montreal Jewish community, I find it reprehensible that the paper would print such a disturbing opinion. Freedom of the press aside, I expect the voice of the Canadian Jewish community to adopt and protect an unconditional position in support of Israel. The publication of these types of opinions can only result in more Diaspora Jews to look for ways to rationalize the aggressive, terrorist actions of the Palestinians, whose singular goal is the annihilation of Israel.

Peter Klauber
Dollard des Ormeaux, Que.

Perspectives

How will Israel respond?

By AMOS HAREL

Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

After a week of failed efforts to settle scores with Israel for the casualties caused by its operation in the Gaza Strip, Palestinian terror organizations scored a string of successes last Thursday.

The day began with the bombing of an army jeep along the Gaza border, which was videotaped by Islamic Jihad. It continued with a direct rocket hit on a house in Sderot that wounded several people, and ended with the deadly shooting attack in Jerusalem's Mercatz Harav Yeshiva, the flagship institute of the religious Zionist movement. The latter was the worst terror attack to take place inside Israel in almost two years.

It provided a grim reminder of those days at the height of the second intifadah, when Jerusalem was hit by a string of murderous terror attacks. What Israel's security services have accomplished in the West Bank over the last three years is a virtual miracle in professional terms: they succeeded in bringing terror down to a very low – even tolerable – level.

It's commonplace to claim that terror can't be defeated militarily, but in the West Bank, Israel has come as close as humanly possible – closer than anyone else has come in any other similar conflict elsewhere on the globe in recent years.

The success of the attack against Mercatz

Harav shows that the terrorist infrastructure in the West Bank is still alive and kicking. And the terrorists' motivation has apparently been spurred by their heavy losses in Gaza, as well as a desire to avenge the killing of senior Hezbollah operative Imad Mughniyah (a group called the "Mughniyah Brigades" was the first to claim responsibility for the Jerusalem attack, though the truth of this claim is doubtful).

The Israeli defence establishment received several warnings about plans to perpetrate terror attacks inside Israel last week, but none, it seems, about



Rescue workers of ZAKA carry the bodies of the murdered students through the grisly remnants of the slaughter. [Israel Sun photo]

move freely throughout the country, making it easier for them to gather information about a target like Mercatz Harav, which is

the one in Jerusalem. And that makes sense: In recent years, Israel's superb intelligence network in the West Bank has enabled the security services to foil almost all attacks about which they receive even the tiniest scrap of information.

As of press time last week, the terrorist who perpetrated the shooting had not yet been identified. However, it seems likely that residents of east Jerusalem either perpetrated or abetted the attack. Because east Jerusalem residents carry Israeli identity cards, they can

located deep in west Jerusalem. But it's also important to remember that nearly six years after Israel started building the separation fence, it's still far from finished. Thus, it's still possible to enter Jerusalem from the West Bank.

The Jerusalem attack will most likely prompt only pinpoint responses: arresting those in the terrorist's immediate circle, identifying the cell that sent him and then eliminating the cell.

The closure on the West Bank will probably be tightened for a few days, and additional checkpoints will be set up. U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's demand that Israel reduce the number of checkpoints in the West Bank will evidently have to wait. Security will also need to be beefed up in Jerusalem, lest the terrorists try to build on their success by launching a string of attacks that would undermine the sense of security of the city's residents.

Even if there is no direct connection between the attack in Jerusalem and the situation in Gaza, each arena influences the other. Anger at the attack in Jerusalem might spur the government to take harsher measures in Gaza, especially if it turns out that Hamas was involved in the attack. Moreover, given that Mercatz Harav is the ideological bastion of the religious right, the incident might spur revenge attacks by Jews.

The new year is just over two months old, and the number of Israelis killed by Palestinian terror – 15 – is higher than the total for all of last year (13). That does not bode well for the future.

To the westerner who 'understands' the terrorist

By BRADLEY BURSTON

Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

To the westerner who "understands" the terrorist: Spare us the explanations. Spare us the learned, sociology-drenched justifications. Spare us the reasons why you "get" Palestinians when they gun Jews down in cold blood.

Spare us the chapter and verse on how the plight of the Palestinians is at the root of Islamic terrorism the world over, and if the Palestinians were to receive full justice, Islamic terrorism would pass from the world.

Spare us.

You may well believe, with the blind faith of the hopeful and the fear-stricken, that when these people are through with the Jews, they won't come for you.

Think again.

Spare us the post-modernism and the radical chic and the guff.

Open your eyes.

When a gunman walks into a Jewish religious seminary at the main entrance to the part of Jerusalem which has been Jewish since 1948, and which was stolen from no one, pay attention.

When he opens fire on religious students hunched over books in a library, firing and firing until blood soaks holy book bindings and open pages of Talmud and the whole of

the floor, pay close attention to the reactions of the self-styled people of faith who run Hamas.

Spare us the conclusion that the only reason Hamas kills Jews, and that its underlying motive for encouraging others to do the same, is to force Israel to agree to a ceasefire.

Spare us the "Israel's policies are responsible for the bloodshed" and "the seminary is, after all, an ideological bastion and symbol of the religious right" and all the other scholarly, arrogant, condescending and amoral ways of saying "they had it coming to them."

Spare us the understanding for the motivations of the mass murderer who kills with God on his lips. Spare us the understanding of the words of the Hamas official who says that after all the Israeli killings of Palestinians, the Jerusalem killings are "our only joy."

Spare us the sight of the thanksgiving prayers for the great victory, prayers that began in Gaza City mosques just after the slaughter of the Jews.

Spare us the sight of the sweets being handed out by little children to motorists in passing cars in Gaza – sweets to celebrate the young Jews dead on the floor, the young Jews dead at their desks, the Jews killed for the crime of being Jews in that place of study and worship.

Spare us the righteousness of those who condemned Baruch Goldstein for entering a

holy place in Hebron in 1994 with an assault rifle and murdering Palestinians, but who can understand why a Palestinian might do the very same thing.

Open your eyes.

Last week, when Israeli forces drove into Gaza, and some 120 Palestinians were killed, many of them were gunmen, but with children making up another sixth of the total, one grieving father spoke with quiet eloquence, saying "Other places in the world, when this happens, there is a great outcry. When this happens here, the world is silent. No one cares."

He's right. The world has grown content to let Palestinians die. The reason is not simple callousness. And it's not, as Hamas proclaims to its followers in Gaza, that the Jews control the world media and world finance, and thus western governments as well.

The reason is terrorism.

The world has grown weary of the Islamist's creed, that only the armed struggle can resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and that the only proper resolution is the end of Israel.

Even the Israeli left, which for decades championed the Palestinians with courage and determination, has, in large part, had it with the Palestinians.

The reason is terrorism. The reason is murder. The reason is that the rulers of Gaza

are people who see an intrinsic value in the killing of Jews for the sake of increasing the number of dead Jews in the world.

The rulers of Gaza cannot bring themselves to accept the concept of sharing the Holy Land with the Jews.

The best that the rulers of Gaza can do is to bring an end to hope among their own people, and ours as well.

They believe that the Jewish state is temporary and that the Jews will soon abandon it to Islamic rule.

After all this time, you'd think they'd know the Jews a little better.

THE MURDERED STUDENTS

Segev Pnuel Avihayil, 15, of Neveh Daniel
 Neriah Cohen, 15, of Jerusalem
 Yonatan Eldar, 16, of Shiloh
 Yonadav Chaim Hirschfeld, 19, of Kochav Hashahar
 Yochai Lipschitz, 18, of Jerusalem
 Doron Maharata, 26, of Ashdod
 Avraham David Moses, 16, of Efrat
 Roey Roth, 18, of Elkana

Opinions

There are no strangers in Israel

I can be an annoying rabbi. Every Shabbat, I harangue my congregants to greet any new faces and say hello to visitors to the synagogue. To me, a community that isn't welcoming isn't a true community.



Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz in Montreal

Unfortunately, we've lost the art of being welcoming. People are uncomfortable making small talk with new people. Greeting strangers is actually taboo in larger cities. Urbanites mumble a perfunctory "hi" to salesclerks and don't dare make eye contact with others on the street. In the suburbs, neighbours barely know each other's names.

Perhaps we're too busy, or just too rude, to say hello. In our Blackberry-laptop-cellphone culture, we're always occupied with anything or anyone but the person standing in front of us. Communities are now "virtual" – anonymous megabytes masquerading as true companionship. Why say hello when you can post greetings on Facebook?

But living in a culture of remote controls and remote friendships leaves us hungry for true community.

The Talmud relates that Rabbi Yochanan Ben Zakai made a point of offering greetings to strangers. His greetings weren't just an expression of one rabbi's sensitivity. They reflected man's existential need to connect with the people around him. Man, the social animal, needs to say hello to keep his soul alive. Indeed, TV shows that feature small towns like the fictional Mayberry, and friendly gathering places like the bar in Cheers, derive their popularity from our hunger for true community.

The commuter who rides the bus with her face in a book and looks away from other people on the elevator can turn on the TV and vicariously experience a much friendlier place.

Israel is one place where community values live on. The old proverb, "Strangers are just friends you haven't met yet," could be its national motto. People strike up conversations everywhere – taxis, restaurants, bus stops. Israel feels like Mayberry. It's like a small town stretched over a small homeland.

The secret to Israel's warmth might be related to exile. Maybe, after long being second-class citizens, Jews are happy to finally belong. Maybe years of homelessness and wandering have made Jews better hosts. Perhaps Israel's warm spirit reflects the giddy joy of a people delighted to be in a homeland they can truly call home.

On a trip to Israel last month, my wife and I happened upon Mira, a jewelry maker with a store in downtown Jerusalem. Long after a necklace was chosen and the purchase made, we chatted with her, discussing our lives, families and values.

It was another country and another language, yet nothing got lost in translation.

We immediately connected, because in Israel, there are no strangers. We all come from the same shtetl and are happy to finally be home again.

Canada has made a good start on Durban

What a pleasure it is to hail a Canadian foreign policy decision that's been made boldly, was stated clearly, and is already having an impact.

Canada's decision to boycott "Durban II," the United Nations' second World Conference Against Racism, scheduled for 2009, made Canada the leader in this fight against anti-Zionism, anti-Semitism and racism. In 2001, under Liberal prime minister Jean Chrétien, Canada dithered as the important conference against racism in Durban, South Africa, became an anti-Israel and anti-Jewish hatefest. This time, Canada was the first nation to repudiate the charade and to refuse to fund NGOs who behaved so miserably last time.

Following Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper's moral move, Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni announced a more conditional boycott. Hailing "Canada's courage," Livni told the Global Forum to Combat Anti-Semitism that Israel would not participate "unless it is proven that the conference will not be used as a platform for further anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic behaviour."

The United States has proceeded more cautiously, considering that President George W. Bush doesn't want to handcuff his successor. Still, in December, the United States voted against the UN budget because part of the money would fund Durban II. And the Americans have also talked about boycotting the conference's preparatory meetings, which were so vitriolic last time. These prep ses-

sions will probably be equally toxic, considering that Libya is chairing, Cuba is vice-chair, Iran is on the committee, and the biased UN human rights council backs the whole effort. U.S. Jews need to ask their presidential candidates to promise to oppose Durban, and to fight the broader issue of UN bias.

But the effort must move beyond the Canadians, Americans and Israelis. Durban's poison cannot be fought alone. Leaders must convince the Europeans and the Africans to avoid another debacle.

The organized Jewish community and Israel should invite Mary Robinson to lead the effort to convince Europe. Robinson is the former UN High Commissioner of Human Rights who presided over the first Durban disaster. In the waning days of the conference, she finally denounced the anti-Semitism on display there. Since then, especially when activists have protested her many academic honours, she has insisted that she did all she could to stop the ugliness in 2001.

Addressing the graduates at Emory University in 2004, where there was an uproar about her appearance similar to the uproar I started over her honorary doctorate at McGill University, Robinson proclaimed: "Let me just say again that I find the very concept of anti-Semitism repulsive, that I have taken action against it all my life, that my only motivation at all times has been to further the cause of human rights for all people." She also acknowledged the "hurt and pain, which the Durban process evoked."



Gil Troy in Montreal

A timely prize for a powerful voice

Sitting at a session of the international symposium to combat global anti-Semitism, organized by Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I felt – rather than heard – a hum. My cellphone was vibrating in my pocket. Ordinarily, I power down during meetings and conferences. But here, in Jerusalem, it seemed like an affront to the national ethos to turn off my cellphone for any reason at all.

As surreptitiously as possible, I glanced at the display: 4:03 p.m. It was my brother calling from Be'er Sheva. At the first opportunity, I stepped into a corridor to return the call.

His voice came through, excited.

"Ida Fink won Pras Yisrael! They announced it on the news at four. I knew you'd want to know right away."

Pras Yisrael – the Israel Prize – is an award conferred by the Israeli government to honour excellence and lifetime achievement in a rotating set of fields. The most prestigious award in the country, Pras Yisrael was established in 1953 and is awarded annually. The award is announced some time before Yom Ha'atzmaut, Independence Day, and conferred on that day in Jerusalem in the presence of the president, the chief justice of the Supreme Court, and the Knesset. This year – Israel's 60th – Ida Fink was selected to receive the Israel Prize for literature, in recognition of the excellence and

significance of her work, joining the ranks of such luminaries as Shmuel Yosef Agnon, Aharon Appelfeld, and Leah Goldberg.

Readers of this column who are familiar with Fink's subtle and luminous writing are nodding in approval. My students at York University are gripped by her work, particularly her stunning collection of short stories, *A Scrap of Time*, finding it powerful and profound.

I phoned her immediately to congratulate her. I had been sipping coffee with her at her Ramat Aviv apartment only a few days earlier. She had no inkling then that she was up for this important honour. She learned of it a mere two hours before my brother heard it broadcast on the radio.

Fink was born in Zbaraz, Poland, in 1921 to an educated, professional family that was well-integrated into Polish culture. At the time the Nazis invaded Poland in September, 1939, Fink was 18 years old, preparing for a career as a pianist and studying literature and music.

Her studies were abruptly terminated, and the family was soon confined to the Zbaraz Ghetto. In 1942, she and her younger sister accepted false identity papers and left the ghetto. A fair-haired, blue-eyed young woman, Fink did not look identifiably Jewish. The two sisters survived the war by concealing their identities. Fink's novel, *The Journey*, is a fictionalized

Robinson now has an opportunity to expunge the stain on her record from the first Durban conference and prove the sincerity of her subsequent announcements. If she took the lead in spurring the Europeans to avoid the mistakes of last time – including monitoring the preparatory conferences – she would help undo the damage that the first conference did to the cause of human rights.

Similarly, Africans – and African-Americans – must be mobilized on this issue. The sad truth is that the ugly, unnecessary, irrelevant demonization of Israel and Jews that occurred in Durban, 2001, distracted many from the important work against racism the conference had convened to fight. I spoke to Africans who viewed the whole fight over Israel as a smokescreen to help Europeans avoid being held accountable for centuries of racism. Israeli, Canadian, and American diplomats should send a clear message to their African colleagues. The Africans should tell their Middle Eastern friends to keep the focus on racism – meaning black-white issues – rather than derailling the conference with an anti-Semitic food fight. In the United States, leaders such as former secretary of state Colin Powell – who was so disappointed by the outcome last time – should be invited to make a worldwide call to keep the focus on racism and away from Israeli-Arab or Jewish-Muslim tensions.

Canada has taken an honourable and heroic stand. Canada has made an important start. The time has come to start building the right coalitions of conscience to avoid another unconscionable hatefest – in the formal conference and among NGOs as well.

account of the war years.

After the war, Fink married, and in 1957, she moved to Israel with her husband and daughter, setting up a home in Holon. She knew not a word of Hebrew. At the age of 36, she began to learn the aleph bet.

She worked at Yad Vashem recording the testimonies of other Holocaust survivors. At home, she began to craft short stories about wartime experiences and their aftermath. Her stories capture the daily details of life and death under the threat of genocide, as well as the interplay of memory, bereavement and trauma. Her speciality is short stories – slivers of remembrance, some as brief as three pages – that focus on moments of revelation and moments of radical change.

Early on, publishers rejected her stories, telling her that her writing was too subdued for her subject. Fink persisted, developing a voice that was subtle yet powerful and haunting.

When her first collection of stories was published in the 1980s, it earned high praise from reviewers, and she has gone on to receive many prestigious international awards, including the first Anne Frank Prize for Literature, the Moravia Prize, the Yad Vashem Prize, and now, Pras Yisrael. At 87, she is in frail health, so the prize is timely.

I have known Fink since the early 1990s and have the pleasure and honour of considering her a friend and mentor. If you have yet to read her stories, let this award prompt you to do so now.



Sara R. Horowitz in Toronto

The Kirshner File

Hamas has squandered its gains

Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement, formed its first government two years ago this month after posting a victory in the Palestinian parliamentary elections. Much to everyone's surprise, Hamas, having boycotted the previous election in 2005, won 76 of 132 seats, crushing its secular nationalist rival, Fatah.

In retrospect, Hamas' triumph should not have been surprising. In municipal elections in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip leading up to the national elections, Hamas trounced Fatah. Hamas fared well due in large part to Fatah's complacency. Fatah, founded by Yasser Arafat in the 1950s and regarded as the touchstone of Palestinian nationalism, had drifted into a cycle of self-satisfaction, cronyism, mismanagement and corruption.

Fatah's faults were magnified in the wake of the 1993 Oslo peace process, which mandated the establishment of the Palestinian Authority. Critics accused Fatah of converting the PA into a fiefdom, siphoning funds from the international community into offshore bank accounts, neglecting the needs of the people and failing to win meaningful concessions from Israel in peace talks.

Hamas, thanks to the fairly frugal lifestyle of its leaders and the respect it attained through its web of schools, clinics, mosques and libraries, was widely seen as a corruption-free movement whose one and only interest was the well-being of the Palestinians.

In contesting the January 2006 legislative election, Hamas, founded by Sheikh Ahmed Yassin in December 1987 at the outset of the first Palestinian uprising, campaigned on a platform of reform and change, a populist slogan of immense appeal.

Two years on, though, Hamas appears to have squandered much of its popularity. As Hamas marked the 20th anniversary of its founding three months ago, a poll released by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research, an independent polling agency

based in the West Bank, found that Hamas has lost ground. Were new elections to be held, the pollsters discovered, Fatah would beat Hamas by a margin of 49 per cent to 31 per cent, while Mahmoud Abbas, the president of the PA, would defeat Ismail Haniyeh, the Hamas prime minister, by a 56 to 36 per cent margin.



Sheldon Kirshner
in Toronto

It's not hard to understand why Palestinians are generally disillusioned with Hamas, an organization dedicated to Israel's eradication and bent on replacing it with a fundamentalist Islamic state.

Since Hamas' swift and violent takeover of Gaza last June, following the breakdown of its tenuous coalition government with Fatah, Israel has branded Gaza an "enemy entity," sealed all border crossings, imposed a blockade and curtailed fuel and electrical supplies. Only food, pharmaceuticals and medical equipment have been allowed in.

Gaza's usually anemic economy has spiralled into a tailspin and poverty has deepened. By all accounts, 80 per cent of its 1.5 million inhabitants, mainly refugees crammed into 360 square kilometres of land, live a hand-to-mouth existence. The Palestinians are suffering, and last week eight British human rights organizations said that the humanitarian situation in Gaza has not been as worse since 1967. But the Israeli government will only lift the siege once Hamas recognizes Israel's existence, renounces terrorism and abides by agreements signed by Israel and the PA.



Ismail Haniyeh

Hamas, having flatly refused, has instead offered Israel a long-term truce and warned it may launch a third uprising. In the meantime, Hamas continues to fire Qassam rockets, mortars and Katyushas into Israeli border towns, heightening tensions and setting the stage for an Israeli invasion of Gaza.

Nearly two months ago, in an attempt to sabotage the blockade, Hamas blew up sections of the walled barrier in Rafah separating Gaza from Egypt. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians poured into Egypt, buying \$150

million worth of goods before the border was resealed 12 days later.

Israel was of two minds about this unsettling event. On the one hand, it was concerned that the rush of Palestinians into Egypt might spell finis to the blockade. On the other hand, Israel secretly hoped that Egypt – which controlled Gaza from 1949 to 1967 – would take responsibility for its affairs. Dashing all such notions, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak retorted that Israel's "dream" of "throwing" Gaza into Egypt's lap was a non-starter.

Indeed, Egypt adopted a tougher policy toward the Rafah crossing, saying that further breaches would not be tolerated and that violators would be shot.

Hamas has demanded a role in administering the Rafah crossing, but it's debatable whether Israel will agree. Prior to the latest series of events, the border point was controlled, on the Gaza side, by the PA in conjunction with European Union monitors. Israel supervised proceedings by video camera.

This is not the only problem that must be resolved. As part of Israel's unilateral withdrawal from Gaza in the summer of 2005, Egypt stationed 750 police officers in the border region. When Palestinian radical groups in Gaza – such as Islamic Jihad and the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade – began shelling Israeli towns and kibbutzim, Egypt offered to double its police force in the Rafah area. Israel balked, saying that its 1979 peace treaty with Egypt limited the number of armed Egyptian personnel that could be deployed along the border. Given Hamas' success in breaching the border, Israel may yet reconsider its policy. In the meantime, Israel is building a separation fence straddling the Egyptian border.

Alternatively, Israel has another option. It can reach a ceasefire agreement, or *hudna*, with Hamas. Mindful that Hamas has taken credit for a succession of suicide bombings that have killed nearly 500 Israelis since 1994, Israel opposes a truce.

Yet, judging by a poll released two weeks ago, 64 per cent of Israelis believe that Israel

should conduct direct talks with Hamas.

A *hudna*, or temporary truce, would be nothing new. In June 2003, thanks to pressure exerted by the PA and Egypt, Hamas unilaterally declared a ceasefire. It ended after 45 days, obliterated by a round of cross-border warfare pitting Israel against Hamas.

Less than six months later, Hamas proposed a 10-year truce in exchange for a complete Israeli withdrawal from the territories and the establishment of a Palestinian state. Israel rejected the offer as a smokescreen, a thinly disguised attempt by Hamas to regroup, rearm and prepare for a new round in the future.

Shortly before Israel's withdrawal from Gaza, Hamas again observed a shaky ceasefire. But it, too, broke down, only to be briefly revived in November 2006.

Last April, after another outburst of fighting, Hamas repudiated the truce and launched a barrage of rockets and mortars into Israel. Five months ago, Hamas renewed its call for a truce, but Israel dismissed it as a ploy.

Last month, Hamas had a change of heart after having rejected a proposal by the PA to broker a truce. "We are ready to study any plan or initiative that can stop the current escalation in Gaza," Haniyeh said in reference to the upsurge of fighting. Ahmed Youssef, Haniyeh's adviser, said that a truce was possible if Israel lifted the blockade and reopened all border crossings.

More recently, Hamas said it would agree to a truce only if Israel ends all military activity in the West Bank.

Last week, after the latest surge of fighting, during which four Israelis and more than 100 Palestinians were killed, Mahmoud Abbas offered to mediate a truce.

Israel has ruled out a truce, at least for now. But some Israelis, such as minister without portfolio Ami Ayalon and the former director general of the foreign ministry, David Kimche, favour a long-term ceasefire.

It remains to be seen what approach Israel will choose. But this much is certain: Hamas, though it has lost some popularity since last summer, will continue to be an important player in Israel's turbulent relations with the Palestinians.

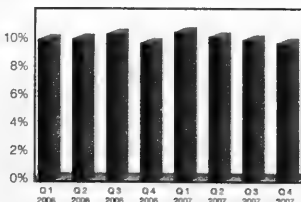


Hosni Mubarak

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Greater Toronto Area

JDL head sues Arab group for defamation

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The leader of the Jewish Defence League (JDL) in Canada is suing the Canadian Arab Federation (CAF) for defamation.

Lawyers for Meir Weinstein advised CAF president Khalid Mouammar in a letter last week that the suit is being launched over a document posted on the organization's website that suggests Weinstein is "part of a right-wing terrorist group, a racist and a supremacist."

The letter adds: "The references to Mr. Weinstein are false and untrue. The damages to Mr. Weinstein as a result of your libelous statements... are substantial."

Weinstein reactivated the JDL a few months ago after the group had been dormant for several years.

The document that prompted the lawyers' letter ran on the CAF website last week, but was subsequently removed. It's a copy of a statement issued by Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights (SPHR), a student-based organization active on university campuses. The document linked the JDL to an "arson attack [that] targeted the bulletin board of EAST (the East African Students Group), which carried posters and information against racism, Islamophobia and military occupation."

"This attack follows the re-activation in Canada of the JDL, the only Jewish group labelled by the FBI as a 'right-wing terrorist group,'" the SPHR news release states. "On Feb. 4 at Ryerson University during events held by black and Palestinian students, around 20 JDL members harassed students attending the lecture without police interference. This sent a message to the JDL and other Jewish supremacist individuals that it is acceptable to target visible minorities in our cities."

SPHR also called on Toronto police to "investigate any links that could be made between the attack on the East African students group and the reconstitution of the JDL in Canada. Inaction on the part of the police will send the wrong message to those who perpetrated this heinous act."

Weinstein, who is mentioned by name in the SPHR release, said about 50 JDL supporters gathered peacefully outside the Ryerson lecture and handed out written material. He said he plans to also sue SPHR, but started with CAF because "they are the main Arab organization that meets with government officials and the most respected organization in Canada."

"The purpose is the have them stop spreading false allegations about myself and the JDL."

Weinstein said he recently reconstituted the JDL in Canada because of concerns over growing anti-Semitism and anti-Israel agitation on campuses.

"We have taken the initiative to combat the spread of hate on campuses and cities in Canada," he said. "The allegations on their website [attempt] to degrade our organization so that anti-Israel incitement can continue without opposition."

"No one will be allowed to silence us. We're going to exercise our lawful, democratic rights as Canadian citizens to stop hate," he said.

CAF executive director Mohamed Boudjenane said the organization had received the lawyers' letter.

"We'll look at it and we'll definitely react to it," he said.

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Greater Toronto Area

NCSY program mixes Shakespeare, Judaism

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

One year ago, Nicole Gruz and Avital Zelter would not have believed that a high school English course could change their lives.

The two 17-year-old public school students, took part in the National Conference of Synagogue Youth's (NCSY) Shakespeare in Jerusalem summer program, in which they toured Israel for four weeks in July while taking a fully accredited English literature course.

Gruz, a Grade 11 student at Stephen Lewis Secondary School, said that although her family is from Israel, she had never travelled there independently, and she got an entirely new perspective of the country.

Led by English teacher David Wagman – head of English at Westmount Collegiate in Thornhill and at Ner Israel Yeshiva – and NCSY's Shoshana Neuman who directed last year's trip, 20 students spent six hours a day travelling to every corner of the country and incorporating it into their English studies.

"Everywhere we went turned into an English lesson," Gruz said. "While on top of Masada, we wrote an essay about what we saw, and then we had a unit on anti-Semitism and the Holocaust before going to Yad Vashem."

Zelter, a Grade 12 student whose family is also Israeli,

said she had been to the Jewish state 11 times, "but never like this. I've always had the 'Israeli experience' but never the Jewish experience. We went to historical places and learned the background of our religion. I got an English credit and a love of Judaism in four weeks."

Gruz said she is motivated to return to Israel to continue her studies when she graduates. "After this experience I want to learn more and more. It ended up so much more than an English credit."

Neuman said the study portion of the trip was taken very seriously by the students. "All assignments had to be completed, and on the days that were set aside for students to do school work, we were always there to help out. They received a lot of attention so their skills improved. They got so much

out of the course in an inviting way."

Dana Grossman, director of NCSY summer programs, said that many teens take high school credits abroad, "but this is the only one in Israel. It is important to learn about our heritage."

This year's program, which will be headed by a different teacher, runs from June 30 to July 28, costs \$5,990, and scholarships are available. The course includes sightseeing in all parts of Israel and a literature program that includes Canadian Jewish poets such as A.M. Klein, Leonard Cohen and Irving Layton. Students will also study Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, and works by Amos Oz and Shalom Aleichem.

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Greater Toronto Area

Canadian Jews pedal hard for Israeli hospital

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF

Staff Reporter

There was a sense of camaraderie and hope last week at Adath Israel Congregation as scores of charity-minded cyclists and their sponsors gathered to celebrate their fundraising accomplishments at a gala in honour of Israel's Alyn Hospital.

Located in Jerusalem, Alyn is one of the world's foremost pediatric rehabilitation centres, focusing specifically on treating children with special needs for the past 76 years.



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Last week's Toronto event, titled "Memories and Dreams Night," was jointly organized by both the American and Canadian Friends of Alyn charities—the latter is a burgeoning support chapter of the former—and marked the first time members of the Canadian group were formally feted for their charitable work.

Canadian participants raised \$500,000 of the \$3 million raised for the hospital last year in the annual Wheels of Love bike ride, a five-day trek across Israel.

To qualify for a spot on the tour, each rider must guarantee \$2,000 in sponsorship and pay a registration fee for the trip to Israel.

The ride was started in 2000 by nine Israeli cyclists who wanted to raise money for the hospital and has since expanded to some 500 riders from 13 countries, including 75 from Canada last year (up from 57 in 2006).

The increased Canadian presence drew the eye of Cathy Lanyard, executive director of the New York-based charity, who travelled to Toronto to be at the event and congratulate the Canuck riders.

Also present at the event was Israel's consul general to Toronto, Amir Gissin.

Joel Kula, director for Alyn Canada and Israel Ellis, co-chair of the event, have been the driving volunteer force behind the Canadian Alyn grassroots movement for the past few years.

"We're trying to increase awareness of Alyn," Kula told *The C.J.N.* "The hospital has needs 365 days a year."

Kula said he first became aware of the hospital through his participation on an action committee at Beit Rayim Synagogue.

"We stumbled on Alyn on the Internet and immediately started allotting funds to it," he said.

Like many others at the Adath Israel event, both Kula and Ellis were proud repeat riders.

Ellis recalled his riding experiences.

"There's times when you're on the bike and you just want to get off," he said. "But as the challenges intensified, I thought about the children of Alyn... and how every day of their lives represents a challenge greater than mine."

He added that the reason for hosting a Canadian Alyn event was to "establish a stronger group to advocate for Canadian riders and consolidate the idea of 'chevrah.'"

Lanyard told *The C.J.N.* she was in town not only to attend the event, but also to promote another Alyn initiative called the Mitzvah of Love, which encourages school children to



Israel's consul general to Toronto, Amir Gissin, and American Friends of Alyn executive director Cathy Lanyard

[Melnick Studios Inc. photo]

sponsor events to support the hospital.

"Wheels of Love has put a face to Alyn. We have ordinary people who push themselves beyond their normal maximums, because they care and they can," Lanyard said. "[Mitzvah of Love] is about empowering a kid to embrace their own [charitable instincts]. It's about healing the world one step at a time."

After a video presentation that showed the work Alyn does with severely disabled children, Gissin addressed the crowd.

But instead of talking politics—his usual topic—Gissin opened up on a personal level to discuss how his role as a father to a child with special needs was influenced by what he's seen at Alyn.

"Twenty-five years ago... I spent three months visiting a close friend in Alyn. While there, I saw a bed with a baby girl who had been abandoned by her family because of terrible disabilities," Gissin said.

"She had a life expectancy of less than a year. But Alyn staff took it upon themselves to adopt this child. She was carried by nurses all hours of the day. That was a gift of love [and] it was the first time I was exposed to what love can do. It was a lesson for life."

He continued, choked by emotion: "I've done some important things in my life. But before everything else, I'm a father. Nothing has prepared me better for [fathering a child with special needs] than that experience. Nothing. They deserve your support."

The next Wheels of Love ride is scheduled for Nov. 9 to 13 in Jerusalem.

For more information, visit www.alynus.org.

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James A. Diamond was one of the editors of *Emil L. Fackenheim: Philosopher, Theologian, Jew*, a scholarly tribute to Fackenheim's memory. Michael Morgan wrote the foreword to Fackenheim's memoir, *An Epitaph for German Judaism, From Halle to Jerusalem*.



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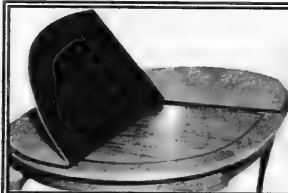
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Greater Toronto Area

Charges dropped in anti-Semitic vandalism case

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

There's an uncharacteristic weariness in Alan Schwarz's voice, but disappointment piled on top of disappointment can do that to a man.

Last week, Schwarz and the rest of his family were handed a double dose of bad news. First they were told by the Crown attorney in Durham region that charges will be dropped against an alleged young offender who had been charged in connection with the trashing of their rental property and its vandalism with anti-Semitic graffiti.

Next their insurer called to let them know their policy did not cover the \$131,000 damage caused in the rampage, which left the building in downtown Bowmanville "destroyed" and covered with racist epithets.

Swastikas were painted on the front door and on the inside, along with, "F...k Jews," "Kike," "white power," and "SS."

No one, it seems, is responsible. Schwarz told *The C.N.*, and his family has been left alone, "on an island," forced to deal with an incident police have been unwilling to investigate as a hate crime. "We're bearing the brunt and we did nothing wrong," he said.

Adding insult to injury, "For Sale" signs on the property have been removed three times.

Schwarz feels let down, by the Crown and police in particular. "The day it happened, police said it was not a hate crime. What was it?" he asked.

"The whole idea of this house being destroyed as a rental property is second-

ary to the swastika on the front door," Schwarz said. "All this horrible racist stuff that will go unpunished because no one investigated it as hate crime."

"The [Jewish] community ought to be concerned. This is a very bad message. Someone can write swastikas, KKK, white power [in your house] and you're left to your own avail."

In mid January, Durham Regional Police laid criminal charges against a youth in connection with the incident.

The young offender, who cannot be identified, was charged under sec. 441 of the Criminal Code with causing damage to a rental property, an indictable offense that carries a maximum sentence of five years in jail.

At the time, police said following through to a conviction was problematic unless witnesses stepped forward. "I have no doubt we have the right person. The trouble is finding witnesses," said Const. Kevin Stuart of Durham Regional Police.

Stuart said a longstanding tenant had turned the home into a virtual "flop-house" with an open door allowing all kinds of people to come and go.

The problem is "proving who actually did the damage," he said.

Assistant Crown Attorney Michael Hill said at the time that if a conviction were attained, "the ugly, hateful things on the wall are something that could form part of the submission on sentencing."

However, Schwarz was told last week that following a pre-trial meeting that included the Crown, defence counsel and a judge, it was decided there was insufficient evidence to proceed.

BROTHERS IN ART:
Brothers Eric, left, in Grade 3 and Zachary, in senior kindergarten, apply mosaic tiles to a wooden treasure box to create miniature Kotels. It was one of many projects honouring Israel's 60th birthday at Netivot HaTorah Day School's annual arts and crafts day. [Rebecca Ansel photo]



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Greater Toronto Area

Reena fundraiser planned for April 5

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

The co-chairs of the fourth annual Not Just Another Saturday Night are hoping to make this year's event bigger and better to raise money for Reena, an Ontario-based agency for people with developmental disabilities.

Over the past three years, Not Just Another Saturday Night has raised more than \$75,000 for Reena services, including after-school programs, summer programs and respite care.

Steven Weisz, who is co-chairing the event with Adam Henechowitz and Zach Goldstein, hopes that this year's party, which is being held at the Dominion Club in Toronto on April 5, will help them pass the \$100,000 mark.

"We've set out a conservative goal of raising \$30,000 for this event," said Weisz, 29, who has been volunteering for Reena for the past three years.

He said they hope to attract 600 people to the evening, which will include an exclusive cocktail reception, an art show, live entertainment, such as cigar rolling and a handwriting analyst, and opportunities to win great prizes.

When Weisz volunteered three years ago, he and Henechowitz created Reena's New Leadership division, a volunteer group of young professionals.

"It all stemmed from the need to get young people, as we call them, the new leaders of the community, involved in fundraising for what we feel is a very worthy cause," Weisz said.

"We targeted people between the ages of 21 to 40, young professionals, who shared our common goal of wanting to get more involved and working with and helping people with developmental disabilities and creating a better life for them. Adam and I have no members who use the services, but we just feel that it is a great cause and the right thing to do."

Henechowitz said that he got involved with Reena six years ago after graduating from the University of Western Ontario.

"I had a background in health sciences and I started working for Reena because it was in the same field. I was working with the clients directly... I left there for another job, and then I started volunteering."

Although Henechowitz has been organizing fundraising events for years, he said he is most excited about the committee he is currently working with.

"We have a lot of volunteers on this year's committee that really believe in giving back to the community and getting involved even if you don't have personal connections to Reena. I've... done a ton of events in the community and this is one of the best committees we've put together - very dedicated people who are very dedicated to giving back."

Henechowitz said he hopes this year's Not Just Another Saturday Night will outdo the last three.

"The party starts at 7 p.m. with a VIP reception. During the VIP reception, we have an art show, where some local artists can come and exhibit their art. We've invited our sponsors and those with VIP tickets to come a little bit early for hors d'oeuvres and drinks and to look at the art. That will last until about 9 p.m., when we'll open the doors to the general public and have a cocktail reception. There will be live music and a DJ," he said.

The money raised will go towards Reena's New Leadership Endowment Fund. Weisz said they hope to fund programming with the interest from the endowment fund.

Although Reena isn't an organization that caters strictly to Jews, most of its volunteers are Jewish.

"Reena is open to the general public and the community of all denominations and faiths, but it's core values are consistent with Jewish values," Weisz said.

"We service the whole community, but the fundraising is done by Jewish people and that is in large part due to the fact that we believe that giving back and tikkun olam is part of our job and part of the reason that we're here. That's what we need to do and that is our obligation to the community."

TZEDAKAH BRIEFING:

Michelle Lavine, left, and Valerie Fish of Holy Blossom Temple's Bikur Cholim committee present information to Grade 7 students at Holy Blossom Senior School's Tzedakah Fair. Twelve community organizations took part.



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Greater Toronto Area

Cohen learned to live with disability in rehab

Continued from page 18

On June 29, 1992, he and several pilots were being transported to an air base when the chauffeur fell asleep at the wheel and lost control of the car.

One of the pilots broke his arm and the others sustained scratches. The driver walked away unscathed.

Cohen broke his back.

"The only thing I remember was waking up in the hospital a day later," he said.

Suddenly, his dream of rising to the rank of a commander was shattered.

"It was a big blow," said Cohen, whose first name means sparrow in English. "I was like a bird, but my wings were clipped."

He sank into a depression. For a man who had always been active, the prospect of being a paraplegic was hard to bear. "It was a hell of a problem."

Cohen, who had been a scuba diver, kick boxer, mountain climber and sailor, and who loved the rush of adrenaline, was now disabled.

At rehab, however, he learned to live with and overcome his disability.

He also returned to the sports he had en-

joyed as an able-bodied person.

"I'm still the same Dror," he said. "Some things change, but you're the same person."

Discovering that some sports, such as water skiing, were considered off-limits to the disabled in Israel, Cohen founded the Challenge Association.

The association, with a membership of about 2,000, encourages people with disabilities to test the limits of their fitness.

Asked what advice he can offer to the recently disabled, Cohen said, "Stay

open-minded. You can do anything you want, if you set your mind to it. You can get yourself together and move on."

Cohen's visit to Toronto was co-sponsored by the Mishorim Development Group, a real estate company headed by Gil Blutruch and listed on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange, and Inter-Canel Ltd., an Internet high-tech company whose chief executive officer is Avi Gerber.

Blutruch's company, which controls rental properties, shopping centres and hotels, expanded its operations to Canada in 1998 and now owns the Horseshoe Valley ski resort near Toronto.

'My wings were clipped'

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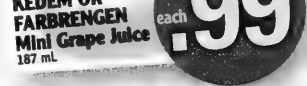
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CTV shows balance is possible in a 2-minute story

Coverage of recent events in Gaza followed an all-too-familiar pattern.

Radical Islamic factions, such as Hamas in Gaza or Hezbollah in Lebanon, initiate random violence against Israeli citizens. The media largely ignore or downplay these attacks.

According to Reports



By

PAUL MICHAELS

Israel then exercises restraint for as long as possible, almost certainly much longer than any other nation would if facing similar attacks on its population. When Israel finally

responds with force, the media are there in record numbers to critically report on Israel's self-defence actions.

This was the case earlier this month when Israeli forces entered Gaza with the aim of stopping the Hamas "militants" responsible for firing Qassam rockets at the Israeli town of Sderot and longer-range Iranian-supplied Grad rockets at the city of Ashkelon. Intense media coverage followed.

In "4 achievements in Gaza" (Ynetnews.com, March 4), veteran commentator Ron Ben-Yishai argued that Israel gained international legitimacy with its military operations in Gaza, "because the ongoing [Hamas] attacks on Ashkelon make it clear that Israel did not pounce on the

Palestinians for no reason."

But it's hard not to think that Ben-Yishai is seeing the western media through rose-coloured glasses.

Consider, for example, Peter Armstrong's March 2 story for *CBC News: Sunday*. Armstrong provided much footage of destruction, injury and death in Gaza, including the tragic deaths of civilians along with scores of Hamas members.

However, Armstrong failed to provide any context for why Israel was carrying out the attacks. When Armstrong finally mentioned the Hamas rocket attacks aimed at Israeli civilians, he did so only to make the point that Israel is responsible for starting the violence: "The escalation of violence began last week. Five senior militants were killed in an Israeli air strike. Hamas launched back, unleashing dozens of rockets on southern Israel."

Armstrong made no mention of the fact that Hamas has launched hundreds of rockets over the past several months, and that it was allegedly planning to carry out a major operation against Israel. (Since 2001, Palestinians in Gaza have launched thousands of rockets into southern Israel.)

In this grossly one-sided story, Armstrong reports: "The United Nations convened an emergency session in New York. The daily rocket fire was condemned, but [United Nations] Secretary General Ban Ki-moon saved his toughest criticisms for Israel."

In fact, on Mar. 1, Ban told the UN Security Council: "I condemn Palestinian rocket attacks, and call for the immediate cessation of such acts of terrorism, which serve no purpose, endanger Israeli civilians, and bring misery to the Palestinian people. I call for an end to these attacks." (The next day, the United Nation's own news service, reporting on Ban's remarks, deleted any reference to "acts of terrorism" and thereby arguably set the message for other media reports.)

On CTV's *National News*, March 1, Janice Mackey Frayer also reported on the human toll in Gaza. But Mackey Frayer made it clear that Israel's strikes in Gaza were a response to Hamas' aggression: "What is driving the offensive is Hamas' arsenal of rockets that can reach farther into Israeli territory, like the ones here [showing damage in Ashkelon], some 15 kilometres north of Gaza's border, putting more than 100,000 people within range. And so, Israel sees its actions as defensive measures."

Frayer's report is proof that balance and context can be achieved in a two-minute TV news item.

On the commentary side, not to be overlooked was the *National Post's* Mar. 3 editorial, "Palestinian self-destruction." The paper drew attention to a 13-month-old Palestinian girl killed by shrapnel in northern Gaza. But



IDF soldiers on patrol in northern Gaza. Apart from destroying missile sites, the IDF soldiers found large caches of weapons. [Isranet photo]

it appears that the shrapnel came from a Palestinian rocket that went off course.

The *Post* argued: "Her death by the Palestinians' own rocket fire perfectly symbolizes the self-destructive pathology that has afflicted the Palestinians since the 1960s. Palestinian leaders would quite literally prefer to slaughter their own people than turn Gaza into a normal country that deals on civilized terms with its neighbours."

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.



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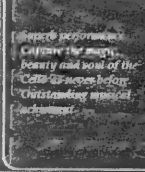
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By RABBI MICHAEL SKOBAC

Our sages teach, "All the festivals are destined to be nullified [in the Messianic age], but the days of Purim will never cease to be observed." (Midrash Mishlei 9:1)

This startling comment may be understood if we consider the placement of Purim in the sequence of the other Jewish holidays. It may be suggested that the progression of our holidays correlates to the entire timeline of Jewish history. Passover, falling in Nissan, the first month of the Hebrew calendar, would correspond to the spiritual state of the Jewish people at the beginning of their history. Purim, celebrated during Adar, the last month of our calendar, relates to the spiritual state of the Jewish people at history's climax.

Each of our holidays marks a critical, miraculous occurrence during our history. Our rabbis explain that there are two kinds of miracles. Supernatural miracles powerfully point to the hand of God behind them. These are called "revealed" miracles – *nigleh* in Hebrew. Other miracles are much more subtle and ambiguous. These "concealed" miracles – *nistar* in Hebrew – are often not even perceived as miraculous.

Passover is the holiday par excellence of the revealed miracle. The year-long parade of spectacular supernatural



Rabbinic Reflections

plagues that struck Egypt prior to our Exodus 3,300 years ago left a profound impression upon our young nation. God left no doubts about who was redeeming us. Even our Egyptian taskmasters understood, proclaiming, "It is the finger of God!" (Exodus 8:15).

The climax of the Exodus was the dramatic salvation of the Jewish people and drowning of their pursuers at the Sea of Reeds. We became so electrically aware of God's presence there that each Jew was practically able to point to the Shchinah and proclaim, "This is my God!" (Rashi, Exodus 15:2). Indeed, our sages in the Mechilta declare that a simple maidservant was able to see more at the splitting of the sea than the greatest prophets would behold in the future.

At the end of the Jewish calendar year, we encounter the holiday of Purim, whose miracles correspond to the spiritual level of the Jewish people at the end of history. The story of Purim is recounted in Megillat Esther. The name of God is curiously absent from this biblical book. This omission seems to reflect the fact that His presence seems to be absent from this story of the salvation of the Jewish people from the genocide-bent Persians. Our near-annihilation seems to

Jewish Life

The hidden world

turn around as the result of coincidences, palace intrigue, incredible timing and extremely lucky breaks.

Yet those who are spiritually sophisticated understand that the Purim story is not simply serendipity – the hand of God is definitely behind each twist and turn of the plot. Indeed, the name of the book, Megillat Esther – the scroll of Esther – in Hebrew can also mean, "the revealing of that which is hidden." The sensitive reader is able to sense God's unmistakable fingerprints on every page, because Purim corresponds to the Messianic age when "the knowledge of God will be as widespread as the waters that cover the seas" (Isaiah 11:9).

The spiritual level of the Jewish people at the Purim stage of history will be very finely tuned. We won't need God to split the sea or bloody the rivers for us to know He's there. We'll be able to perceive Him even at small flowing streams where He's hidden within the quietness of nature.

When our sages claim that all holidays will be nullified in the Messianic age, they may mean that during this time of heightened spiritual sensitivity, we won't require the overt supernatural manifestations of His presence that typify other biblical holidays.

Rabbi Michael Skobac is director of education with Jews for Judaism Toronto.

By RACHAEL TURKIEINICZ

This year, the holiday of Purim comes at the same time that we begin reading the book of Leviticus. It's an interesting juxtaposition, since our celebration of Purim emphasizes the topsy-turvy nature of the holiday, and Leviticus begins with the description of the details involved in ritual sacrifice. On the one hand, the strangeness of Shushan and the foreignness of sacrifice almost line up. On the other hand, one text almost speaks of a

loss of reference points and the resulting abandon of discipline, while Leviticus emphasizes the strictness of detail and discipline.

Yet these two descriptions, Purim and sacrificial law, teach us something important about ritual. Within the scroll of Esther, there is no mention of God's name. The trials and tribulations of the Jewish people in ancient Persia are recounted to us as if they dealt with history alone, with no appeal to God and no help from above. There is a moment in the text when Esther and all the Jewish people fast. We assume this fasting is a sign of repentance and spirituality, a turning toward God, but we are left with that assumption unconfirmed, as the text never relates to it in those terms. There is never a prayer uttered, and there's never a moment of beseeching the Divine.



The other side of the spectrum occurs in the book of Leviticus, when the opening statements describe how one is to bring a sacrifice, which animal to bring and what the kohen should do with the various body parts. If an appendage is not placed on the altar properly, not facing the right direction or not washed properly, the sacrifice is invalid – regardless of the intent of the person. It is communication with God that attends to detail in a way that seems foreign to a modern reader.

The two books are so vastly different in their approaches that one can only question which model reflects the Jewish one. Perhaps we are to solve all our problems on our own and never appeal to God, or perhaps we are to appeal to God with every detail in question and await direction. Interestingly, we don't decide the question, since the importance is not in the answer, but in the question itself.

These two texts do not describe two opposing models, but two defining ones. Whether or not a Jewish person believes they are on their own in dealing with everything without appealing to God, in reality they are involved with God, since they are dealing with their

lives from within a Jewish reality. Choosing to fast is an expression of soulful communication, while not turning to God in an overt way is still part of a spiritual relationship. This defines one side of a Jewish engagement with God.

The other side is defined by a relationship that cements itself in attention to detail and particularity. The Leviticus relationship is as real as the Esther relationship. One reflects a more hidden and generalized spirituality, while the other reflects a more overt and detailed one. They are both equally true.

The choice between Esther and Leviticus is not made within the model but within the person. Midrash Tehillim states that the person whose prayer is answered is the one who "lifts the hands with their heart in them." Only we and God know what is truly in our hearts. Therefore, only God can judge whether our prayers contain our hearts.

There are some people for whom the Purim engagement with God is their true expression, and there are some for whom the details of Leviticus open their hearts. The two models are not representative of right and wrong, but a reflection of latitude. Shmot Rabbah beautifully states this point when reflecting that "we are all equal before God while in prayer."

Jewish Life

By ALEX GROPPER

Jericho is probably the best-known archeological site in the Holy Land, with the possible exception of Jerusalem. It has been dug a number of times since the beginning of the 20th century, when the land was still under Ottoman control.

The first excavators were German. This isn't surprising, since the Ottoman Empire was allied with Germany during World War I. Prior to that, Kaiser Wilhelm II had been busy trying to increase German influence in the Middle East and had even visited Jerusalem during one of his trips before that war.

However, the British have been the major excavators of Jericho.

Their first effort at that famous tell was in the 1930s, during the period of the Mandate. The man in charge was John Garstang, who had also excavated the site of Hazor (which I have written about in a previous column). Garstang's excavation caused a small sensation when he claimed to have found evidence of the Israelite destruction of Jericho caused by Joshua.

But it would be Kathleen Kenyon whose name would be inextricably linked with the excavations of Jericho. Kenyon made Jericho a household name in Canada when she chose A. Douglas Tushingham as her co-director. Tushingham was chief archeologist of Toronto's Royal

Ontario Museum. As a result, newspapers across the country had a field day with the excavations, and the Canadian public became aware of this important archeological site.

Kenyon began her excavations at Jericho in 1952, and she dug there until 1958. Her excavations turned up some fascinating details that would rewrite the history of that famous site and call into question some cherished beliefs. Kenyon was the first to practise the new methodology of excavating that she had learned while working with the legendary British archeologist Mortimer Wheeler. It now bears both their names and is known as the Wheeler-Kenyon method. Basically it involves meticulous excavation, careful recording, and using the stratigraphy at the side of a trench to match up finds with specific soil levels. Ultimately, the idea is to recreate an entire tell from the final published report of the archeologist.

Using this new technique, Kenyon came up with some amazing discoveries. She turned up evidence that Jericho was one of the earliest settlements ever unearthed, dating to the dawn of the Agricultural Revolution, which saw the start of the domestication of both plants and

animals. This cultural breakthrough dates back some 10,000 years and was a major milestone in human existence, paving the way for the rise of cities and civilization some 5,000 years later. Coincidentally, this is exactly the same amount of time separating us in the present from the dawn of civilization some 5,000 years ago.

But the most controversial evidence Kenyon turned up dealt with the dating of Joshua's conquest of Jericho. In fact, there was no evidence of it. Using her meticulous methodology, Kenyon found that at the time of Joshua's supposed conquest, Jericho lay in ruins, probably having been destroyed by the Egyptians a few hundred years earlier when they were adding Canaan to their empire during the New Kingdom around 1550 to 1100 BCE.

Kenyon's discoveries have been the source of a great deal of controversy ever since. Some have speculated that the level of Joshua's conquest may have eroded in the intervening time, but nobody has convincingly refuted her findings.

The excavations of Jericho are a prime example of the danger in using archeology to try to prove the historicity of the Bible. Although the Bible does mention verifiable historical events, it's not a history book in the modern sense. It's a chronicle of Israel's faith, and faith by its very definition defies proof.

Past Forward



Sweet lessons in a basket

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

The ninth chapter of the Book of Esther states in Verse 19: "Therefore the Jews of the villages, that dwell in the un-walled towns, made the 14th day of the month of Adar a day of gladness and feasting, a holiday, and of sending portions to one another."

That's why on March 21, thousands of years after the Book of Esther was written, Jews around the world will be scurrying from doorstep to doorstep depositing baskets laden with goodies at the homes of friends and strangers, too. Today, a look at one of the most delightful customs in the Jewish calendar: mishloach manot.

Why does the Megillah command us to perform this mitzvah? Surprisingly, one source traces this tradition to the evil Haman. As Rabbi Yehudah Prero explains, "Haman described the nation of Israel to Achashverosh as a 'people scattered abroad and dispersed amongst the people.' Some commentators explain that Haman was pointing out that the Jewish nation was vulnerable because they did not all get along: there were disagreements and disputes among them so that in their hearts they were scattered and dispersed... To foster feelings of closeness, kinship, and love, we send gifts to each other on Purim." [tinyurl.com/2q43en]

Several sites go into great detail about how to perform the mitzvah properly. L'Chaim examines the proper time to deliver mishloach manot, the quantity of food to be sent and the importance of

using an agent to deliver the gift. [tinyurl.com/2twsby] Darche Noam looks at the custom through traditional sources such as the Gemarah and the Rambam.

[tinyurl.com/2vvgae] Although the Megillah clearly states that we should exchange food on Purim, curiously, there is no blessing associated with the mitzvah. Rabbi

Yechiel Weinberg says this makes perfect sense when you consider human nature. If there were a blessing, it would have included the word "v'tzivani" ("and He has commanded us"). However, it is preferable to give of your own free will from a sense of love for your fellow Jew. If one gives mishloach manot because one is commanded to do so, this would lessen the element of love. [tinyurl.com/2oarjm]

In that light, CLAL, the National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership, has created a meditation that can be recited as you put together your mishloach manot: "May I prepare and give these gifts with a full and open heart. May we be blessed on Purim and on each day of our lives with light, gladness and honour, and with the gift to express our friendship." [clal.org/r21.html]

Surely you can send off something more imaginative than a tub of candy. The folks at Virtual Jerusalem have shared some alternatives. "One year I delivered a breakfast shalach manot: a

cup of hot coffee, bagel, butter, hard-boiled egg and orange juice... Another with a fish motif: a small can of tuna, gummy fish, chocolate fish, etc." [tinyurl.com/3e49te] Aish.com's dip-themed suggestion includes whole-wheat za'atar pita chips, guacamole and Salsa Mexicana. [tinyurl.com/2r9vzg]

If you do want to give in to your sweet tooth, try whipping up Purim Poppyseed Candy, Hazenblosen [tinyurl.com/6e8hg], Persian Rice Cookies or Halvah with Walnuts. [tinyurl.com/ppq2z]

Rina Peled wants to fill her gift basket with something more substantial than sweets – such as kindness, consideration, love and other qualities she longs to give of herself. Writing in Hebrew in Shaloch Manot of the Heart, she tells us that her daughter's teacher should get a basket filled with "consideration" for the hard work she puts in. Her own kids should receive gifts of "tranquility and acceptance," while her husband deserves "unending kindness." And "maybe this year, I'll attach to the basket I send to my father... a bit of forbearance and patience. Something that will symbolize the fact that I will wait until he finishes his sentences, and I won't interrupt as if I knew what he was going to say... something that will show him that he is truly important to us all." [tinyurl.com/2eq8ds]

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.



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Coast to Coast

SNUGGLE UP & READ:

More than 200 students in senior kindergarten through Grade 2 from Associated Hebrew Schools' Posluns and Kamin branches recently took part in a "Snuggle-up and Read" program. Children and teachers came dressed in their pajamas and participated in activities planned and guided by Associated staff, while their parents attended a "Love of Reading" workshop by literacy expert Anne Porretta, who is pictured reading to the students.



YIDDISH CORNER

Edited by: ALEK SILVER

ידיש-ווינקל

הערצונות פון: אלעק סילבער

שלח מנות ביי אונדז אין שטעטל

(ונגנט זכרונות פון דער אלטער היים)

פון אלעק סילבער

ביי אונדז אין אלטן שטעטל סטאפניץ האט מען נישט געשיקט קיין שלח מנות. מען האט געטראגן שלח מנות. וואס הייסט עפעס שיקן? ... וואס מען וועט רינגען א באלעגאלע מיט פערד און וואגן. האט מען געטראגן.

מיין יינגער שוועסטער און איד האבן געטראגן דעם שלח מנות און אויב די מאמע האט געהאט א ביי-סעלע צייט האט זי ויך געלאזט צו א שבעט. נישט בלויז צוליבן שלח מנות. עס האט איר געגעבן א פאר-מינוט ויך אפצורעדן. עס איז געווען א גרויסער רחמנות אויף אונדזער מאמע ארום פורים צייט. זי האט זייער שווער געארבעט נאך מיט צוויי טעג פריער. זי איז נישט געשלאפן די לעצטע צוויי נעכט. מיר ווייסן עס, ווייל ווען מיר זיינען אויפגעשטאנען האט שוין די מאמע געהאט צוגעגרייט דאס טיג אויף צו באקן. מען דארף נישט פארגעסן, אז אחוץ דאס באקן אויף שלח מנות, האט די מאמע אויך געמזט מאכן קרעפלעך צו דער היינאכטיקער פורים סעודה. און אויב איז פורים ארויסגעפאלן ווי היינאך אין א פרייטיק, האט די מאמע אויך געארבעט צוגרייטן אויפן דריטן טאג, אויף שבת. איז זי טאקע געווען באדעקט מיט שווייס און געלאפן פון קאך-אויפן צום באק-אויפן און געמישט, און פאר-זוכט, און צוגעגעבן, און צוגעגרייט צום סערווירן.

געגאנגען מיטן שלח מנות זיינען מיר באזונדער. בלויז אין געציילטע היידער זיינען מיר געגאנגען צוזאמען. ספעציעל האבן מיר ביידע געוואלט גיין צו זיידע באבע און צו א רייכע מומע ריזל און פעטער בערל (שוסטער). דער פעטער און די מומע האבן נישט געהאט קיין קינדער האבן זיי אונדז שטענדיק געבעטן, אז אויפן וועג אהיים זאלן מיר אנטרעטן דא און דארט און אריינגעבן זייער שלח מנות. פאר דעם האבן מיר שטענדיק באקומען א שיינע פאר גראשן. דער פעטער בערל פלעגט פאר אונדז מאכן שטיוועלעך פון בעסטן לעדער, אז מען האט זיך געקענט אין זיי אפשפילגען.

צוריקגעצויגן צו דעם שלח מנות. אונדזער מאמע, זאל זי ווען אין געדן, איז געווען פון די בעסטע בעקערס. די המך-טאשן, אגענעפלט מיט פאווידלע, זיינען געווען ווי אויסמערשט מיט די שפיץ. (פא-וידלע איז א געמיש פון געקאכטע קארשן און פליממן מיט צוקער). חוץ דעם האט זי געבאקן די בעסטע מאך קיכלעך און א גרויסן קוכן פון וועלכן זי האט געשיקט שטיקלעך פאר דעם שלח מנות און פאר אונדז אליין.

ביים צערייבן דעם מאן און דאס פלייש צו די קרעפלעך האט איר געהאלפן דעם טאטנס געזעל, דער שגן וואלדעק. ער האט ליב געהאט צו זיצן כמעט א גאנצן טאג אין דער שטוב, האט איינגעזאפט די געשמאקע ריחות און פון צייט צו צייט האט די מאמע אים געגעבן פון דעם, וואס איז ארוועגעפאלן ביים קאכן און באקן און ער האט זיך דערקאפט דאס הארץ.

ווען עס איז געקומען צו צעטיילן דעם שלח מנות, האט מען קודם-אל אויסגעקליבן דאס שענסטע פאר זי רייכערע קרובים. זי מאך קיכלעך האט מען געמאכט זייער, אז זיי זיינען נישט צוגעברענט. די המך-טאשן האבן געמזט זיין די בעסטע געבאקענע. פון דעם קוכן האבן זיי שטנדיק געקראגן דאס פון דער מיטן. מען האט עס אויסגעלייגט אויף דער שענסטער טאג אין-הויז און געטראכטן מיטן שטענדיק וואנטל. און די מאם-מע האט געשטיילט א צושרייענע.

ווען זי מאמע האט זיך געוועזט צו דער פורים סעודה אין אונזער איז זי געווען זייער מיד, אבער געדאנקט גאט, אז אלץ איז ארויף בשלום.

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On Campus

UWO business students explore Israel's economy

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

When Nicole Demarsh signed up for a trip to Israel that focused on the country's economy, she had no idea how dramatically it would change her perceptions of the Jewish state.

"It was really hard for me to conceptualize and imagine what the country would be like. I really had a hard time trying to get a visual picture in my mind," said Demarsh, 22, who travelled to Israel from Feb. 21 to March 2 with 29 peers from the University of Western Ontario's Richard Ivey School of Business to learn about Israel's booming economy.

"Now I actually have a perception of what the country is, what it entails," said Demarsh, who is Catholic. She was one of 20 non-Jewish students and 10 Jewish students who spent 10 days touring the country and meeting some of Israel's most successful entrepreneurs, politicians and journalists.

"We thought that bringing a mixed group of people to Israel, Jews and non-Jews, and focusing only on the economy, and talking about various Israeli companies and why they are successful in Israel, we figured we could educate the students and get students to think about investing in Israel," said Noah Slepov, director of Jewish and Israel affairs for London Jewish Campus Services and one of the trip's organizers.

The tour, which was funded by private donors and the Canada Israel Committee (CIC), included stops at Teva Pharmaceuticals, Israel Aerospace Industries Ltd., Given Imaging and the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange.

The speakers the group heard from included Jon Medved, co-founder and CEO of Vringo, a service that allows subscribers to share videos through their cellphones; Aluf Benn, diplomatic editor of the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz*; and David Azrieli, an Israeli-Canadian who heads Canpro Investments Ltd.



The students sat in the board room of the Azrieli Centre listening to David Azrieli talk about his Israeli business success stories.

"It was really neat to see such a small country, very young, and to see the success that it has," Demarsh said.

She said she was impressed with Azrieli, a Montreal developer who had great financial success in Canada, but returned to Israel for ideological reasons and was determined to find success in Israel, too.

"Regardless of how politically challenged the country can be, the economy is the real story in Israel because it is a knowledge-based economy, with people who are being ingenuitive, creative and coming up with great ideas and great products. Working on campus for the last four years, there has been virtually no emphasis on the economic side of Israel," said Slepov, adding that shifting the focus from Israeli politics to its economy

is a great way to advocate for Israel.

But the organizers made sure to give the students insight into Israel's social and political aspects as well, because they felt it would help give them a complete picture of the economic situation.

"If you take a look at a magazine like *The Economist*, economics is about knowing everything. It's about knowing the political climate, it's about knowing the culture. In order to make smart business decisions, you have to know about the society itself," Slepov said.

"One of the things they have to know about Israel, to know about the economy, is who are these people? Where did the tension in Israel come from? CIC, to their credit, when they got on board with this project, they expressed to us how important it was to take them to places like Yad Vashem, places like Masada, to meet with politicians, for them to get a better understanding of Israel."

He said that when the group met with Benn, he didn't speak about the political crisis in Israel. Rather, he spoke about the psyche of Israelis – "not wanting to be losers" – and the Israeli mentality that affects all aspects of their lives, including business.

"One of the things that I think spoke to people is that the Israelis are in a situation that they don't have a lot of natural resources and instead of scapegoating and complaining, and finding ways to blame people for their lack of resources, they've taken things into their own hands and said, 'How can we maximize the situation we're in? How can we as a people move forward?' They've put their energy into building the country."

Continued on page 26

Black Tie & Pearls
Tuesday, April 1st 2008



**For the residents of Sderot, living under rocket attacks,
30 seconds can be the difference between life and death**

Not a day goes by when the Red Alert Warning System does not sound onto the City of Sderot. Children who would ordinarily play freely in an outdoor playground have less than 30 seconds to be ushered into their shelter before the next rocket comes slamming into their lives.

These concrete shelters quickly become the children's classroom and playground. Who knows how long they will have to remain here.

Na'amat Canada Toronto has taken on the responsibility of raising the necessary funds to transform the eight dismal shelters attached to the Na'amat Neve Eshkol and the Tzelon Daycare Centres in Sderot, that were recently struck by Katyusha rockets, into colourful safe havens for these small children.

Black Tie & Pearls Gala

Tuesday, April 1st, 2008

LeParc Conference and Banquet Centre
8432 Leslie Street, Thornhill, Ontario

**6:30 p.m. Cocktail Reception
7:30 p.m. Gourmet Kosher Dinner**

Entertainment
ESO Swing Band

Gala Chairs: Irwin Michael Mariel Michael Gary Wiseman Laurel Wiseman

Live & Silent Auctions • \$180. per person • For Tickets Call 416.636.5425

On Campus

Dani

Developing
and Nurturing
Independence

"As long as we regard our disabilities as tragedies
we will be pitied;
As long as we feel ashamed of who we are
our lives will be regarded as useless;
As long as we remain silent
we will be told by others what to do"

by Adolf Ratzka 2005

2nd Annual Shabbat Kulanu

שבת כולנו

Saturday, March 29, 2008

Thank you to participating synagogues in Toronto!

and

Silver Spring - Budapest - Bratislava - Caracas - Detroit - New York - Virginia - Washington

Kulanu K'e'Echad • כולנו כאחד • All of Us - As One

2nd Annual D.A.N.I. Gala

Thursday, March 27, 2008

Toronto Centre for the Arts

(5400 Yonge St. North York)

Cocktail Reception at 6:30 p.m.

\$250.00/person

Silent Auction and 'Dig for Diamonds' at 7 p.m.

'Broadway North'

Community Celebration at 8 p.m.

\$36.00 and \$54.00

Honorees:

Mrs. Esther Wachsman

Ms. Batya Feigenbaum

Musical Entertainment By:

Peter Bloom - Justin Hines - Marshall Loomer

Aaron Schwebel - Cantor David Edwards

David Sisson - Robbie Wulfohn - D.A.N.I. actors

MC: Diane Dupuy - Famous PEOPLE Players

To purchase tickets:

905-731-6606

e-mail: danigala2008@gmail.com • www.dani-toronto.com

Fundraiser for programs at D.A.N.I.'S PLACE

Entrepreneurs impressed with the Ivey group

Continued from page 25

For Slepov, one of the highlights of the trip came during a meeting with Leon Koffler, the founder and chairman of Super-Pharm. Koffler asked the students how he should respond to New-Pharm, a rival pharmacy that reportedly was planning to cut its prices to take market share away from Super-Pharm.

Slepov said Koffler was very impressed with the students' strategic responses.

"He offered the students a permanent spot around his board table if they stayed in Israel."

But Slepov wasn't surprised that some of Israel's most successful entrepreneurs were impressed with the Ivey group.

After having interviewed 50 applicants for this trip, the organizers were only able to offer spots to 30 students based on their resumes and interviews.

"I was blown away by the level of these students. A lot of them have been working at multinational companies the last couple summers [and] a lot of them had already been hired by multinational companies for next year. We just picked the students we thought were at the top of their class, and also [so] that the demographics of the trip would reflect the demographics of the school."

He said the trip itself was very multicultural, which was evident when participants toured the Old City in Jerusalem, the Church of the Nativity and the Arab Quarter.

"It opened them up to each other and they bonded in a way that was really unpredictable... They learned more about each other's religions in this one week than they would have in their whole careers as students because of the open nature of Israel itself," Slepov said.

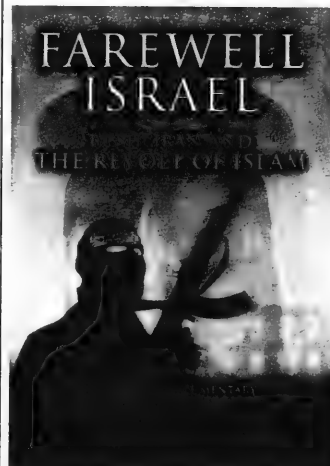
He added that the students also learned that there is a huge disconnect between the media's portrayal about everyday life in Israel and what really takes place.

"They had no idea that Israel was such an open society, that it was so multicultural, that there were so many people who were so different."

But the overall message Slepov wanted the group to understand was how important a strong economy is to maintaining stability in a region.

"One of the things that I think the students came away with was recognizing that there is a link between the economy and stability and security. For there to be peace in any region in the world, people need to be in jobs, and people need to be able to feed their children," he said.

Farewell Israel? See The Film. Meet the Director. Know the Facts.



"...thoroughly
researched,
expertly crafted...
[Joel Gilbert has
created] a
compelling view for
anyone interested in
this most curious
and important part of
the world, and the
history leading up
the tensions found
there today."
Rolling Stone
Magazine

Tuesday, March 25, 2008, 7:00 pm

Beth Torah Congregation, 47 Glenbrook Avenue

(South of Lawrence. East of Dufferin)

\$10 per person, payable at the door

Limited seating. RSVP to farewellisraeliafilm@live.ca



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Whether it's a bar mitzvah, bat mitzvah, "Bubbie's" birthday or a business banquet, you'll always be treated like a rock star at Hard Rock Cafe Toronto and Hard Rock Cafe at The Rogers Centre (formerly the Skydome).

With a combined 27,000-square feet, including nightclubs and streetside patios, Hard Rock Cafe Toronto and Hard Rock Cafe at The Rogers Centre offer a vast array of configurations for a wide variety of events, from five to 500 people, breakfast through late-night.

Marcelo DeOliveira, sales and marketing manager for Hard Rock Cafe: "We've hosted countless bar mitzvahs, wedding receptions, product launches and press conferences. We've put on events for all types of companies, from Deloitte & Touche and The Toronto Star, to BMG Music. Guests love Hard Rock. It's a very unique environment."

As if to make his point, DeOliveira walks a visitor past some of the priceless rock memorabilia hanging on Hard Rock Cafe Toronto's walls,

such as Bob Dylan's autographed guitar from the cover of a 1984 live album and a handmade mariachi suit he wore on tour. Guests will also see a pair of sketches by John Lennon, a fur-trimmed purple jacket that belonged to Prince and an outrageous pair of platform shoes from the closet of Stanley Eisen — better known as Paul Stanley of KISS — as well as a beautiful custom instrument once owned by Canadian guitar virtuoso, Alex Lifeson, of Rush.

And as a testament to the old adage, "rock 'n' roll never dies," Hard Rock Cafe at The Rogers Centre boasts dueling walls of The Rolling Stones' and The Beatles' memorabilia. So far, The Beatles are ahead with 23 pieces, including the hand-written lyrics to "Get Back." But if Brit Rock isn't your thing, you can check out some cool stuff from this side of the pond, like the guitar Jimi Hendrix used when recording "Little Wing," the jacket Buddy Holly wore on tour or Bo Diddley's guitar "Lucille." There is a tribute room to the "King" himself, where you can get a peek at Elvis's silk pajamas, among other things.

After the tour, DeOliveira explains that this is all part of the experience, that his staff will design exactly the experience a guest is looking for. "For instance, you can have a sit-down dinner or a buffet. We have great sound, great lighting and video monitors throughout the cafes. We can set up for dancing or karaoke. We can even put together really fun loot bags from our Rock Shop. Whatever you need. Because to us, you're a rock star."



For more information on either cafe, contact Marcelo DeOliveira, 416-362-3636, toronto_salesmanager@hardrock.com, hardrock.com/toronto.

Hard Rock Cafe Toronto is located on Yonge St. at Dundas. Hard Rock Cafe at The Rogers Centre is located at 1 Blue Jays Way, Gate 1.

And now for something completely different:

HEEBONICS

Volunteer comes face to face with victims in Darfur

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

There was nothing that could have prepared Yoni Levitan for the tragic first-hand accounts he heard from victims of the genocide in the Darfur region in Sudan.

Earlier this year, Levitan, 23, the volunteer executive director of the Canadian branch of Students Taking Action Now: Darfur (STAND), travelled to Sudan with an NGO called Canadian Aid for Southern Sudan (CASS), which is run by Liberal MP Glen Pearson and his wife, Jane Roy.

Levitan, a Queen's University graduate and the former vice-president of operations for Queen's Hillel, was invited to join their annual CASS trip, along with Liberal MP Carolyn Bennett and a student and lawyer from London.

Levitan, a first-year student at Osgoode Law School, spent a week in southwestern Sudan, in an internally displaced persons (IDP) camp in a village called Rumol, and at a Catholic mission compound in Kenya, learning first-hand about the human cost of the conflict that has left hundreds of thousands dead, and almost three million displaced over a span of five years.

During Levitan's time in the IDP camp, he interviewed about three dozen people, some of whom arrived just days before on foot, on 10- to 15-day journeys through the desert.

One of the women he spoke with, Nybol, a mother of eight, told him about the day her husband and brother-in-law were killed when her village was attacked.

"When they fled the village, five of her children went missing. She only had three of her children when she left. She doesn't know where they are. They could be in another camp somewhere else. They could have also been killed like her husband and she just doesn't know," Levitan said, adding that Nybol continued to hope for the best for her remaining children, including their going to school.

He recalled a man he interviewed who wanted nothing but to show him a large bump on his back he developed from a beating before he fled his village.

"There was another woman I met and she had two of her children murdered right in front of her eyes, and that was all she wanted to tell me. She didn't want to tell me anything else about her family, she didn't want to talk about her journey here, she didn't want to talk about any other message to bring back to Canada. She just wanted to tell me about her two

children, and to her all that mattered was that her children wouldn't die in vain."

Levitan, who had been working for the past two years to raise awareness about the plight of countless Darfuri refugees, said that the act of sitting and speaking with them about their stories gave them hope because it showed them there are people outside of Sudan who care.

Because of this, Levitan said he and the rest of the CASS group were warmly welcomed and treated with respect.

"Everyone knew we were there with a development organization, and we were there to bring these people's stories back to Canada and try to get them help. So everyone had a lot of respect for us and accordingly, wanted to make sure we had a positive experience," Levitan said.

What really surprised him was how upbeat and full of life the children were, and how respectful the community was when it came to the property of

others.

"The social norms were really amazing. When there were food drops from the UN, they could just leave hundreds and even thousands of pounds of food in the middle of the field because it is just the norm in that culture, that you don't take something that doesn't belong to you. They could just leave crates and crates of food in the middle of the field, and no one would touch it until an administrator came and distributed it," he said.

As much as Levitan tried to prepare himself for what he would experience on the trip - reading first-hand accounts, and watching documentaries - he wasn't able to predict the effect it would have on him.

"The first thing that jumps to your mind is all these numbers. Four hundred thousand estimated dead and 2.5 to three million displaced, and you hear all these numbers and there is a kind of parallel to the Holocaust. What does six million mean? Or 1.5 million children? Same with Darfur... It really helped give meaning to what Darfur means to me because it really helped personalize it for me. I got to see first-hand that this is the face of contemporary genocide and this is the face of the world's indifference."

He said one of the biggest challenges was coming to terms with the fact that he couldn't help them with their immediate needs.



This young Sudanese child, a victim of the crisis in Darfur, was one of the many children who was thrilled by something as simple as having his picture taken, and then seeing it on the screen of the digital camera. [Yoni Levitan photo]

"You're just thinking you want to help these people, but you want to also be able to think long-term and address the root causes. It just really tears at you because you want to do something right then, but you don't want to perpetuate what's going on."

For example, Levitan said family friends, who are doctors, donated a shopping bag full of cough medicines, pain killers and even baby formula to bring to the IDP camp.

"They didn't have a medical clinic at the IDP camp, but they did have a pharmacy in a hut. I took everything out, and literally with a shopping bag of medicine, I doubled the inventory of the pharmacy that services thousands and thousands of people," he said.

"On the one hand, you're happy and grateful that you're able to help, but at the same time, it is very hard. The first thing you want to do is help the people you see. It's hard to step back and think about what the root causes



These women showed Levitan what people mean when they said they have nothing to eat. They had resorted to eating leaves. [Yoni Levitan photo]

are. Widows and orphans and disease and malnutrition - all these things are the symptoms of genocide.

But Levitan said that despite their hardships, they still have hope and the desire to make life better for their children.

"It's helped me realize that trying to foster an environment that is conducive to peace in Sudan is not an easy thing, but if these people can say that their lives can get better... it gives me the strength to say that in the end, this will not persist indefinitely.

"As brutal as the situation may be, STAND and other organizations may be able to help create an environment that fosters peace and stability in Sudan."

Coast to Coast



FEEDING THE HUNGRY: Thirty campers and counsellors from Hahonim Dror's Camp Geshet gathered recently to make more than 200 sandwiches that were delivered on a Sunday morning to Ve'ahava - The Canadian Jewish Humanitarian & Relief Committee to donate to shelters throughout Toronto.



CAPITAL CONVENTION: Twenty-eight student leaders from across the country gathered in Ottawa recently for Canadian Young Judaea's national convention in mid-February. The weekend included volunteering and leadership seminars.



LEARNING TO HELP OTHERS: As one of their chesed projects, the children at Gan Netivot, Netivot Hatorah Day School's preschool, collected lots of coins for the children at Zareinu Educational Centre. Zareinu executive director Randy Spiegel told the children about the work that Zareinu does to help children with special needs.

[Mindy Klein photo]

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish News



Mazel tov to David Hall & Kristy Bignell on the birth of Huck Jordan from thrilled grandparents David & Susan Bignell.



Happy Birthday **2** Cole!

Love, Grandparents
Gerald & Sheila Lipson,
David & Eva Danon,
Great-Grandmother
Leah Srajer,
Uncle David & Aunt Lara



Bubbie Elaine, Zaidie Verne, I am excited that you will be at my second birthday April 5 in Palm Desert, Calif.
Love, Benjamin Morris Chelin.



Happy first birthday, Abigail!
Proud parents are Lisa & Steven Jeffries.
Excited grandparents are Joseph & Sharon Goldstein, and Rosalind & Joel Jeffries.



Happy first birthday, Joshua!
Proud parents are Lisa & Steven Jeffries.
Excited grandparents are Joseph & Sharon Goldstein, and Rosalind & Joel Jeffries.



Ella, daughter of Alicia & Even Green blessed our lives on Feb. 21.
Grandparents, Babcia Fran & Pipi Bill, Arlene & Gabby Green.
Great-grandmother Bertha Green.



Hanoch & Tara Schvalb welcome their son Brodie Emerson.
Loved by big brother Mason, and grandparents Sandy & Dayna Shulman and David & Clarise Schvalb.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos and keep wording to 25 words or less.

Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return.

Mail to: The CJN, Family Moments,

1300 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205,

North York, ON, M3B 3K4.

or email: cblackman@cjnews.com



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*What's
New*

By REBECCA NADLER



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What's New deadlines: Monday, March 17, is the deadline for the March 27 issue, and Monday, March 24, is the deadline for the April 3 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjaews.com. This week's What's New was done by Carolyn Blackman.

Thursday, March 13

WINE TASTING

She'arim Hebrew Day School hosts an evening of wine tasting with prizes and boutiques. Thursday, March 13, 7:30-10 p.m. at the Borochoy Cultural Centre. \$18 in advance, \$25 at the door. Tickets, 416-633-4783, or Na'amat, 416-636-5425.

Friday, March 14

KABALAT SHABBAT

Lodzer Centre Congregation will have a Kabbalat Shabbat service at 6

p.m. It continues weekly.

Saturday, March 15

PARSHAH DISCUSSION

Helen Cooper talks about the weekly portion, Vayikra, 9:30 a.m., Beth Tikvah Synagogue. 416-221-3433

Sunday, March 16

BREAKFAST AND LECTURE

Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Brotherhood holds a breakfast and lecture, 9:15 a.m., on illustrated

classical art of the Renaissance. Arlene Kushnir, artist and AGO docent, talks about Rembrandt and the Jewish community of Holland. All welcome. Door charge \$5. Call 633-5500 for information.

POLISH-JEWISH HERITAGE

The Consulate General of Poland and the Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation present a lecture by Krzysztof Jasiewicz on "Why Poland? Why Students? Why Jews? Why 1968?" and a screening of the film *Gdansk Railway Station*, George Ignatieff Theatre, U of T, 15 Devonshire Place. Free admission.

ELECTIONS 2008

Aish Toronto presents "Elections 2008: What's Good for the Jews," an in-depth analysis from the political and Torah perspectives on the upcoming U.S. presidential elec-

tions, featuring David Luchins, senior adviser to the late senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, 8 p.m., pre-registration, \$7 at the door, 949 Clark Ave. W.

MUSEUM WORKSHOP

"Works on Paper and Parchment: Ketubot, Megillot and Manuscripts," with Sharon Liberman Mintz, curator of Jewish art, library of the Jewish Theological Seminary, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Beth Tzedec Congregation. For information, call Dorion Liebgott, museum curator, 416-781-3514, ext. 232, or museum@beth-tzedec.org.

SHLOSHIM MEMORIAL

Beth Tzedec Congregation and Beth haMinyan are jointly sponsoring a shloshim memorial in memory of Rabbi Benjamin Hollander, following the 7 p.m. Minchah service

at Beth Tzedec.

Monday, March 17

60 DAYS FOR 60 YEARS

Rabbi Moshe Stern, guest speaker at the 60 Days for 60 Years program, speaks on "The State of Israel - The Hidden Hand of Divine Providence," 8:30 p.m., Westmount Shul and Learning Centre, 1118 Centre St. Visit www.westmountshul.com for information.

DIABETES CHAPTER

Jewish Diabetes Chapter presents "Heart and Mind: The Diabetes Connection" with Dr. David Tal, 8 p.m. Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, Brotherhood Hall, admission \$1. For information, call hotline, 416-363-0177, ext. 7403, or visit www.diabetes.ca.

Continued on page 31

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NCSY having served on numerous campaigns
and committees over the years. Hedy has Co-Chaired
the Mount Sinai Fundraising Gala. Ron has
been a member of the Spirit of Hope Benefit for many years.

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www.ncsy.ca click on NCSY Purim e-Cards.

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*The mitzvah of Mishloach Manot requires the sending of two gifts of food and drink. The NCSY Purim e-cards are meant for sending in lieu of Mishloach Manot beyond the two items required for the mitzvah.

NCSY 7000 Bathurst Street, Thornhill, ON L4J 7L1 Phone: 905-761-6279 Fax: 905-761-9115 www.ncsy.ca

What's New

Continued from page 30

Tuesday, March 18

IDENTITY THEFT

Lunch and Learn, Beth Tikvah Synagogue presents **Fran Saltzman**, a former RCMP officer who will talk about how we can defend ourselves against credit card and Internet fraud, \$20. Lunch, 12 noon; learn, 12:45 p.m. By reservation only. 416-221-3433, ext. 352

CHUG HATANACH

Irving Matlow leads a discussion of the Book of Ezra, Chapter 7. 8 p.m. at Beth David Congregation. All welcome.

Wednesday, March 19

BEREAVEMENT SEMINAR

Temple Har Zion continues its bereavement seminars with **Roz Smith**, who will talk about "Breath and Visualization for Healing." 7:30 in the library. Free and open to the community. Call 905-889-2522 for information.

Other News

PURIM PARTIES/CARNIVAL

The **Temmy Latner Forest Hill Jewish Centre** hosts Cookies and Costumes: A Family Purim Party, with magic show followed by costume parade, face painting, live music, refreshments. \$10/person or \$30/family in advance, \$12/person at the door. Sunday, March 16, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. 446 Spadina Rd., Suite 206. Call Luci, 416-483-0883.

Zichron Yisroel Congregation of Associated Hebrew School presents Purim Carnival 2008. Games, prizes, jumping castle, face painting, costumes and more. Sunday, March 16, 12-4 p.m. at 300 Atkinson Ave. Admission \$2. \$4.

B'nai Brith Dr. W. Filderman Lodge invites members and friends to the Purim party, Tuesday, March 18, 6 p.m., 15 Hove St. Full dinner, hamentaschen, drinks, live music, dancing. \$20. Please book ahead. **Felicia Lowy**, 416-631-0634, or **Neti Badulescu**, 416-733-1214.

Beit Rayim Hebrew School family Purim carnival and Megillah reading, Thursday, March 20, Ross Doan Public School, Richmond Hill.

Beth Tzedec's Purim family musical, *The Sound of Purim*, a musical romp through the Megillah featuring an orchestra, costumes and singable songs, Thursday, March 20 following 6:45 p.m. Megillah reading; Saturday, March 22, 9 p.m.; Sunday, March 23, 3 p.m. Tickets at the door \$10, adults; \$5 kids 13 and under. Call 416-781-3511.

Chabad Lubavitch of

Markham presents Purim in the Rainforest, Friday, March 21, 11:30 a.m., featuring inter-active drum café, hamentaschen, treats. \$3 per person. Open to the public.

Kulanu Toronto's third annual Purim masquerade party is at Slacks. Costumes, dancing and hamentaschen, \$12 cover or \$8 in costume. Visit Kulanu at www.kulanutoronto.ca.

CHASSIDISM

Join **Aaron Nussbaum** for "Chassidism: The Early Masters" and study the lives, legends and teachings of the early masters through their writings. March 17-April 7, 8-9:15 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. \$50. Register, 416-877-2050 or www.mekorot.ca.

FLOWERS AREN'T ENOUGH

Jewish Women International Canada presents **Naomi Ackerman** in *Flowers Aren't Enough*, the story of a young woman from an upper-middle-class family who finds herself in an abusive relationship. Wednesday, March 26, 8 p.m. at Beth Tzedec Synagogue. \$25, includes dessert reception. 416-630-9313 or info@jwcanada.com.

TRIP TO ISRAEL

The **Bernard Betel Centre** is sponsoring a trip to Israel May 13-25 in celebration of Israel's 60th anniversary. Members \$3,200; non-members \$3,400. Call 416-225-2112, ext. 123, for info.

JIAS TORONTO

Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, 4600 Bathurst St. #325. www.jias.toronto.org. For more information call 416-630-6481.

Shindman/Sharna Scholarships provide financial support for new immigrant Jewish students pursuing post-secondary degrees or upgrading their skills. Application deadline is April 20. Complete terms of eligibility and applications are available in JIAS office and can also be downloaded at www.jias.toronto.org.

Passover seder hosts wanted: If you would like to welcome a newcomer family to your seder table, contact **Joanna** at ext. 30.

Family-to-Family: Welcome newcomer families and provide informal advice and orientation to our community. To participate, call **Joanna**.

Conversation Café: Newcomers to Canada practise speaking English in a casual, friendly environment, Thursday evenings at the BJCC. New Tuesday morning location in Thornhill at Family Resource Centre. Bring your kids. Also, volunteers needed for our telephone language companion program. Call **Joanna**.

JUMPstart: If you have a networking or job opportunity in the skilled labour market for a newcomer, connect to our JUMPstart program by calling **Elisa**, ext. 24.

PULPIT EXCHANGE

Co-sponsored by the Sidney & Tillie Cof Memorial Lecture Fund: **Rabbi Steven Saltzman**, Adath Israel Congregation; **Rabbi Wayne Allen**, Beth Tikvah Congregation - Saturday, March 15, Adath Israel; Saturday, March 22, Beth Tikvah. Following the March 15 service there will be a light lunch and study program, \$10 person. Pre-registration required. Call **Honey**, 416-635-340 or honey@adathisrael.com. For info on the March 22 program, call 416-221-3433, ext. 300.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St., 416-638-7800 or www.jfandcs.com. Call **Shawna**, ext. 215, for info and registration.

- Younger widow/widower bereavement group: A six-session discussion series for individuals 60 and under who have recently lost a spouse. Tuesday, March 25, Lipa Green Building, 7:30-9 p.m.
- Couple communication: a four-session group for couples wanting to learn communication skills to deal better with day-to-day issues, Wednesday, March 26, Lipa Green Building, 7-9 p.m.

FOR SENIORS

The Association of Jewish Seniors hosts **Frank Dimant**, of Bnai Brith Canada, on "An Analysis of Israel's Strategic Position." Thursday, March 13, 9:30 a.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. Guests \$2. Reserve, **Tammy**, 416-635-2860, ext. 458.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the

Park. Casino Rama, Thursday, March 27; Yiddish-speaking hairdresser/barber, Thursdays, 9 a.m.-noon; mahjong, Tuesdays, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.; bridge, Thursdays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. The club is deeply saddened by the sudden passing of our president, **Betty Palter**, on Feb. 27. Info, Tuesday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 416-395-7881

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Blood pressure clinic, Monday March 17, drop-in, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., in lobby.

Purim party, Wednesday, March 19, 1-3 p.m. \$4 members, \$6 non-members.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

JCC Maccabi Spin-a-thon to support Maccabi athletes. Sunday, March 30, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Call **Grant**, ext. 257.

Tumbling Toddlers, through Jewish Discovery Museum. Wednesdays 2-2:45 p.m. Ages 1-2 with adult, \$60 per child, \$50 museum members. Call ext. 390.

School and day-care registration is now open for the 2008-09 school year. Info, ext. 248.

Family Resource Centre drop-in fun for children five years old and under with parents/caregivers includes music circle, crafts, kosher snacks and Shabbat celebration. Register for Boogie Babies & Jammin' Tots with singer **Deborah Maes**; drumming fun and Artsy Crafts. Call 905-882-8509.

Purim Family Fun, March 21, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. (Good Friday). No registration required, all facilities free

and open to the community. Come hear the Megillah reading, participate in arts and crafts, Jewish Discovery Museum, cooking, gym and swim and more. Call ext. 367 for information.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www.mnjcc.org.

Purim Carnival, Sunday March 23, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Everyone welcome, don't forget to wear a costume. Admission at door, \$10 per family; \$5 per child; food and drinks \$1 each.

Toronto Jewish Film Society with Israel at 60 Toronto presents the classic Israeli feature: *Late Summer Blues (Bnei Lahofesh Hagadol)*, with guest speaker **Shlomo Schwartzberg**. Rush seats on sale 15 minutes before screenings: \$15, \$10 (ages 18-29, 7:30 p.m. screening only.) Call **Esther** for information.

Tickets on sale for *Life in a Jar*, a play written by Kansas high school students about a woman who saved 2,500 Jewish children during the Holocaust, March 27, 7:30 p.m. Tickets \$15, students \$10. By phone Polish Jewish Heritage Foundation of Canada, 416-651-5014; in person, Miles Nadal JCC front desk.

55+ Forward at the MNJCC offers "Difficult Family Situations Seniors May Encounter," a dramatized presentation and discussion about how to address a variety of situations and where to get help. Thursday, March 13, 1:30 p.m. Info, **Phyllis Fien**, 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

Celebrate Purim, music, bagels and a light brunch, Wednesday, March 19, 11 a.m. Admission \$2. RSVP by March 17 to **Phyllis Fien**, 416-924-6211 ext. 155, or phyllisf@mnjcc.org.

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SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 33

OBITUARIES and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Buxbaum, Rosa	Feb. 23/08	500 Glencairn Ave
Rotstein, Rosaline	Feb. 24/08	34 Hawleaf Cres
Eisenberg, Hinda	Feb. 24/08	164 Kennard Ave
Mills, David	Feb. 23/08	123 Spadina Rd
Fisz, Benjamin	Feb. 27/08	7460 Bathurst St
Tucker, Nathan	Feb. 27/08	4300 Bathurst St
Ross, Jeffrey	Feb. 28/08	535 Sheppard Ave.
Tulchenetska, Nekhama	Feb. 28/08	1925 Steeles Ave E
Pister, Paul	Feb. 28/08	113 McAllister Rd
Smolack, Libby	Feb. 24/08	

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Edward Futerman	Feb 23/08	27 Montessor Dr
Gerald Wener	Feb 23/08	7601 Bathurst St
Harry Shendelman	Feb 23/08	161 Banbury Rd
Ida Blum	Feb 23/08	11 Cedar Springs Gr
Eliahu Wierzba	Feb 25/08	541 Finch Ave W
Samuel Gangbar	Feb 25/08	3800 Yonge St #705
Joe Goldstein	Feb 25/08	645 Castlefield Ave
Howard Sinukoff	Feb 27/08	10 Tichester Rd
Don Jacobs	Feb 28/08	395 Courtleigh Bl
Betty Palter	Feb 27/08	4266 Bathurst St
Mary Kessel	Feb 28/08	66 Gypsy Roseway
David Henry	Feb 27/08	Toronto
Hanania Abisdoris	Feb 29/08	2100 Keele St
Carl Nevard	Feb 29/08	44 Charles St W
Gladys Zaldin	Feb 29/08	10 Torresdale Rd
Aron Ayzenberg	Mar 1/08	262 Ridley Bl
David Jacobs	Mar 1/08	55 Ameer Ave

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Cotler urges India to quash Itzhayek sentence

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Liberal human rights critic Irwin Cotler is stepping up his pressure on both the Canadian and Indian governments for the release of Montreal businessman Saul Itzhayek, who has been incarcerated in India for nine months since being sentenced to three years in prison for an entry visa offence.

Cotler told reporters last week that Canadian officials should urge the Indian president or cabinet to use any one of the executive powers they have to free Itzhayek. These might include a pardon, suspending his sentence, transferring him in a prisoner exchange, or deporting him to Canada or Israel, where he also has citizenship.

Cotler said Indian law provides for these executive remedies even while a case is before the courts.

**'This is not how friends
should treat
each other's nationals'**

Itzhayek was convicted last May of entering India on an expired visa from Nepal, where he was on a business trip. According to his testimony, the Indian police guaranteed him safe passage into India, then arrested him and asked for a bribe if he wanted to be let go.

The only news Cotler said he has on Itzhayek is that he was denied being released on bail while his appeal goes through the courts.

Cotler said he was recently told by Defence Minister Peter Mackay that he raised the case of Itzhayek with the Indian foreign minister during his five-day business mission to Mumbai and New Delhi that concluded on Feb. 22. Mackay is also minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency.

"I appeal to a fellow democracy and Commonwealth member to invoke any executive remedy it sees fit to end the pain and suffering of Mr. Itzhayek. This is not how friends should treat each other's nationals," Cotler said.

Itzhayek, 42, and his family are residents of Cotler's Mount Royal riding.

Cotler said he doesn't believe that ratcheting up the pressure on India could be counter-productive.

"This is not an adversarial campaign. We have not sought to embarrass the Indian authorities," he said.

Although Itzhayek's and the Indian police accounts of why the Montrealer was arrested conflict, Cotler said he doesn't believe that Itzhayek violated Indian law, and that he was, in fact, a victim of entrapment.

"Even if we accept the Indian officials' version of what happened, the sentence was excessive and becomes abusive, by Indian standards, for what is essentially an administrative breach."

Coast to Coast

French ruling lets survivors claim for lost livelihood

By ELIAS LEVY
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — A group that advocates for Shoah victims whose property was confiscated in Nazi-occupied France is urging people who lost their livelihoods under the Vichy regime to file for state compensation after a precedent-setting ruling that redefined property to include non-physical assets.

Last June, the administrative tribunal of Paris overturned a 2004 decision by the Commission pour l'Indemnisation des Victimes de Spoliations (CIVS) — a government body set up in 1999 to handle cases of property seizure during the war — to deny compensation to a Jewish dental surgeon for the loss of his patient base during the war, when he was not able to practise.

The tribunal's ruling set a precedent regarding the seizure of property from French Jews during World War II, because previously, claimants could only received compensation for the seizure of physical assets, said Jean-Jacques Fraenkel, a Holocaust survivor who, in 1999, founded La Coordination Off Shore, a group that fought the case in French court.

"That judicial decision opens up the possibility for all applicants, including Jewish families who had a business in France and therefore a clientele, to seek reparation from CIVS for loss of non-physical property such as a clientele, whether it was a cap manufacturer, a home-based tailor, a professional, a businessman," said Fraenkel, whose family was killed in Auschwitz-Birkenau.

In its ruling, the administrative tribunal said CIVS "had committed a clear error in judgment in rejecting the application for compensation for the loss of the above-mentioned non-corporeal property that had been taken from [the dentist]" — in other words, his patients.

Fraenkel is telling descendants of Jewish victims who had

property seized — including those who have already been compensated and those who are preparing to seek compensation — to complete a supplementary application for compensation for their loss of clientele.

Survivors or their descendants who think they qualify for compensation as a result of last year's decision can apply to CIVS themselves or have this done by a lawyer, Fraenkel said.

"It can be tricky," he added, "because, despite the tribunal's decision, applicants will also have to fight CIVS, which will do its best to reject any new claims. In order not to have their application rejected, therefore, they need meet the requirements set out by CIVS."

Fraenkel and La Coordination Off Shore are making themselves available to people who want to seek compensation, to inform them of the steps necessary to make a claim.

For those who want help in preparing their case, the lawyers who worked on the earlier case will, within an agreed fee scale, take the files and plead the cases before CIVS.

"Eligible parties can send their file by registered mail to Maître Christian Roth, the lawyer who pleaded the case against CIVS before the administrative tribunal of Paris. He will study the file to verify that the application falls under the new precedent. Roth will then inform the applicants if their file is admissible," Fraenkel said.

If it is, Roth will receive the fee agreed upon with La Coordination Off Shore, as well as a percentage of the resulting compensation.

For French applicants, the fee is about 700 Euros, or about \$1,000 (Cdn).

"I think it will be less for those living in Canada," Fraenkel said, adding that "all the preliminary verification to see if the file is admissible is free."

Roth speaks French, English and German.

To reach him, write to Maître Christian Roth, PDGB

Avocat, 174 Avenue Victor Hugo, 75116 Paris, France. Telephone: 33 1 44 15 21 21; fax: 33 1 44 05 21 02; e-mail: christian.roth@pdgb.com.

For more information, contact La Coordination Off Shore by phone at 33 1 42 27 29 93, or by e-mail at coordinationcad@ AOL. Its website is www.lacoordination.info.

A longer version of this article appeared Feb. 14 in French in the Montreal edition of The CJN. Translation by Carolan Halpern.

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Rabbi's assailant gets four years in jail

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — A man who attacked a Jewish community leader and his guests from the streets of the Russian city of Ivanovo has been sentenced to four years in prison.

Last June, Rabbi Zvi Hersheovich of Montreal, his wife Chayale and their eight-year-old daughter were assaulted by youths while walking in downtown Ivanovo with Ervin Kirshtein, chair of the city's Jewish community, as well as local community member Valery Makushev.

On March 3, the Ivanovo Leninsky District Court found local resident Sergey Novikov, 21, guilty of hate-motivated assault. In addition to the jail term, the court ordered Novikov to pay 80,000 rubles (about \$3,300 Cdn) in moral damages to

Kirshtein and 40,000 rubles to Makushev, according to the Russian news service Interfax, which quoted the Ivanovo region prosecutor's office press secretary, Valentina Kruchinina.

"Novikov was found guilty of humiliating the dignity of a group of persons on ethnic reasons and attitude to religion, an act committed publicly, including violence, hooliganism and premeditated infliction of bodily injuries not dangerous for human life," Kruchinina is quoted as saying.

The attack occurred on the first day of Rabbi Hersheovich's visit to Ivanovo, an industrial city of more than 500,000 residents about 350 miles northeast of Moscow.

Rabbi Hersheovich, a member of the Lubavitch community, is now spiritual leader of the Stavropol Jewish community, his former colleague in Montreal, Rabbi Israel Bernath, told The CJN.

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Coast to Coast

CIJA, Cotler join forces to fight anti-Semitism

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Mount Royal Liberal MP and renowned human rights advocate Irwin Cotler is putting the finishing touches on his new International Coalition to Combat Anti-Semitism.

Cotler, along with British MP John Mann — who chairs the British all-party parliamentary committee against anti-Semitism and commissioned a 2006 inquiry into anti-Semitism in the United Kingdom — launched the coalition last month with an announcement at the Global Forum for Combating Anti-Semitism in Jerusalem. The new coalition will be run under the auspices of the forum.

Speaking to *The C/N* from Ottawa late last month, Cotler said he has approached fellow parliamentarians from all the major political parties to begin assembling a Canadian version of Mann's all-party inquiry.

He also outlined the task forces he will put together over the next year to combat anti-Semitism in all its guises.

"I'll head up a task force on genocidal anti-Semitism," he said. "There will be one on state-sanctioned anti-Semitism, [another] dealing with state-supported anti-Semitism like those of Hamas and Islamic Jihad... I don't think people realize these groups are state-supported."

The coalition will also deploy a task force to look into anti-Semitic terrorism — what Cotler calls "specific acts of terror targeting Jews inside and outside of Israel" — and a legal remedies task force to be headed by David Matas, senior legal counsel to B'nai Brith Canada.

Cotler said the coalition has also approached individuals with expertise on anti-Semitism to act as advisers for his coalition, including former Soviet dissident Natan Sharansky; Gregg Rickman, America's special envoy for monitoring and combating anti-Semitism; Per Ahlmark, Sweden's former deputy prime minister; and Mikhail Chlenov, secretary general of the Euro-Asian Jewish Congress.

Cotler expects the coalition to be fully "active and activat-

ed" by the time of the next global forum on anti-Semitism in 2009.

He added that Mann has indicated the next forum will be hosted by the United Kingdom.

Hershell Ezrin, CEO of the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA), is also lending his organization's weight to both the coalition and the forum in the form of a website to fight anti-Semitism.



Hershell Ezrin



Irwin Cotler

CIJA's "Global Forum for Combating Anti-Semitism" website says that it will provide "a forum for the exchange of ideas and best practices to eliminate the scourge of anti-Semitism around the world."

Ezrin, who was also in attendance at the global forum — which drew almost 300 parliamentarians, academics, human rights activists and Jewish leaders from around the world to Jerusalem — said CIJA's presentation to the delegates last month was well-received, and he added that a number of nations and groups have already expressed interest in joining the fledgling Internet site.

As of last week, the website was still under construction, but Ezrin said it was on target for a May launch.

"We will integrate the work Cotler and Mann are doing," he said. "But one of the main conclusions to come out of the forum was to involve the non-Jewish community in combating anti-Semitism."

Citing his organization's ongoing success in promoting the initiative Fighting Anti-Semitism Together (FAST) — a coalition of non-Jewish Canadian business and community leaders that funds educational curricula encouraging students to speak out against racist activity — Ezrin said delegates showed "a great deal of interest" when it was revealed that nearly 800,000 Canadian students have participated in FAST programs over the last year.

"We wanted the international community to see what we've done," he said. "The U.S., United Kingdom and some others... wanted to see if an initiative taken by non-Jews would be something they could follow in their own countries."

Ezrin noted that one of the major pieces missing to effectively counter anti-Semitism is the ability to share "best practices" on the subject between people and organizations worldwide.

The CIJA website is intended to fill that void, he said.

"We want to build a knowledge-transfer site to meet people's needs... in both real time and in planned groups," Ezrin said. "We want to report action alerts, provide materials to experts and NGOs, parliamentarians and scholars around the world."

But the website will mostly be a members-only affair, he noted, saying that many organizations require confidentiality in order to effectively conduct their battles against anti-Semitism.

"We also agreed to build a compact, public site and post public information as well," he added.

Program helps hearing impaired follow Megillah

MONTREAL — A PowerPoint version of the Megillah developed by Montrealese Frank Duchoeny, which enables the hearing impaired to more fully participate in Purim, is now being used in North American synagogues and schools.

It is distributed through Our Way, a program for the deaf and hard of hearing under the New York-based Orthodox Union's national Jewish council for disabilities.

The entire Megillah, including the blessings, was put on a PowerPoint computer disk that projects the text in Hebrew and English side by side onto a screen, two to four verses at a time. The verses that are repeated aloud by the congregation are highlighted in a different colour to make it easy to follow along.

As the villainous Haman's name appears, humorous images, such as a raging bull or a rabbi stomping his feet, are flashed on the screen, with sound effects.

Duchoeny, the Our Way co-ordinator in Montreal, created the program four years ago for his 16-year-old son, who has been profoundly deaf since birth.

He gave credit for the idea to Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz of Congregation Tifereth Beth David Jerusalem.

More than 100 synagogues and schools in the United States and Canada requested the PowerPoint Megillah last year, and Our Way program co-ordinator Batya Jacob said similar numbers are expected this year.

The cost of the Megillah is a \$100 donation to Our Way. Contact Jacob at 212-613-8127 or jacobb@ou.org.

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Coast to Coast

Women can have aliyot, Orthodox scholar says

BY JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — With his black attire, wispy beard and unassuming demeanour, Rabbi Daniel Sperber doesn't look like someone who is trying to shake up the Orthodox Jewish world.

Yet, the 67-year-old talmudic scholar from Israel is doing just that with his outspoken advocacy of greater inclusion of women in Jewish ritual.

Most contentiously, Rabbi Sperber argues that there's no prohibition in Jewish law against women being given aliyot and reading from the Torah in synagogue (other than those aliyot that are reserved for kohanim and Levites).

He is president of the Jesselson Institute for Advanced Torah Studies at Bar-Ilan University and rabbi of the Menachem Zion Synagogue in the Old City of Jerusalem.

His rare recent visit to Montreal included a meeting with members of the Rabbinical Council of Canada (Montreal section), a public lecture at Congregation Beth Israel Beth Aaron, and speaking with supporters of the Canadian Friends of Bar-Ilan University, which sponsored his trip.

According to his interpretation of the commentaries of the sages of the first four centuries of the Common Era, "it is completely permissible" for women — and children — to read the Torah during worship.

"The basic texts say all people, including women and children, can be called to the Torah," he said in an interview.

"Like it or not, radical changes have taken place in society with regard to the status of women... Many Jewish women today are learned and are studying Torah at advanced

levels. There is a thirst among them for spirituality and a means of expressing their religious devotion. Excluding them is an affront to the dignity of the individual."

He said he understands the resistance to change, but believes it is inevitable.

Rabbi Sperber is viewed with great suspicion by his more traditional colleagues, and his assertions have even been called dangerous. He admits that his is very much a minority opinion, but he believes that in the not-too-distant future, it will be mainstream among the modern Orthodox.

"More and more congregations in Israel and the United States are gradually extending more opportunities to women. No doubt there will be more," he said.

"The Orthodox establishment is trying to stymie this, but the consequence is that they are strengthening streams of Judaism that they object to."

Although Halachah may contain no prohibition, Rabbi Sperber said women rarely were able to exercise their rights because most were illiterate in ancient times.

By the medieval era, Judaism had absorbed the larger society's attitude that women were "chattel" and not really independent persons. Women's participation in the synagogue came to be regarded as offensive to men, he said.

The British-born Rabbi Sperber holds a doctorate from University College in London in ancient history and Hebrew studies. He is descended from a long rabbinical dynasty, and his father settled in Wales before World War II, having come from Transylvania. The family was strongly Zionist and Rabbi Sperber made aliyah in 1968.

He said he respects the counter-argument that tradition or custom carries as much weight

as the letter of the law, but he can't accept it. "The social situation has changed and when circumstances change, tradition must change, too."

Those are fighting words in some circles.

"The opposition has been extremely respectful," he said. "We have agreed to disagree. The critics have found it very difficult to refute my arguments."

Banning women from synagogue honours is more political than legal at its root, he said.

"There is a feeling that this is an alien import from the feminist movement, that it is a slippery slope and that women will make greater demands, and the whole nature of synagogue worship will change. Give them an inch and they will take a mile," he said.

Rabbi Sperber said he doesn't support mixed seating during worship, but he said there's no need for men and women to be separate, for example, at weddings or lectures.

He also said he can't accept women being counted in a minyan, because that would be a violation of biblical text, which is not subject to change. Rabbi Sperber does believe women can act as advisers on all aspects of halachic issues, as well as sit on synagogue councils and religious affairs committees, and work as mashgichim.

As for women rabbis and judges of a rabbinical court, Rabbi Sperber said that "each issue has to be examined in its own right."

He sees the boundary between the left wing of Orthodoxy and the right wing of Conservative Judaism starting to blur, but he thinks any merger is unlikely because of Conservative Judaism's "much greater degree of flexibility in interpretation" of the law.

"Modern Orthodoxy is the true hope for Judaism," he said. "Unfortunately, it lacks a central leadership, and what leadership there is, is not particularly forceful or activist."

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by Mordecai Richler

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Press council rejects 'chassidic' cartoon complaint

BY JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The Quebec Press Council has rejected a complaint that an editorial cartoon published last year in *La Presse* was anti-Semitic or discriminatory.

Giovanni Bruno complained to the council about the June 18, 2007, cartoon by Serge Chapeau, which depicts Action Démocratique leader Mario Dumont as a chassidic Jew with earlocks, wearing a huge shtraiml.

He is saying: "...and next week, I will be courted by the nude cyclists of the Plateau. Don't miss that!"

The headline is "Mario Dumont courted by the Jewish community."

The cartoon was prompted by a story the paper had carried on the front page a few days earlier about its discovery that retired Liberal senator Leo Kolber had hosted Dumont, the new opposition leader, and other Jewish community leaders at a private meeting at his home.

In its decision, the council said: "While the cartoon may have shocked the plaintiff, it did not contravene the code of ethics,

and Mr. Bruno has not demonstrated in what way this cartoon would be anti-Semitic."

Bruno also charged that *La Presse* editor André Pratte had resorted to "falsehoods and half-truths" in his response to B'nai Brith Canada's public denunciation of the cartoon, a complaint the council also dismissed.

Pratte had responded that the cartoon's message was not directed at the Jewish community, but rather at Dumont.

La Presse lawyer Philippe-Denis Richard argued before the council that the cartoonist had the right to use satire to depict Dumont's visit with the Jewish community. His intention was to convey Dumont's readiness to look anywhere for support.

The news that Dumont had had dinner with Kolber prompted other cartoons in Quebec newspapers. *Le Devoir* depicted Dumont wearing a T-shirt bearing "MK" and "pareve," saying, "I am now certified kosher."

Sherbrooke's *La Tribune* had Dumont with dollar signs in his eyes as he greeted two men wearing kippot and earlocks, and carrying briefcases.

Tanenbaum donates \$1 million to rights museum

Senate approves legislation turning institution into national entity

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Special to the C/JN

WINNIPEG — Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment chairman Larry Tanenbaum last week donated \$1 million to Winnipeg's soon-to-be-built Canadian Museum for Human Rights, the brainchild of the late media mogul Israel Asper.

Tanenbaum was joined by Jim Temerty, founder of Northland Power, and Toronto lawyer Donald MacDonald, who also contributed \$1 million each. Their donations were announced March 6 at Toronto's Marshall McLuhan Catholic Secondary

School.

In making his gift, Tanenbaum said he hoped the museum will help Canadian young people understand human rights violations of the past and what they can do to improve human rights in the future.

He and Temerty, a Ukrainian-Canadian, both encouraged other Canadian businesspeople to donate to the museum.

MacDonald, the father of a disabled child, said he hopes the museum will help sensitize Canadians to the consequences of discriminating against people with disabilities.

In an interview, Asper's daughter, lawyer Gail Asper, chair of the Friends of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, told *The C/JN* she was "humbled by the tremendous support" of the three donors.

"The goal of the museum is to inspire people to take personal action and personal responsibility for the protection and advancement of human rights in Canada and around the world. The museum is not just a place where we are chronicling history," she said.

"The museum will contain the first



From left, Jim Temerty, Donald MacDonald, Gail Asper and Larry Tanenbaum celebrate the three \$1-million gifts to Canadian Human Rights Museum last week.

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national gallery in Canada dealing with the Holocaust. This is something that is long overdue for Canada. It's highly appropriate that the gallery dealing with the Holocaust and anti-Semitism today be in the museum for human rights," she added.

"It's important to remind people that the Holocaust happened not just because of Hitler's will to destroy the Jews, but because of the indifference of the world and complicity of the world. We have to inspire the citizens of the world to work together to ensure that the Holocaust doesn't happen again, and that Jews are not persecuted, and of course, that the world steps up and speaks out about any other people that are being persecuted."

Asper said the fundraising campaign for the museum, which is set to open in 2010, is at "a critical juncture."

She and the supporters of the museum have raised \$88 million out of the \$105 million in private donations needed before an April deadline, after which construction costs will go up, which could mean the project has to be scaled back.

Approximately \$17 million in private donations has come from Ontario.

Last week, legislation making the muse-

um a national entity passed the Senate. The bill previously passed in the House of Commons with the unanimous consent of all parties.

Asper hopes the legislation will spur a flurry of donations so that the remaining \$17 million in private capital can be raised.

The museum, which will be the first national museum in Canada outside the Ottawa region, is a \$265-million project. When the private capital is raised, the government of Canada will put forward \$100 million, the province of Manitoba will contribute \$40 million and the city of Winnipeg will contribute \$20 million.

The federal government will also contribute approximately \$22 million in annual operating funding.

The museum has the support of 50 ethno-cultural and human rights groups across Canada.

Asper said that "the idea is that the museum should be a hub of museums of conscience in the world."

She added: "The museum's website will reach tens of thousands of students around the world and the museum should be a catalyst for conferences on human rights issues."

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Food, Scrumptious Food

Food has been chef's passion since boyhood

By **SHELDON KIRSHNER**
Staff Reporter

Food, food, food. Anthony Rose, the executive chef at the Drake Hotel, always knew what he wanted, even at the tender age of 13.

With his sights set on the hospitality industry, Rose, now 34, used his bar mitzvah money to finance his studies at the California Culinary Academy in San Francisco.

Having suitably honed his skills, he returned to his native Toronto two years ago to take up

out at Schwartz's, the legendary Jewish-style delicatessen.

In a sense, food was in his blood.

His mother Linda, a real estate agent, is a great baker whose brisket dish and matzah ball soup elicit rave reviews. His father, Joel, a lawyer, is a wine connoisseur.

Rose's wife, Kymberly, the mother of their son, Simon, has managed two restaurants and is "an amazing baker" and a "fantastic cook." Recently, she launched Green Eggs Toronto, a food website.

"I always loved, loved food," said Rose, who cooked for his siblings, Randi, a cardiologist, and Lorne, a lawyer when they all lived at home.

And he fondly remembers his grandfather bringing steaming hot bagels for family breakfasts.

As a young man, Rose's tastes were rudimentary, to say the least. "My favourite meal was a hamburger slathered in ketchup," he admitted.

Rose, having abandoned the misbegotten idea of becoming a forest ranger, refined his taste buds as an apprentice chef at Toronto's Centro restaurant.

His mentors, David Lee and Marc Thuet, encouraged him to study at the California Culinary Academy, where he spent two years.

There he came under the influence of California cuisine.

"You support your local farmers and you cook with the seasons,"

Rose explained. "This is pretty much the way people have always cooked. It's fresher, it's supportive of the local economy, it's tastier and it's sustainable environmentally."

After graduating from the California Culinary Academy, he worked in a tavern in upstate New York and then, at among other places, at the Alias, a neighbourhood bistro in New York City's Lower East Side.

One of his mentors, Jonathan Waxman, taught him the meaning of simplicity and the importance of flavour.

Above all, he learned that you can't satisfy a customer unless you please yourself.

"You have to love what you're doing. Cooking is my passion. It's inside me. I've never really done anything else."

One of Toronto's few professional Jewish chefs, he serves up a medley of mouth-watering dishes at the Drake.

His appetizers range from mixed greens, tossed with candied hot walnuts, Macintosh apples and Benedictine blue cheese, to hot smoked trout, accompanied by polenta fries, mustard and garlic.

His "classics," or entrees, are the gamut from aged striploin with wild mushroom ragout and black truffle aioli to sauteed potatoes and parmesan dumplings with wild mushrooms, roast squash, sage, chili and chestnuts.

At home, he and his wife share the cooking. When they eat out, they tend to frequent Italian, Chinese and Mediterranean restaurants.

He hasn't plotted out his future, but he's certain that he'll be collaborating with Jeff Stober, the proprietor of the Drake. As Rose put it, "We work together very well."

BAKED ONTARIO GOAT CHEESE AND GRILLED RADICCHIO WITH WALNUT DRESSING

1 lb. soft unripened goat cheese
6 heads radicchio, cut in quarters-
1 1/2 cups deeply toasted walnuts
1 cup extra virgin olive oil
1/4 cup white wine vinegar
1 bunch oregano leaves
picked
juice from 2 lemons
salt and pepper
2 tbsp. chili flakes
extra virgin olive oil for
drizzle

Heat gas or charcoal grill to medium. Season radicchio quarters with salt and pepper, extra virgin olive oil and chili flakes. Grill radicchio on all sides until there is a little char, but they're still a little firm to the touch. Set aside, cool and rough cut.

In a blender, put 1/2 the walnuts, 1 cup extra virgin olive oil, vinegar, salt and pepper. Blend until smooth. Season with lemon juice, salt and pepper. Arrange radicchio on plate, crumble cheese on top, drizzle vinaigrette, scatter walnuts and finish with oregano leaves and a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil. Makes at least 10 servings.



Anthony Rose

his present position at the Drake, located on trendy Queen Street West.

Rose, an amiable fellow who talks, thinks and dreams about food, specializes in California cuisine, which celebrates fresh seasonal fare, and in farmhouse cooking, which emphasizes simplicity.

But being inventive, Rose has no problem venturing into new territory.

Last week, in honour of the Taste of Iceland festival - which runs until March 16 and publicizes Icelandic's first non-stop flight between Toronto and Reykjavik, set for May 2 - Rose collaborated with Icelandic chef Hakon Orvarsson to cook up a storm.

At a media luncheon at the Drake, the pair laid on a memorable meal of Nordic proportions.

An appetizer of pickled herring on Icelandic rye bread was followed by a first course of shredded salt cod soup and root vegetables garnished with horseradish.

The second course, consisting of grilled Ontario lamb, smoked lamb sausage, mashed rutabagas, potatoes and pickled red cabbage with caraway, was topped off by an unusual dessert, rhubarb tart.

"My Russian ancestors would have been familiar with that," he said.

Rose is no stranger to the kitchen. By the time he was 14, he was flipping pizzas in a pizzeria.

And when he studied geography and geology at Montreal's Concordia University, thinking he might be a forest ranger, he hung



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Family Matters

by
John Syrtash

B.A. (Hon.), LL.B.
Counsel

Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator
for 26 years

on his parents by the Court.

Question. My ex has been ordered by the court to make support payments. He is not doing so. I found out that he finally took on a job after two years and where he was working. I called FRO and they garnished his wages. After two weeks of garnishment he left/quit his job. He told me himself that he quit.

He is in arrears to me for over \$5,000. I found out today from our children that his common law wife has now gone to work. He is staying home and not working so that he doesn't have to pay support. How does this work due to the fact that we are not divorced and he is living common law? Can her wages be garnished?

Answer: If he quit work the Court would likely order the same amount of support as if he was still working at the job he quit.

Have the FRO enforce that, and if he defends on the basis that he quit his job he will get nowhere with a Judge. However, his common-law spouse is in no way liable, unless she is hiding his assets in her name. If she married him, she still would not be liable. Her wages cannot be garnished. If he doesn't pay, the FRO will likely suspend his driver's license, his passport and possibly have a Judge throw him in jail. Finally, your rights to child support do not change upon divorce.

Question. A father paid child support for his son faithfully until he turned 18, never missing a payment. At 18 the son stopped attending school and the court authorized child support payments to end.

Now the son is nearly 21 years of age and has come back to sue the father for payment of his OSAP loan, residence at college, books, etc. Is this allowed?

The father remarried and has two daughters, one going on 16 and the other one going on 18 and she will be going to college, provided father does not have to pay for the son.

Answer: I question whether the father would be responsible for repayment of a loan which is his son's obligation. But he may well be responsible for reimbursing his son for at least part of his education costs.

When child support ended at age 18, it was child support payable to the custodial parent, not child support per se. The child may well have retained his rights for support, including schooling, if he is still deemed to be dependent

Mr. Syrtash has now moved to a new law firm and has been appointed as Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, Ontario M5G 1E5. John Syrtash can be reached at (416) 642-5410, Call (416) 886-0359. Visit www.freenychild.com; www.spousalsupport.com; www.garfinzeidenberg.com.

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Food, Scrumptious Food

Celiacs can enjoy Purim treats, too

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to The C.J.N.

Purim is one of the few holidays when we can eat sweets with abandon. We feast on hamantaschen, cookies, chocolate treats and other goodies on this festive day. But not everyone can partake of the hamantaschen and cookies.

Celiacs, people who can't tolerate gluten, can't eat anything made with wheat, oats, rye, spelt or other glutinous grains. Since celiac disease is quite prevalent these days it's important to include some gluten-free treats among the mishloach manot offerings.

If there are no nut or peanut allergies, one can add chocolate covered almonds or pecans and/or chocolate-dipped dry fruit to the platter or basket, which would be suitable for most celiacs. However, finding sweet recipes without all-purpose flour or graham cracker crumbs can be a challenge. The following gluten-free recipes come from *Mamma Now Cooks Like This!: The Best of Susan Mendelson* (Whitecap Books, 2006) and could satisfy the sweet tooth of any dessert aficionado.

ROCKY ROADS

- 1 cup butter
- 2 lb. semi-sweet chocolate
- 1 1/2 cups hazelnuts
- 2 cups whole almonds
- 1 10-oz. bag mini-marshmallows or whole marshmallows cut in quarters

Preheat oven to 350 and lightly grease and flour a 13x9-inch baking pan. Melt butter and chocolate in the top of a

double boiler and allow to cool.

Toast nuts on a cookie sheet in preheated oven for 10 to 12 minutes or until golden. Cool. Stir marshmallows and nuts into slightly cooled chocolate mixture. Spread into prepared pan. Refrigerate for 2 to 3 hours. Cut into small squares. Makes 30 squares.

LYNN'S CHOCOLATE PUDDING CAKE

Susan Mendelson's twin sister Lynn Mendelson, also a cookbook author and caterer, is known for her baking. Her chocolate pudding cake is one of her signature recipes. She recommends using a high quality chocolate for this recipe. "The better the chocolate, the better the cake."

- 6 eggs
- 1/2 cup plus 1 tbsp. sugar
- 1 1/4 cups sugar
- 1/2 cup butter
- 1/4 cup water
- 14 oz. semi-sweet chocolate, chopped and melted

Preheat oven to 350 and line a 9x5-inch loaf pan with buttered parchment paper. Mix together eggs and 1/2 cup and 1 tbsp. of sugar.

Melt butter in water over medium-high heat, then add 1 1/4 cups sugar and stir until it dissolves. Add hot sugar mixture to egg mixture. Whisk melted chocolate into egg-sugar mixture. Pour batter into prepared pan. Run a couple of inches of water in a larger pan and place loaf pan inside it. Bake 75 to 80 minutes, until set. Chill. Garnish with whipped cream (optional). Makes 10 to 12 servings.

ALMOND FUDGE TORTE

Mendelson makes this recipe with all-purpose flour, but she has also adapted the recipe for an uncle who has celiac disease, substituting rice flour for wheat flour.

- 1/2 cup almonds, toasted and ground
- 1/2 cup rice flour
- 1 cup butter
- 7 oz. semi-sweet chocolate
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 1/2 tsp. coffee liqueur
- 4 eggs

Preheat oven to 350 and grease and flour a 9-inch round cake pan.

Combine and set aside nuts and rice flour. Melt butter and chocolate. Let cool for a couple of minutes, then add sugar.

In a separate bowl, mix eggs and liqueur and then add to chocolate mixture. Now add dry ingredients. Bake in prepared pan for 25 minutes. Do not overbake. Cool. Place cake on rack with plate underneath. Pour Lazy Gourmet Glaze (recipe follows) over top and gently spoon over sides. Decorate with 8 to 10 whole almonds. Makes 10 servings.

LAZY GOURMET GLAZE

- 1/4 cup butter
- 4 oz. semi-sweet chocolate
- 2 tbsp. whipping cream
- 1 tbsp. coffee liqueur

Melt butter and chocolate together. Mix cream and liqueur and blend into melted chocolate. Makes about 1/2 cup.



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Hamas admits training in Iran, Syria

By RUTH MARGALIT

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JERUSALEM — Hamas has sent hundreds of militants to train in Iran and Syria in the past two years, a commander in the Iz al-Din al-Qassam military wing of Hamas said in a rare interview with *The Sunday Times* of London.

Speaking on the record but on condition of anonymity, the Hamas commander, already a senior figure in his late 20s, told the British newspaper

that Hamas had been sending militants to Iran for training in both field tactics and weapons technology since Israel pulled out of the Gaza Strip in 2005. Others, he said, go to Syria for more basic training.

"We have sent seven 'courses' of our fighters to Iran," he said in the interview. "During each course, the group is trained to increase our capacity to fight."

The most promising members of each group stay longer for an advanced course and return as trainers themselves, he said. "We send our best brains to Tehran. It would be a waste of money to send them

and then have them come back with nothing."

The report confirms assessments made by Shin Bet Director Yuval Diskin last week in a speech in front of the Knesset foreign affairs and defence committee. "Hundreds of Hamas members have been sent to Iran for training, and not training periods of a week, two weeks or a month, but for long-term, high-quality training," committee member MK Zvi Hendel, of the National Union party, quoted Diskin as saying last Tuesday.

The Sunday Times' report suggests that these

assessments were right and that so far, 150 members of Hamas' military wing have completed training in Tehran, where they study for between 45 days and six months at a closed military base under the command of the elite Revolutionary Guard force.

An additional 150 are currently undergoing training in Tehran, the commander said. Conditions at the base are strict, he said, adding that a further 650 Hamas militants have trained in Syria under instructors who were themselves trained in Iran. Sixty-two Hamas militants are currently in Syria, he said.

'Monstrous attack must bring about major change'

Continued from page 1

Regardless of any differences of opinion, we are all part of this pain."

The yeshiva occupies an almost mythical place in the psyche of the national religious camp. The movement that subsequently became known as the "settler" movement was born there.

Rabbi Avraham Kook, who founded the yeshiva in 1925, was the founder of religious Zionism. His son, Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook, headed the yeshiva for decades and famously told his students, "Close the Talmud and go settle in Judea and Samaria."

And settle they did.

It was from the study halls of the yeshiva that a generation would establish Jewish settlements in the hills of the West Bank and sand dunes of Gaza.

Many of the boys who study at the yeshiva travel there from their homes in West Bank Jewish settlements that their mothers and fathers helped establish. Among the yeshiva's graduates are the elite of the settler movement: rabbis, prominent scholars and Knesset members.

In announcing the tragic deaths, the yeshiva released a statement in which its rabbis described their institution as "the great Torah centre, in the holy of holies of the nation, the heart of the State of Israel."

Just three weeks before the Six Day War in 1967, on Israel's 19th Independence Day, Rabbi Zvi Kook used his address to his students to bemoan the loss of the biblical heartland in the West Bank.

Nearly weeping, he asked, "Where is our Jericho? Where is our Nablus?"

His students were stunned by his unusual lamentations and seemingly without warning found themselves in those same places within weeks of his talk.

"Within religious Zionist circles, that speech was very quickly seen as an outburst of prophecy," said Yossi Klein Halevi, a senior fellow at the Adelson Institute for Strategic Studies at the Shalem Center, a Jerusalem think-tank. "The Mercat Harav yeshiva's significance is far deeper for the religious community than politics. The politics are an expression of prophecy."

"So this is an assault of place of prophecy," he said, referring to the attack.

Many of the religious Zionist community's rabbis have called on the Olmert government to take a more decisive, military stand to protect Israel.

"Within that community there is deep anger, even rage, at what is perceived to be the government's inability to turn the tragedy into strength, and for the religious Zionist community, it compounds the tragedy," Klein Halevi said.

"What that community wants to see is a decision by the government to go to war with the intention of winning. Whether that's against Hamas or Hezbollah now or in the future, whether it relates to Iran, the religious Zionist community is desperate for a government decision to fight the enemies of Israel with resolve."

The yeshiva in its statement reflected this sentiment, saying: "This monstrous attack must bring about a major and substantial change. We call upon and demand from the government of Israel to wake up and to fight to the end, without mercy, against the enemies of Israel."



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wife of HaRav Yitzchok Kerzner ז"ל
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Our condolences go out to the entire family.
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Israel & the Jewish World

Terror strikes Jerusalem yeshiva

© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd

A gunman stormed into the Yeshivat Mercatz Harav complex in west Jerusalem on March 6, mowing down students who had gathered in the library for the traditionally intensive pre-Shabbat classes.

The gunman was killed by a police SWAT team, according to Israeli media reports.

Eight boys – seven of whom were aged 15 to 19 and one aged 26 – were killed and nine more wounded when the gunman entered the yeshiva in Jerusalem's Kiryat Moshe neighbourhood and opened fire in the library. Three of the wounded were in critical condition.

Seven of the students injured were still hospitalized at Hadassah University Hospital, Ein Kerem and at Shaare Zedek Medical Center, Jerusalem, as of last weekend.

As of the weekend, the condition of the three students at Hadassah Ein Kerem had improved, but one was still in intensive care for observation. A hospital spokesperson said all of the students had multiple gunshot wounds.

Hamas initially claimed responsibility for last Thursday's attack, but later retracted it.

Ala Abu Dahim, 25, from the village of Jabal Mukhbar – a neighbourhood where Palestinian residents hold Israeli ID cards that give them freedom of movement in Israel – was shot and killed during the massacre.

Several residents of Jabal Mukhbar said he had been a driver at the yeshiva he attacked. His family set up a mourning tent last Friday and hung green Hamas flags outside their home.

As of Monday, eight people had been arrested by the Israeli authorities on suspicion of abetting Abu Dahim.

Mercatz Harav is the ideological seedbed for Israel's national religious movement, which combines Orthodox piety with pioneering Zionism. Many of the yeshiva's alumni have gone on to top posts in politics and the military.

Witnesses reported blood splashes on the pavement outside the seminary, where anxious relatives milled among ambulance staff and security forces.

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas condemned the yeshiva shooting. Meanwhile, Israel said it would continue U.S.-backed peace talks with the Palestinians despite the attack.

In Canada, Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier offered condolences to the victims' families and to the Israeli government.

"Canada condemns this terrorist act in the strongest possible terms. It does nothing to advance the Palestinian cause," he said.

"Canada calls on all Palestinian leaders to reject such atrocious terrorist acts, which are contrary to the peace process."

Calling it a "senseless tragedy," Liberal opposition leader Stéphane Dion extended his sympathies to those affected and said that his party "joins the international community in condemning such deplorable acts of violence."

Montreal Liberal MP Irwin Cotler, who recently was asked to head a new international coalition to combat anti-Semitism, addressed the House of Commons the day after the attack and called for the "culture of hate" in the Middle East to end.

"It is this state-sanctioned hate and incitement that leads to Hamas missiles targeting Israeli civilians in Sderot and Ashkelon, and terrorist attacks in Jerusalem," he said.

On its website, the NDP called the loss of life "tragic" and said the party "condemns all violence against civilians and calls on all sides to categorically reject using violence against civilian populations."

North American Jewish leaders also decried the attack.

Speaking to *The C/N* last Friday, Moshe Ronen, chair of the Canada-Israel Committee, urged the government and the people of Canada to understand the "toxic theology of hate" that's being inculcated by extremists in Israel.

"After this horrific attack, there's a need for Canadians to understand what Israel is faced with... the ongoing attacks and the culture of terror we have to struggle with," Ronen said. "Wanting and encouraging a peace process is one thing, but a [real] understanding of the situation Israel is faced with has to be the framework that the government and opposition uses to engineer their [policies]."

In the United States, the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations – the central co-ordinating body for American Jewry – called the attack "barbaric" and said it demonstrates "the need for Israel to take whatever measures are necessary to prevent, deter and destroy those who perpetrate such heinous crimes."

For some members of the Jewish community in Canada, the tragedy hit close to home.

Nadav Eliyahu Samuels, a 15-year-old boy who holds Canadian, British and Israeli citizenship and is a student at Mercatz Harav, was shot several times in the legs and chest.

The *National Post* reported that he was placed in intensive care at Jerusalem's Hadassah Ein Kerem hospital, and although he was in stable condition last week, he was breathing with the help of a ventilator.

Nadav, whose father is a Toronto native who moved to Israel

in 1983, made annual trips to Toronto with his family to visit his grandparents, Sandra and Laurie Samuels.

York University Professor Martin Lockshin, who studied at Yeshivat Mercatz Harav for four years from 1970 to 1974, has fond memories of his time there.

"The years that I spent at Mercatz Harav were some of the richest years of my life from an intellectual and religious perspective," Lockshin told *The C/N* in an e-mail from Jerusalem, where he is on sabbatical.

"This was a cowardly attack on defenceless teenagers who were just trying to study Torah and develop their minds."

Meir Buchnick, a 24-year-old from Hashmonaim, a city between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, is currently spending a year at Kollel Torah MiTzion in Montreal studying and teaching there.

He said he studied at Yeshivat Mercatz Harav as part of a high school program that gives students the opportunity to study there for days and even weeks at a time.

Buchnick said that when he first heard the news, he was shocked.

"Because I live in Israel... this one hit really, really close. For anyone who lives in Israel, he knows how big and important this yeshiva is. It is the core of all the seminaries in Israel. To hear that something like that happened... I was in total shock," he said.

"I know a few people who still study there. Thank God, none of them were killed or injured. One of the first things I had to do yesterday was make phone calls to find out and hear if, God forbid, something happened to a friend. Thank God none of them were hurt."

Buchnick added that in spite of continued attacks on Israelis, they must stay strong.

"Mercatz Harav was founded by Rav [Avraham Yitzhak HaKohen] Kook and it was

Rav Kook's inspiration and guidance that taught us that no matter what, even with all the hardships and with all the pain, we still have to continue going on. The terrorists want to break our spirit and we can't let that happen."

Rabbi Reuven Tradburks of Toronto's Kehillat Shaarei Torah has three children currently living and studying in Israel.

As he does each week, Rabbi Tradburks sent out a mass e-mail to his congregation last Thursday with Shabbat announcements and his thoughts. Last week, he wrote about the young victims of the attack.

"The first thing I think of is my own children. Knowing they are not in danger is a relief. But reading the news is not easy. I have been in Mercatz Harav. When they say the terrorist entered the library, I think they mean the beis midrash. There can be hundreds of people sitting and studying there. It is not hard to visualize the helplessness of these high school boys, the chaos."

Rabbi Tradburks told *The C/N* that his daughter, who lives about a 20-minute walk from the yeshiva, heard the ambulances and immediately called home.

"She called our other kids and within minutes, they called us, hoping it was before we had heard the news, just to tell us everything was OK," he said.

"My son, Elie, is at Yeshivat Hakotel and one of the boys who was killed was the son of one of the teachers at Yeshivat Hakotel. Yochai Lipschitz was one of the boys."

He said that his other son, Yosef, who studies at the Mir Yeshiva near Meah Shearim, learned about the massacre when another student announced that he wanted to recite psalms for the dead.

Rabbi Tradburks said that his three children attended the funeral for the eight victims at Mercatz Harav before the families of the victims went their separate ways for the individual funerals.

Jerusalem bore the brunt of the Palestinian suicide bombing campaign of 2002 and 2003, but since then, effective Israeli countermeasures have largely stemmed the bloodshed in the capital.

Many Jerusalemites have voiced exasperation at the slow pace at which the West Bank security fence is going up in the city due to bureaucratic holdups and legal challenges by Palestinians who stand to lose land to the project.

"This tragedy shows the enormous need to attend to the fence," said Jerusalem Mayor Uri Lupolianski.

With files from *The C/N*'s Sheri Shefa and Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf, and JTA.

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Israel & the Jewish World

Shooting sparks closure

Israel shut down the West Bank and the Gaza Strip after last week's terror attack on the Mercat HaRav yeshiva in Jerusalem. The closure was launched at 1 a.m. last Friday, just hours after a killer walked into the cafeteria of the yeshiva in west Jerusalem and opened fire, killing eight students before being killed in retaliatory fire. Police also limited access to Friday prayers at the Al Aqsa and Dome of the Rock mosques in Jerusalem's Old City to women and men 45 or older and bearing identity cards from inside Israel. Thousands of police were deployed

throughout Jerusalem.

Arabs may repeal offer

The Arab League is considering a review of its 2002 plan for comprehensive peace with Israel. Arab League foreign ministers meeting last week in Cairo deplored Israel's recent offensive in the Gaza Strip and said regional peace prospects were in doubt. Under the 2002 offer, Israel would be recognized by the Arab world in exchange for giving up land captured in the 1967 Six Day War and agreeing to a solution to the Palestinian refugee problem. Israel has welcomed the initiative but balked at placing preconditions on peace talks.



Israel Briefs

The Arab League stopped short of saying it would withdraw the offer, or of calling on the Palestinian Authority to curtail U.S.-sponsored peace talks with Israel.

New sanctions on Iran

Israel welcomed the new round of sanctions against Iran last Monday, voicing hope that it would succeed in getting Iran to abandon its uranium enrichment efforts. The UN Security Council stepped up sanctions aimed at curbing Iran's nuclear program. By a vote of 14 in favour and one abstention, the Security Council decided March 3 to impose a third round of sanctions against Tehran, including financial blacklisting and an expanded ban on selling technologies to Iran that could

be used for military projects. Iran defied the two previous sanctions resolutions, in 2006 and 2007, though independent analysts said its economy was hit hard by the measures.

Carter, Annan offer to help

Jimmy Carter and Kofi Annan have offered to broker a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas. The former U.S. president and former UN secretary general recently proposed to Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert that they act as go-betweens in truce talks between the Jewish state and the ruling Palestinian Islamist faction, Army Radio reported. Should they come, Carter and Annan would require Israeli permission to enter Gaza, which has been under embargo since Hamas took power in

2006. According to Israel's Army Radio, Jerusalem opposes the initiative but has yet to make a final decision.

3 held in bomb plot

Philippine authorities said they foiled an alleged plot to bomb the Israeli and U.S. embassies in the country. Three Middle Eastern suspects were arrested under counter-terrorism regulations, Manila officials said. Associated Press quoted local sources as saying there was intelligence indicating the suspects planned to attack the Israeli and U.S. embassies, as well as possibly the British and Australian missions. The Philippines has an active Al Qaeda wing, Jemaah Islamiyah.

— with files from JTA

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Expressions of interest should be directed to J.P. Carr, Chairman, by e-mail at jpcarr@jewishvancouverisland.ca by 5 pm, April 11, 2008.

JFVVI reserves the right not to accept or advance the Expressions of Interest received.

Israel & the Jewish World

Captivity, beating of French Jew echoes horrors of Halimi

By BRETT KLINE
JTA

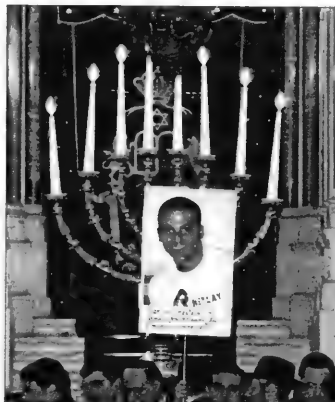
PARIS — French authorities are saying the recent captivity and beating of a 19-year-old Jewish man in a Paris suburb was committed by delinquents, related to money and fuelled by alcohol. But the Jewish community here is instinctively linking the Feb. 22 incident to the torture and murder two years ago of Ilan Halimi, a 23-year-old French Jewish man.

"Everyone is thinking about Ilan," said pharmacist Danielle Brami in the Belleville district of Paris. "We know very well that the two incidents are not the same. But people were very scared when Ilan was killed, and now this incident also provokes fear — fear that Jews are in danger."

In last month's incident, Mathieu Roumi was held for nine hours in a garage by six men of various ethnic and religious backgrounds aged 17 to 25. They handcuffed Roumi, then beat and kicked him over money he allegedly owed them.

They then scribbled "sale juif" — "dirty Jew" — with a marker on his face while making references to Halimi, who was kidnapped and tortured for three weeks before he was dumped on the streets. He died shortly thereafter.

Roumi was held in Bagneux, where he and his attackers lived, and the same suburb just south of Paris where



A memorial ceremony for Ilan Halimi at "La Grande Synagogue de la Victoire" in Paris on February 23, 2006.

Halimi was killed by a gang calling itself the Barbarians. More than two dozen people, notably gang leader Youssef Fofana, go on trial soon for Halimi's murder.

Unlike Halimi, however, Roumi knew his aggressors and went with them voluntarily to an apartment to discuss their financial dispute before he was taken to a nearby garage.

The alleged assailants were arrested Feb. 27 and held for several days before being formally charged with violence linked to the religion and alleged sexual orientation of the victim, acts of torture, and sequestration by an organized gang.

Believing Roumi was a homosexual, they had forced him to swallow cigarette butts and suck on a condom-covered stick. They also wrote "dirty fag" on his face and yelled their admiration for

Fofana.

Jewish community officials say the fact that an ordinary argument over money in the neighbourhood could escalate into a violent captivity with an anti-Semitic nature is dangerous.

"There is a kind of banalization of anti-Semitic acts going on here," said Joel Mergui, the head of the French Consistoire, the Jewish body of religious affairs. "These guys knew each other from the neighbourhood, but they handcuffed him for nine hours and scribbled 'dirty Jew' on his face."

Richard Prasquier, the president of the Jewish umbrella organization CRIF, said Roumi had a non-Jewish mother and his father "is not connected to the Jewish community."

Prasquier was only informed of the affair on Wednesday morning, though police had told the Jewish community's protection service when officials confirmed the anti-Semitic character of the violence.

The CRIF head said there is nothing to indicate any breakdown in communications.

"The police had to conduct their investigation, and they did their job," he said.

Police said the six suspects, who reportedly admitted their actions to police, were unemployed and have had trouble with the law.

Roumi has been out of school for two years and has no criminal record, but he has been involved in cases of theft, the sale of stolen objects and vandalism, his father, Jean-Paul, was quoted as saying in the *Le Figaro* newspaper Thursday.

"These guys are all delinquents and apparently not too bright," said Armand Funaro, an osteopath in upper Belleville. "It used to be that petty criminal activity in tough suburbs stayed just that, but now there is this anti-Semitic element, and it is scary. And Bagneux is a nice place, not at all a ghetto."

"In Tunisia, these things did not happen to us, but in secular, republican France they happen."

Funaro became more agitated as he went on. His voice rising, he said, "The public school system is failing. The kids who become losers are ignored by the system and by the general public. The Gallic French have always ignored petty criminality in the suburbs, and if it turns anti-Semitic often enough, they will ignore that also. And that is bad for the Jews in France."

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Arts & Travel

Former yeshiva student finds hip world-music band

By RHONDA SPIVAK

Special to the CJN

WINNIPEG — Basya Schechter, who was born into a haredi family of seven children in Borough Park, Brooklyn, taught herself to play guitar when she was 19 years old.

"I was never taught to read or write music, and I still can't," says Schechter, but that hasn't stopped her from making music that is rich, innovative and highly original.

Today, the singer, songwriter and multi-instrumentalist performs a unique blend of world music. With her band Pharaoh's Daughter, which she formed in the mid-1990s, she fuses Middle Eastern and Jewish chassidic sounds, giving it a hip, modern edge.

Last month, Schechter performed for the first time in Canada at a sold-out concert presented by the Rady Jewish Community Centre in Winnipeg.

As a child, Schechter grew up singing *zmirot* at the Shabbat table with her family and was surrounded by Hebrew music that her father played at home. She went to an all-girls yeshiva, and there spent her time inventing six-part harmonies with her friends. The prayer-filled cadences of those childhood years are woven into her music, which is layered and complex, and frequently has a chanting quality to it.

"As children in yeshiva, we translated texts from Hebrew to Yiddish, from one language that we didn't know into another language we didn't know. Even though I didn't really understand what I was doing, I liked it. I liked the chanting, and it has never left me," Schechter says.

She eventually widened her horizons when as a teenager she went on a tour of Israel, Africa and Turkey with her guitar in hand. The rhythms of her inspirational journey, to Egypt, Central Africa, Kurdistan and Greece, resonate in her music, and her extensive travels have produced music with a scintillating world beat vibe.

Pharaoh's Daughter is good-sized band. Schechter plays oud (a Middle East string instrument), guitar and percussion, as well as singing; her bandmates include keyboardist Jason Lindner; accordion player and vocalist Uri Sharlin; and drummer Yuval Lion. Daphna Mor plays recorders and other instruments, along with contributing vocals. A bassist, a violinist and others round out the band.

The name Pharaoh's Daughter is an English translation of Schechter's first name, Basya.

"Basya means daughter of God, and is the name that was given to Pharaoh's daughter in the Bible when she rescued Moses as a baby in the river in Egypt," she says.

The title of Schechter's latest album, her

fifth, is *Haran*, a place she visited in Turkey. "Haran is where Abraham first started his journey in the Bible, and that's why I was drawn to the name," she says.

In *Haran*, Schechter sings in biblical Hebrew, Aramaic, Hebrew and Yiddish, and the influence of her Sephardi upbringing is evident in many of her selections.

For example, her soulful rendition of *Kah Ribon*, sung in Aramaic, is a prayer titled *Ya Ribon (Master of the Universe)*, written by a Sephardi rabbi. It was a *zmirot* that was sung around her Shabbat table.

In another innovative selection, she uses passages from *Shir Hashirim*, which Schechter says she chose "because both the male and female appear to be equal." At other times, the words in her music appear to be a collage of Hebrew and Aramaic texts.

One of Schechter's personal favourites from *Haran* is the Hebrew *Yonati*. "I like it because it feels round. I feel like I can float on the music. It's new and it's different," she says.

In an earlier album, titled *Exile*, the songs Schechter wrote are in English. The title track of the album is about giving birth. It has a particularly beautiful melody that sounds like folk music mixed with "dye, dye, dye" sounds that are typical of chassidic niggunim.

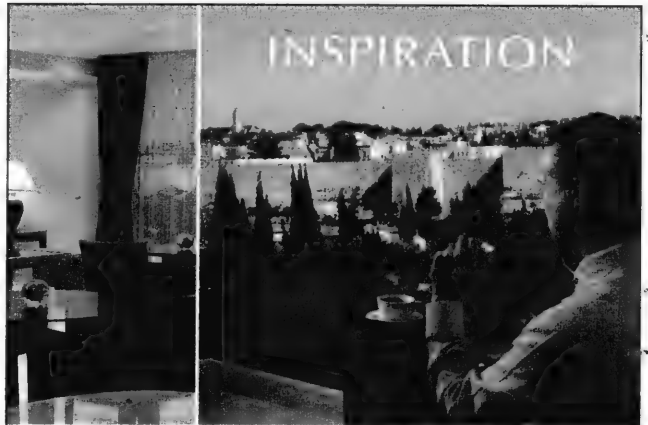
Pharaoh's Daughter has performed in New York, at Central Park's Summer Stage Series and at the Lincoln Center; in London, England's prestigious Queen Elizabeth Hall; and this past December the band toured Israel and was featured at the Sephardic Music Festival.

Schechter expects to be back performing in Israel this summer. "All of my siblings live in Yerushalayim, and my parents are also making aliyah," she says. She considers herself the "rebel" in the family because she is not Orthodox and prefers to live in the heart of the New York, where she's close to the music scene, rather than in Jerusalem. But, she says, "my family listens to my music."

When she's not touring or performing, Schechter plays in the ensemble that accompanies Friday night services in New York at Congregation B'nai Jeshurun.



Basya Schechter



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Illuminating interviews paint candid portrait of Woody Allen

By BILL GLADSTONE
Special to The CJN

Woody Allen once famously quipped: "I don't want to achieve immortality through my work. I want to achieve it through not dying."

Whether or not he achieves that wish, his name has already attained the poetic equivalent of immortality due to his extraordinary film career. Although the celebrated writer-director has often portrayed himself on screen as a comical Jewish-intellectual "nebbish" from New York, full of existential doubts, fears and paranoia, he has carved a distinguished niche for himself in American culture and the modern cinema.

My personal list of favourite Woody Allen films includes *Broadway Danny Rose* (1984), *Hannah and Her Sisters* (1986), *Radio Days* (1987), *Husbands and Wives* (1992) and *Sweet and Lowdown* (1999). I consider 2005's *Match Point*, starring Scarlett Johansson and Jonathan Rhys Meyers, to be his finest production. Sharply written and beautifully directed, it is superior even to the admirable *Crimes and Misdemeanors* (1989), which shares a similar plot.

In both films, a married man involved in an adulterous relationship murders his increasingly demanding lover and gets away with it, opening up central existential issues dealing with fate, luck, justice and the existence – or non-existence, as Allen often puts it – of God. A significant difference between them is that Allen played a minor comic character in *Crimes and Misdemeanors*, but wrote himself entirely out of the script of *Match Point*.

His filmography also includes *Play It Again, Sam* (1972), *Annie Hall* (1977), *Manhattan* (1979), *Stardust Memories* (1980), *Zelig* (1983), *The Purple Rose of Cairo* (1985), *Everyone Says I Love You* (1996) and at least a dozen others, almost any of which might have catapulted another director to the uppermost ranks of critical attention.

Allen made a string of mediocre and poorly received films in the mid-1990s. The period coincided with his breakup with his longtime partner, Mia Farrow, upon her discovery that he was having an affair with her adopted daughter, Soon-Yi Previn, whom he eventually married. Throughout the scandal, Allen kept to his rigorous output of roughly one film per year, but the quality dropped off – astonishing many loyal fans who thought his artistic vision could never fail him. Some critics assert his dry spell lasted about a decade and hailed *Match Point* as a sign that he had finally returned to form and was again at the top of his game.

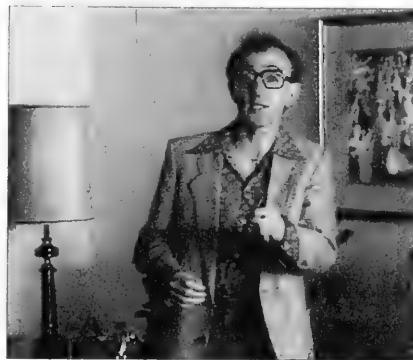
Eric Lax, an American writer on the arts and author of a now-outdated biography of Allen, has conducted dozens of illuminating interviews with Allen on dozens of film sets, in hotel rooms and other locations over the last 30 years. An astute critic with no shortage of intelligent questions and observations, Lax's wide-ranging conversations with Allen provide a candid portrait of the artist in his own words. Film buffs and fans of Woody Allen will appreciate this opportunity to learn more about the man, his methods of filmmaking, his opinions on art and, above all, his means of nurturing his own prolific creativity.

Allen views his own abilities without delusions and with much apparent realism. He succinctly expresses his limitations as an actor as adeptly as any critic. He recognizes that he is a limited comic type on screen who would lack credibility as the protagonist of a serious drama. Consequently, he prefers to write himself out of scripts entirely (as in *Match Point*) or else to create only peripheral parts for himself (as in *Crimes and Misdemeanors*).

Despite his natural comic gift, he considers comedy less emotionally satisfying than serious drama. However, he has had limited critical success with his repeated forays into more serious, Bergmanesque-type cinematic landscapes, as in *Interiors* (1978), *Stardust Memories* and *Shadows and Fog* (1991). Serious drama is a higher form of art, he says.

"When comedy approaches a problem, it kinks it but it doesn't resolve it. Drama works through it in a more emotionally fulfilling way. I don't want to sound brutal, but there's something immature, something second-rate in terms of satisfaction when comedy is compared to drama. And it will always be that way. It will never, never have the stature of *Death of a Salesman* or *A Streetcar Named Desire* or *Long Day's Journey into Night*."

Allen utters high praise for cinematic masters such as Bergman and Fellini, but has no compunction against knocking – as if with a clumsy elbow – the great Bard of English literature from his traditional pedestal. Only a refreshingly creative mind like his could observe, with compelling originality, that Shakespeare is an unskillful playwright. Allen admits that he admires "not so much [Shakespeare's] plays but the words of the plays. They're written so beautifully. I don't find any of his comedies funny, but the speech is so magnificent, it's so gorgeous, that you're overcome by it. But I find the plays dumb and bumpkin-oriented and aimed at the groundlings. The serious plays have some really beautiful moments, but often they're not constructed at all well. But you sit through them because the language is so elevated."



Woody Allen in a scene from *Broadway Danny Rose*

Surprisingly, Allen says he has an innate sense of movie-making but no literary equivalent. "I didn't absorb literature in the same way as I absorbed movies or had comedy built into me. So when I finish a manuscript I have to show it to people and ask, 'Is this a book? Is this a novel?' It wouldn't surprise me if a person said, 'You have not written a novel. You have a good outline for a novel,' or 'This has the makings of a good short story.'"

Allen writes with pen and notepad, often producing many pages of near-finished scenes at a sitting. Although he seems to write quickly, he spends many hours deliberating about character and plot, and "the thinking is the writing; the writing is (just) the writing down." When he pens a comic line of dialogue, he often laughs as if hearing it for the first time. "I'm in the room and I write the joke or say the joke out loud and it's coming from my unconscious, so I'm hearing it and I laugh at it like a stranger." He has an extraordinary ear for dialogue and is known for his rare ability to write female and male characters with equal depth.

Another intriguing element of his creative *modus operandi* is his insistence that his cast members see only the pages of the script that they need in order to learn their dialogue; as in real life, his characters are otherwise kept in the dark about what is going to happen. "No one has ever complained to me about not getting a full script," he explained.

Indeed, big-name actors are usually thrilled to be invited to read for a part, even though Allen's production company cannot offer the mega-millions they might receive from a big-budget production. Even without the big bucks, many grab the chance to be part of Allen's cinematic "immortality."

Regarding his own artistic accomplishments, Allen acknowledges that he has had every opportunity to make a cinematic masterpiece, but has yet to do so, because he lacks the necessary determination and depth of vision. "I've had carte blanche for 35 years and I've never made a great film," he said. "I'd like to make a great film provided it doesn't conflict with my dinner reservation."

Celebrity hasn't turned Allen's head or made him a different person, it turns out: mostly, it just gets in the way of what he wants to do. "After I had my first successes, which I needed to get established, it didn't mean much to me," he said. "Not that I'm an ingrate. I'm thankful for my luck, but to me, no success or honour bestowed on me can alleviate my genetic gloom."

Conversations with Woody Allen: His Films, the Movies, and Moviemaking (Knopf) splices together many discussions between Lax and Allen. They are arranged thematically according to how Allen constructs movies – conception, writing, casting, shooting, directing, editing, scoring – with the result that there is a cut-and-paste quality to the flow of ideas. Reading everything Allen has to say about *Match Point*, for example, means flipping to more than a dozen pages throughout the book. Had this been a movie, I'm sure that Allen would have found a better way of editing it.

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Arts & Travel

Purim story becomes a musical at Beth Tikvah

By SHERRY SMITHER
Special to The C.J.N.

With Purim around the corner, Beth Tikvah Synagogue's music director, Eyal Bitton, saw it as the perfect opportunity for an in-concert performance of his play about Queen Esther.

In *Miss Persia: The Musical in Concert*, the Montreal-born Bitton takes a light-hearted approach to the biblical story of Esther. The heroine, Hadassah, a young woman living in ancient Persia, takes on the identity of Esther to win the Miss Persia pageant and become queen.

"The seeds of this show actually started in 1997, while I was working on a musical *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* put on by the Yiddish Theatre of Montreal. I remember being very stimulated by this new field - I just tied onto musical theatre the year before," said Bitton, 38.

"I never really grew up being a fan of musical theatre, but in 1996 I was starting to have ideas for a very dramatic musical, which turned into *The Child* [similar to a King Arthur legend] and at the same time I had this burst of creativity.

"I wondered what Dreamworks and Disney's take on the Esther story would be. I've always enjoyed *Aladdin* and *Beauty and the Beast* because of their style and wide audience appeal," he said.

Striving to use Jewish tradition and history as a springboard, Bitton believes Jewish literature to be "ancient and rich, starting with the Bible's wonderful timeless stories that are universal. Having resonance with Christians as well as Jews, why not use them as source material?"

Bitton began creating *Miss Persia* in 1997 but got sidetracked writing and producing *The Child*, *King David the Musical* and *Moses the Musical Saga*.



Eyal Bitton, Beth Tikvah's music director, wrote the musical *Miss Persia: The Musical in Concert* and his wife, Michèle Tredger, plays the lead role of Hadassah/Esther.

"At one point I had to put it [*Miss Persia*] aside because *The Child* came together more quickly. Every year there was always a project

that took priority. But since I've been at Beth Tikvah [nearly five years] developing programming with the musical committee and

Cantor Tibor Kovari, I thought this year might be the right occasion for this show."

After presenting his idea to the synagogue's music committee last September, Bitton revised and wrote additional solos, duets and chorus numbers in his two-act play centring on the strong, courageous female character, Hadassah/Esther, played by Michèle Tredger, his wife.

The couple met when Tredger auditioned in Montreal for one of Ayal's plays. Recognizing her talent, he enlisted her help in recording a demo tape of *Miss Persia* in 1998.

Tredger, a Quebec City native, has performed in Second City's production of *Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding*; *HMS Pinafore* (at the Drayton Festival Theatre in Drayton, Ont.); *King David the Musical* (Winter Garden Theatre); and *Moses the Musical Saga*. She co-hosted *The Producers* and *The Directors*, which aired on Bravo and Star TV.

Miss Persia's 15-member cast includes Vancouver actor-singer Martin Lindquist as Haman. The production's keyboardist is Greg Gibson, the associate musical director of Lorraine Kimsa Theatre for Young People.

Miss Persia will be presented by Musica Beth Tikvah on Sunday, March 16 at 7:30 p.m. It will be performed in concert, without costumes or a set. "It's like a stage reading - the full cast is on stage during the entire production, stepping forward if they're involved in a particular scene," Bitton says.

"If it's a really good show it can be performed on an empty stage without costumes. I don't want people to judge this based on the set. Let the work stand on its own."

For tickets to *Miss Persia*, call 416-221-3433, ext. 354. General admission \$25; reserved section \$36; students and seniors \$18; and under 18, \$10.

For more information, visit www.musica-bethtikvah.com and www.eyalbitton.com.

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Arts & Travel



Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

NEARLY 100 PARTICIPANTS GEARING UP FOR BETH TZEDEC'S 'SHOW OF SHOWS'

For the third year in a row, Beth Tzedec Congregation is busy working on its "event of the year" – an original Purim family musical titled *The Sound of Purim*, production of which involves a 12-piece orchestra, state-of-the-art lighting and sound, colourful costumes, creative sets and an army of nearly 100 participants, onstage and behind the scenes.

The high-energy show was concocted by Cantor Simon Spiro, known in Europe as "The British Jazz Singer" for his ability to combine successful careers in both the Jewish world and the world of pop music, and his wife, Aliza, an award-winning singer-songwriter from the United States. Together, they manage to infuse the members of the company (who range in age from five to 78) with infectious enthusiasm that spills easily from the stage to the audience.

The Sound of Purim combines elements of the Purim story with *The Sound of Music* and features fresh orchestrations adapted by Spiro from the Rodgers and Hammerstein melodies. "It's an utterly ridiculous musical romp through the Megillah, with Haman, Mordechai and some Austrian nuns," among other characters, offers Aliza Spiro.

Performances are at Beth Tzedec, 1700

Bathurst St., on Thursday, March 20, after the Megillah reading, Saturday, March 22 at 9 p.m., and Sunday, March 23, 3 p.m. Advance tickets are \$5 for adults, \$2 for children 13 and under; \$10 or \$5 at the door. 416-781-3514

Out of the Cold Art Exhibit: The first Out of the Cold Art Exhibit features works by guests of Holy Blossom Temple's weekly Out of the Cold program. Proceeds to assist the artists and the program. Holy Blossom Temple, Philip Smith Hall, 1950 Bathurst St., March 17 to 19, 7 to 9 p.m. Opening reception Tuesday, March 18, 7 to 9 p.m.

Hillel Ventures into Theatre: Hillel of Greater Toronto presents as its first major theatrical student production *Anything Goes*, the famous 1930s musical by Noel Coward. (According to Wikipedia, *Anything Goes* and *Porgy and Bess* are the only two 1930s musicals that are still regularly revived.)

The student group has ventured into theatre in order to "engage new students and appeal to those looking for a creative outlet for their interests in the fine arts," says the show's director, Rachel Saslove, program associate at Ryerson University for Hillel of Greater Toronto. Many students, she has discovered, "share a passion for both theatre and their Judaism."

Conversations with a few participants quickly reveal the passion and excitement they are bringing to the stage. "Judaism is a big part

of my life, second only to theatre," said Audrey Amar, political-science student at the University of Toronto, "so the Hillel musical was really the perfect way to blend two of the major ways I define myself."

For Tamara Winegust, in third-year film at Ryerson, the Hillel play was "a great way to meet other students and reconnect with my love of musicals." Naomi Kraiden, in second-year theatre at York, said, "When I saw the poster... I jumped at the opportunity to audition. Not only is *Anything Goes* a great musical with wonderful and catchy tunes, but I was also excited to see a way of mixing my love for theatre and music with a chance to get involved with the Jewish community on campus."

Catch the excitement of Hillel's theatrical debut. Tickets are \$20; \$12 for students and seniors in advance, \$20 at the door. Leah Posluns Theatre, 4588 Bathurst St. Wednesday, March 12, and Thursday, March 13. Doors open 7:30, show starts 8 p.m. 416-913-2424

Life In A Jar: The Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation of Canada presents *Life in a Jar*, a play about Polish heroine Irena Sendler who saved 2,500 Jewish children during the Holocaust. The play was written in 1999 by students from a Kansas high school; it has since taken on a life of its own, and been performed more than 2,500 times across the United States, Canada and Poland.

The four girls who wrote and perform the play did not know any Jewish or Polish people when they started the project. They have since visited Irena in Warsaw, met diplomats and survivors, and toured Auschwitz and Treblinka. Presented by the Kansas high school students at the Al Green Theatre, Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave. Thursday, March 27, 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$15 (\$10

for students) from the Polish Jewish Heritage Foundation, 416-651-5014; or in person at the Miles Nadal JCC front desk. 416-924-6211, ext. 606

Remembering Sholem Asch: Friends of Yiddish and the Workmen's Circle mark the 50th anniversary of Sholem Asch, the giant of 20th-century Yiddish literature, with a lecture by Gerry Kane that examines the work of this prolific Yiddish writer, especially his controversial novel *The Nazarene* (*Der man fun Natseret*). In a talk titled "My Bobe, Mike Huckabee, Yoske Pandere and Sholem Asch," Kane discusses the furor *The Nazarene* raised in the Jewish community and its pertinence to American politics today. Workmen's Circle, 471 Lawrence Ave. W. \$5; members free. Sunday, March 23, 2:30 p.m.

Arts in Brief

• Pianist-vocalist Fern Lindzon performs with George Koller on bass at the Rex Hotel, 194 Queen St. W., April 2, 16, 23 and 30, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. www.therec.ca

• Toronto Jewish Film Society and Israel@60 Toronto present the classic Israeli film *Late Summer Blues* (*Blues Lahofesh Hagadol*) with guest speaker Shlomo Schwartzberg.

Rush seats available 15 minutes before screenings, \$15 or \$10. Miles Nadal JCC. Sunday, March 16, 4 and 7:30 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 606; e-mail esthera@nmjcc.org.

• Singer-songwriter Sara Kamin is joined by Brian Macmillan, Ronley Teper, Mark Weinstein, Eden Hertzog, Jeff Straker and the Russell Leon Band for the fourth annual Music for MSF: Musicians In Support of Doctors Without Borders. The Rivoli, 334 Queen St. W. Saturday, March 15, 8:30 for 9 p.m. Minimum donation \$10.

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Faked Shoah memoir spurs concerns

JTA

In the wake of the recent disclosure by the author of a Holocaust memoir that her best-selling book is a fake, historians are worried that such incidents will cast doubt on legitimate Holocaust scholarship and memoirs.

Holocaust deniers already are having a field day with the story, observers say.

A prominent article about the hoax is featured on the website of Holocaust denier David Duke, who asserts that the case casts doubt on all "outlandish Holocaust tales."

Deborah Dwork, a Holocaust scholar who says she warned the publisher of the book, *Misha: A Memoir of the Holocaust Years*, a decade ago that the book's veracity was suspect, is most concerned about how young minds will be affected by such fakery.

The effect on young people, "who are not grounded in history and who may only vaguely remember talk that a memoir was not true," she said, "opens the door to greater readiness to acceptance of Holocaust denier arguments."

Continued on page 48



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Arts & Travel

Judy Gans stars in *The Little Foxes*

By KATHRYN KATES
Special to The CJN

Judy Gans has been a member of Stage Centre Productions' acting company for 19 years and over that time has appeared in 30 shows.

Her latest role is Regina Giddens in the classic American play *The Little Foxes*. Written by Lillian Hellman, it's the story of the Hubbards, a southern family torn apart by their ruthlessness.

The play was originally set in the genteel American South of the 1900s, but the Stage Centre production takes place in 1936, during the Great Depression. When the family's get-rich scheme runs short of cash, the Hubbards will do anything to keep their dream alive. This stirring tale of family hatred and greed was partially based on southerner Hellman's own experiences. Regina is the youngest of the three Hubbard siblings.

Gans, 52, tackles her roles by doing a lot of research about the plays she's performing in. She likes to find the core motivation of her character and reads up on

how the playwright sees the character.

"It is a family motivated by power and greed. Regina has always felt left out, because when her father died he left the family fortune to her two brothers," Gans says. "She uses her southern charm to manipulate those around her so that she can get what she wants."



Judy Gans

"It is a wonderful part because it is incredibly challenging and very different from my own character and that is always so much fun to do. It is fascinating how to figure out why someone like this is the way she is and what motivates her to stop at nothing to manipulate her whole family and turn people against each other. It is one of those parts that come in your acting career

because it is someone you can never imagine being, but is so much fun to play."

The show is directed and designed by L. Garth Allen and includes Brad Emes as Leo Hubbard; Edward Karek as William Marshall; James Marshall as Benjamin Hubbard; Varda Shomrony as Birdie Hubbard; Frank Keenan as Oscar Hubbard; Sara VanBuskirk as Alexandra Giddens; and Alan Washbrook as Horace

Giddens.

A longtime Torontonian, Gans has stayed in the city, except for two years, from 2000 to 2002, when she lived and acted in San Diego. Gans is a semi-professional actor who is paid for her performances from time to time. By day, she works as an information co-ordinator at the Toronto Humane Society.

"Acting is not something I am pursuing full time. I act for the sake of the creativity, the art, and the opportunity to get to play all kinds of characters and not have to rely on it to make a living. I never really wanted it to be something I would be desperate about," she says.

Gans is the niece of actors Sylvia and Ben Lennick. Her parents, Ben and Gerry, were professional actors who studied at the Neighborhood Playhouse in New York. Her parents still act in community theatre. In fact, at 86, her father is performing in film and on television.

"I encourage people to come and see the show," Gans says. "Even though it is a drama, it is a lot of fun as well, watching the antics of these competing siblings try to outsmart each other to win in the end. Audiences will walk out perhaps thinking of people they know or perhaps someone in their own family, who are like the characters in the play."

Continued on page 48

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Congregation Habonim

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Three founders of the contemporary German storytelling movement – Gidon Horowitz, Regina Sommer, and Martin Ellrodt – will share stories from their multicultural repertoires, and discuss their experiences as storytellers in modern Germany, using stories to build new cultural awareness, spark wisdom, and help their fellow-citizens to ask difficult questions about German history. They will be hosted by Toronto storytellers Dan Yashinsky and Eli Rubenstein.

ADMISSION FREE



This program is produced by the 2008 Toronto Festival of Storytelling (a program of The Storytellers School of Toronto), and is co-sponsored by The Goethe Institute, The Koffler Centre of the Arts, Holocaust Centre of Toronto, Lufthansa, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and Congregation Habonim.

Holocaust deniers having field day with hoax

Continued from page 46

Dwork is the director of the Strassler Family Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Clark University in Worcester, Mass.

Lawyers for the Belgian-born Massachusetts author known as Misha Defonseca issued a statement last week saying the book was not true, that the author isn't Jewish and that her real name actually is Monique De Wael.

De Wael, however, defended her work. "This story is mine. It is not actually reality, but my reality, my way of surviving," she said in the statement apologizing for the

fabrication.

In the memoir, the author wrote that she lived with a pack of wolves after the Nazis abducted her parents, searched for her parents across Europe for four years as a young girl and murdered a German soldier.

She also claimed her parents were Belgian resistance fighters killed by the Nazis.

Boston Globe writer David Mehegan questioned the book's legitimacy a decade ago.

Translated into 18 languages, *Misha* was made into a popular film now playing throughout Europe. The film, by French filmmaker Vera Belmont, is called *Survivre*

Avec Le Loups (Surviving with Wolves.)

Deborah Lipstadt, a historian and expert on Holocaust denial, compared the incident to that of Benjamin Wilkomirski, whose popular Holocaust memoir *Fragments* was similarly discredited.

In the case of *Misha*, De Wael and her ghostwriter, Vera Lee, filed a lawsuit several years ago against the book's publisher, Jane Daniel, for insufficiently promoting the book in the U.S. market.

In 2001, the pair won an enormous judgment against Daniel when a judge tripled a jury's damages and awarded the two more than \$30 million.

As the complicated story surrounding the book unravelled last week, the Belgian newspaper *Le Soir* reported that not only were De Wael's parents not killed by the Nazis, but they actually collaborated with them.

Relatives of De Wael's father, Robert, told *Le Soir* that Robert De Wael was responsible for denouncing a number of fellow townspeople to the Gestapo. He was not killed by the Nazis, relatives said, but died of natural causes after the war.

When townspeople learned about this after the war, Robert De Wael's name was removed from a Brussels monument to those who had died at the hands of the Nazis.

The Little Foxes

Continued from page 47

The play shows how big business operated back then, and Gans says it hasn't really changed to this day – ruthlessly taking over communities and not caring for the environment or the people who live there.

The Little Foxes runs from March 6 to 9, 13 to 16 and 19 to 22 at Fairview Public Library Theatre, 35 Fairview Mall Drive, Toronto. For tickets, call 416-299-5557 or visit www.stagecentreproductions.com.



Judy Gans in *The Little Foxes*

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Holistic World Expo opens at convention centre

By **BENJAMIN GLEISSER**
Special to The CJN

In the health care industry, today's buzzword is "empowerment." This means giving people a sense of control and informing them of the choices they have for managing their health.

One of those choices is holistic medicine, which is in the spotlight at the Holistic

Statistics show that more people are embracing holistic medicine and looking to create a holistic lifestyle. According to a 2004 study by the Pew Internet Project, about six million people log onto the Internet every day to search health-related websites.

According to the study, 51 per cent sought information dealing with nutrition, vitamins and supplements (up from 44 per cent in 2002), while 23 per cent looked for data on experimental treatments and experimental medications (up from 18 per cent).

According to the American Holistic Health Association, a holistic lifestyle encourages people to balance and integrate their physical, mental, emotional and spiritual sides; establish respectful, co-operative relationships with others and the environment; make wellness-oriented lifestyle choices; and actively participate in their health decisions and healing process.

Murray says strengthening the mind-body-spirit connection is the key to good health. "Once you start taking better care of yourself, you feel lighter and more open to the mental flow of life. When you feel better, you have a more positive attitude. And people who become more joyful quite often become more consciously aware of a higher power. After all, spirituality is part of the healing process."

One of the Holistic World Expo's featured presenters is author and motivational speaker Bijan Anjomi, 64. Born in Iran, Anjomi came to the United States when he was 19 years old to study engineering. He went on to create his company, Effortless Prosperity, drawing on his Jewish background and knowledge of philosophy and world religions.

According to the company's website, www.effortlessprosperity.com, its aim is "to assist in opening people's hearts to joy, peace and a life of Effortless Prosperity." The company sells books and CDs, and Anjomi gives workshops worldwide. He has recently spoken about health, spirituality and empowerment in India, China and Japan.

Anjomi says that he has not been sick for a day in the past 18 years. "I stay healthy

through clean living. I have no desire to smoke, drink or do drugs. I meditate a lot and stay connected to spirit. And I constantly choose to experience joy and peace, and avoid dark emotions."

At the expo, Anjomi will give two lectures: "Effortless Money - What is the Energy of Money?" and "Fantastic Relationships - No Matter What!"

"Both of my talks are about recognizing the opportunities for happiness around you," he says.

"If you believe you can have money or be loved, then you will attract money and love into your life. If you don't believe it, you will not attract these things you desire. However, if you're unhappy with who or where you are, then you have the power to change your life."

Presenters and vendors at the expo include Body and Hair Direct and Premier Spa Boutique, which import organic skin-care products from Israel; Leda Health Innovations, which imports and manufactures natural skin-care products for pregnant women and babies; Advantage Health Matters, which offers a line of organic nutritional supplements; BioPro Technology, whose products aim to block harmful radiation emissions from

wireless electronic products; and Just For Me Music, which sells educational yet fun music for children.

"The songs on my CDs talk about things like food groups, the alphabet and safety issues," says Mark Alexander, the executive producer of Just For Me Music. "What makes the CDs unique are each one is personalized with a child's name, therefore he or she will pay more attention to the information in the song."

And how do children's music CDs fit in at a holistic health show? "Music and spirituality go hand in hand," Alexander says. "Every religion prays with music. Plus, children have a love of music. Songs touch the spirit of everyone."

For more information about the Holistic World Expo, call 416-966-2626 or visit www.holisticworld.org.



Bijan Anjomi

World Expo, March 14 to 16, at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre.

The event features guest speakers and about 200 exhibitors offering items ranging from nutritional supplements and organic baby-care products to chips that claim to block harmful radiation from cellphones and reduce the risk of getting cancer. There are also yoga, homeopathic medicine, biofeedback and massage therapy demonstrations.

"This event is for people who are already living a healthy lifestyle and for those who have heard about wellness and are looking for ways to change their life," says Yvette Murray, the show's producer.

"We don't see ourselves as 'New Age' tree huggers... Our aim is to provide knowledge for people who want to know more about empowering themselves. There's something for everyone here."

ALZHEIMER'S RESEARCH

Mark Gryfe, president of the Baycrest Foundation, accepts a cheque for \$50,000 from Steve Forberg, left, and Howard Forberg, right, of Decorium at a fundraising event held recently at Paradise Banquet & Convention Centre to support ongoing Alzheimer's research at Baycrest.



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- 5 HOUSES FOR SALE
 15 HOUSES FOR SALE PRIVATE
 20 HOUSES FOR RENT
 24 HOUSES WANTED TO BUY
 25 HOUSES WANTED TO RENT
 30 CONDOMINIUM FOR SALE
 35 CONDOMINIUM FOR RENT
 40 CONDOMINIUM FOR SALE/RENT
 45 CONDOMINIUM WANTED
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 60 SHARED ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE
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 485 SNOW REMOVAL
 490 TABLE COVERING
 493 TAILORING/ALTERATIONS
 495 TILING
 496 TRAINING
 498 TRAVEL & TOURISM
 500 TUTORING
 510 UPHOLSTERY
 512 WATERING SERVICES
 515 WATERPROOFING
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 550 WORKSHOPS



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THORNHILL GOLF CLUB \$2,990,000
 Gated Community. Lot (99 x 223) 4 br's on 2nd floor, guest ste on 3rd fl w/ sitting rm, 2 bth's & kitchenette. Elevator to all levels. LL. billiard rm, wine cellar, indoor salt-water pool.



THE CHEDINGTON \$2,680,000
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Israel & the Jewish World

Poland reaches out to expelled Jews

JTA

WARSAW — Poland will ease the way for Jews to reclaim citizenship 40 years after the start of massive expulsions.

In a letter released Monday, Polish Interior Minister Grzegorz Schetyna said he would "order the implementation of the appropriate procedures today."

Piotr Kadlick, the president of the Union of Religious Jewish Communities in Poland, told JTA he had already received verbal confirmation that Schetyna endorsed the plan to re-naturalize Jews who fled between 1968 and 1970. Some 15,000 Polish Jews were deprived of their citizenship.

Historians today look upon the period as a vast anti-Semitic campaign born of Soviet anti-Israel policies.

In fact, Kadlick said, it has been agreed that these former Poles actually never legally lost their citizenship. Once the decision is formalized, Jews who fled Poland can go to a Polish consulate in their new home country and "reconfirm their citizenship" as if they had never lost it, he said.

The decision to repatriate Polish Jews follows recent stepped-up pressure by Kadlick and Jewish advocacy groups in Poland. Golda Tencer, the head of Poland's Shalom Foundation, recently told the Polish newspaper *Dziennik* that President Lech Kaczynski had not yet answered her request of last October.

Schetyna said the problem could have been solved by Kaczynski, but "he did not take that opportunity."

Kadlick said the policy would apply particularly to Polish Jews who went to Israel, "because those who went to other places had no problem getting back their citizenship" up to now. He added that he doesn't think the number of applicants would be very big, but he felt "very good about it because it shows that we as a Polish Jewish community can have dialogue with the Polish government. It is important."

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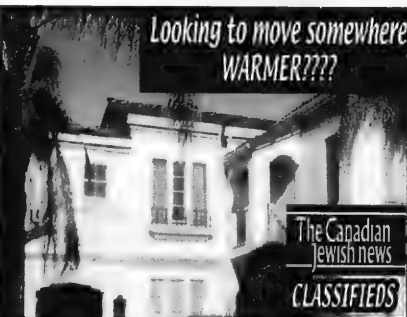
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Pray Ball! Jewish boys of spring tuning up

By HARVEY ROSEN
Special to The CJN

WINNIPEG — "The spring is a time of rebirth. It is the season when flowers bloom and the buds of trees begin to open, and a time when many birds return home from their warm southern climates. It is also a time for baseball."

The words are those of Rabbi James Gordon in his book *Pray Ball! The Spiritual Insights of a Jewish Sports Fan*. The rabbi of Congregation B'nai Shalom of Buffalo Grove, Ill., uses sporting events and athletes as his analogies to illustrate how the games they play tend to reinforce important traditional Jewish values.

For example, he explains: "Many parallels exist between a minyan and baseball. According to the American League, which follows the designated hitter's rule, 10 players are needed to start the game and each is of equal importance."

As for the upcoming season, there's a good chance there will be a minyan.

The Milwaukee Brewers just completed their first winning season in 15 years at 83-79, thanks

in no small part to third baseman Ryan Braun. The son of an Israeli father, who was the fifth overall player taken in the 2005 Major League baseball draft, took the National League by storm last year when he arrived on May 25 from AAA Nashville and slugged his way to a .334 average, 34 homers, plus 97 RBIs in just 113 games. The 24-year-old University of Miami grad was subsequently named the National League rookie of the year.

If the six-foot-two, 200-pound Braun is to add more to his arsenal in '08, he'll have to sharpen his fielding skills. The second-highest drafted Jew (next to Ron Blomberg) had a Major League worst 26 errors at the hot corner and was often yanked in the late innings. In spring training, the 24-year-old Mission Hills, Californian was working out in left field and chances are better than 50-50 the outfield will soon be his calling card.

Boston's Kevin Youkilis, 29, enjoyed a banner season and was a major contributor to the Red Sox World Series title in '07. The six-foot-one, 220-pound Cincinnati, a first baseman,

hit a solid .288, smacked 16 taters and drove in 83 runs. He is batting second in the lineup, and few are better at drawing walks and setting the table for the big boppers who follow. His main drawback is a lack of speed, stealing only four bases last season.

Seven-year veteran right-hander Jason Marquis of the Cubs went 12-9 as a starter last year, but Chicago's swirling winds helped to inflate his ERA to an unflattering 4.60. He's a workhorse, though, starting 33 games and going 192 innings. The former Brave and Cardinal starter, who will turn 30 this summer, is projected as the team's number 4 or 5 starter. The Cub's Jewish pitching coach Larry Rothschild is working with Marquis on the mental part of his game. He seems to falter in the second half of the season due to a lack of focus that appears to sap his confidence.

John Grabow, 29, bypassed arbitration in mid-January and was signed to a one-year contract with the Pirates. In 63 games and 51.2 innings last season, the left-handed reliever compiled a 3 and 2 record and ERA of 4.53. What he needs now, and it'll be difficult in Pittsburgh, which finished last at 68-94, is a solid season in 2008 that might earn him a more secure pact.

Colorado's right-handed starter Jason Hirsh is being counted upon to be the club's number 5 starter in '08. Last year, the 26-year-old pitched in 112 innings and compiled a record of 5-7 and an ERA of 4.81. An imposing figure on the mound at six-foot-eight and 250 pounds, he ended his season last year in early August when he fractured his right fibula. Prior to that a sprained ankle hampered his development.

Ian Kinsler, 25, of the Texas Rangers is about to begin his third season enjoying the security of a five-year extension at \$22 million, signed in late February. The six-foot, 200-pound second sacker who hails from Tucson, Ariz., showed some pop in his bat last year with 20 homers, along with a .263 average and 62 RBIs. The golf enthusiast also played well defensively and scored 96 runs.

Another 25-year-old Ranger is relief pitcher Scott Feldman who spent part of last season



Boston's Kevin Youkilis

in AAA Oklahoma and got into 29 games with Texas, sporting a 1-2 record and somewhat inflated ERA of 5.77. The right-hander out of San Mateo College, who was born in Kailua, Hawaii, stands six-foot-six and weighs 225. According to his manager, Ron Washington, Scott was working on a slightly different delivery during the off-season that has given his ball more movement.

After giving managing in the low minors a try in 2007, outfielder Gabe Kapler, 32, wants back into the fun room. The former Red Sox muscle man has been

signed to a one-year contract with Milwaukee and hopes to make it as a bat off the bench and a backup outfielder. The nine-year veteran from Hollywood, with a lifetime BA of .270, plays the game with flair and will be a welcome addition to the Brewers.

There comes a time, both in and out of the sports world, when youth must be served. Houston catcher Brad Ausmus, who has caught more than 1,800 games in the majors, is pushing 39 and has finally been designated as the backup receiver with the Astros. A fine defensive catcher with a lifetime BA of .252, he is known as one of the best ever as a handler of pitchers. Few will disagree that the Dartmouth grad is managerial material or at least a coach-in-waiting. He will this year help tutor his replacement, J.R. Towles.

Mike Lieberthal, 36, a 13-year catcher with Philadelphia who played 38 games with the Dodgers in '07, is retiring; Los Angeles failed to pick up his option. The two-time All-Star hit .274 in his career and whacked 150 homers.

So far in early March, no team has, surprisingly, shown any interest in free agent Mets' outfielder Shawn Green. In 2007, he batted .282, hit 10 homers and had 71 RBIs in 446 at bats. It's entirely possible that the final chapter of the now 35-year-old's career has been written. From the Blue Jays to the Dodgers, the Diamondbacks and the Mets, the 1991 first-round pick had a career average of .283, wallowed 328 home runs and drove home 1,070 runs. Not hall of fame numbers, certainly, but few Jewish players were better and carried themselves with more dignity and class.

Also looking for work in the majors, are right-handed reliever Craig Breslow, 27, in Boston and left-hander Mike Koplove, 31, in Cleveland.

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Almost Oprah

A friend and colleague once told me that it's better to fail as yourself than succeed as someone else and get trapped.

From years of creative endeavours, I also accept the following as scripture: you can't please the audience by predicting what they want.

If there were a "true" formula, we wouldn't have crappy films. Please yourself instead, and let the audience find you. There is someone for everyone, and you can be appreciated for your authentic self.

Now, if your authentic self is a jackass, I'll make some recommendations.

I took a maturity test last year and scored "80 per cent child brain." It was concluded, scientifically, that if pressed, I'd respond with the emotional depth and physical panache of an eight-year-old.

It's fascinating to wake up, as an adult, and become aware that you're actually missing key interpersonal tools. But the same way baking can be taught, the ingredients of an authentic relationship are well explained and available to you in *Lies at the Altar: The Truth About Great Marriages*, my reading recommendation for this month. It's great for relationships, however you define them, and it actually teaches empathy, not just promotes it.

Note: some people don't appreciate being given a "How To" manual in the middle of a relationship.

When I was 10, my father gave me Dale Carnegie's famous book *How to Win Friends and Influence People*. All I remember was a book called *How to Make Friends, Loser*. I still self-medicate when recalling the gift's hidden judgment.

Recently, I read a nice *CJN* article about the value of knowing one's self and the dangers of aimless people-pleasing. When you own your goals, limits, passions and negative triggers, you will actually function more clearly.

Every T-shirt and calendar recommends the first part: "To thine own self be true."

But no one is a singularly self-pleasing package,

a sustainable island of happiness. I certainly get by with a little help from my friends.

So, I believe in pleasing others. But I no longer try to please everyone. That's the horse pill I'll call maturity, which, in my case, is only budding.

I've learned to displease people that I love dearly, but I offer them alternate affections, as they do to me.

In film, I've met great actors who are not great for a part. It's that simple. But once a part is filled, the acting still has to

be top-notch.

Casting films and partners seems similar. Once the right person fills your heart, the relationship still has to be top-notch. All the proper etiquette should be there. I think we get tired of exhausting our best selves by dating from early in our youth, and we can overcompensate for an otherwise healthy attitude of "pleasing ourselves," becoming too dependent on self-gratification.

But that's only half the deal, since once you find the right partner, you have to revisit an investment scenario.

Money doesn't double in your closet. You have to invest it. The same goes for love. First, know your authentic self. Second, stop dating child-brainers. Third, behave like you did in high school on Valentine's Day.

Upon reflection, I'll simply say that I invested in the wrong people – not bad people at all, just the wrong ones for me. Everyone is right for someone. And once you know yourself well – once you've cleaned out your fridge of mouldy vices and past-prime attitudes – you can know what you're shopping for.

In the film *Meet Joe Black*, Brad Pitt's character says it best: "It's OK to take care of a woman. She takes care of you."

Once you are the right person, you'll attract the right person, and I'll wager it's OK to invest there. Please them.

Pleasing others is not wrong. Pleasing the wrong people, however, is wasted effort. And knowing your authentic self is the best way to highlight the tasks and people that you should most invest your precious time in.

ALMOST FAMOUS

By JACOB MEDJUCK



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- 5 oz. semisweet chocolate
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- 2/3 c flour
- 1/3 c chopped walnuts (optional)

Microwave semisweet and unsweetened chocolate together in small time increments until melted. In food processor, process butter, flour, baking powder, eggs, vanilla, coffee granules and sugar. Fold in melted chocolate. Gently fold in mocha or coffee chips and nuts.

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Getting ready to get muscular

In my last column, I spent a lot of time discussing cardio equipment for your workout room. Now I want to share with you some of the options in resistance training equipment.

We all know that producing muscle is good for your body and overall health, but how do we do that? Well, there are many different ways, but all you really need to start is an exercise ball or a bench, small weights or bands, and a small piece of floor.

Home gym units are great, but there are so many out there, and everyone wants to sell you the biggest, most expensive piece. The truth

is, if you are older or a beginner, and joints are a problem, looking into a home gym unit may be your best bet.

A machine will support you and help keep you in proper form more easily than free weights. I tell my clients to shop around and sit in the equipment – give it a try.

Some machines are heavier than others. You want to make sure the piece has most, if not everything, you want to work your body, and that you can lift it. Most machines come with a book and/or a poster-like instruction manual to show you different exercises that you can

do with the equipment. I recommend using a trainer or expert in the field to show you how to properly, effectively and safely use your equipment.

There are also other choices besides a big piece of equipment. I like variety, so I don't have a home gym unit, but many different, but smaller pieces, such as a bench, an exercise ball, a variety of free weights, body bars, tubes, medicine balls, Pilates ring and balls, as well as some fit disks for core training. You don't need all that to get started, but I think you get the idea.

I always recommend hiring a trainer to make sure you're working out safely and effectively. The last thing you want to do is work really hard for nothing, or hurt yourself.



FITNESS CORNER

By FELCY ZOMPARELLI

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

Life can break my heart. I'm sure you feel the same from time to time. Life can do that.

Most recently, my heart was broken by the troubling reality that 8,000 rockets have been fired into Sderot and that these erratic killers have hurt so many. My heart breaks for the people of the city, in which a little boy almost lost his arm and families huddle together underground, while rockets bombard their homes day in and day out. Parents know it is their job to keep their children safe. How must they feel about their task as rockets rain down on them?

My heart breaks for the fathers and mothers of our Israeli brothers and sisters who have fallen in the line of duty while defending Eretz Yisrael and the Jewish people. It breaks for all Israeli parents who are witness to their child going off to battle.

URBAN WRITER



Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, the spiritual leader of Shas party and former chief (Sephardi) rabbi of Israel, bids all Jews to pray for the safety of Israel Defence Forces soldiers. He asked that these prayers not only be said on Shabbat but on Monday and Thursday as well, the two weekdays when the Torah is read.

"Our soldiers, the Israel Defence Forces, contribute themselves selflessly, enter the lion's den... how they need to be blessed. Had it not been for them, would we have time to study the Torah? To turn to the books?" he said.

Let us pray then, so as to mend our broken hearts, to protect our sons and daughters and so that we can live like Jews.

And my heart bleeds for the 14-year-old Palestinian killed during the fight as the violence spilled over into the West Bank after the Gaza incursion.

My heart breaks

Fourteen is young, too young to die. And the children, infants who were killed in Gaza were only that, little beings born into the misfortune of a war zone and misdirected by their leaders. I can only be sad for the loss of life when that life is so young. It will not impede my resolve to secure our State of Israel and the Jewish people, but I will never get used to the fact that children lie lifeless in a morgue, stilled by bullets and battle. We are told never to celebrate the death of our enemies, and most of us are good at that. We are also told by our teachings that everything is a creation of God.

My heart breaks knowing that it is the Israelis who are on the front line of our physical fight to ensure the continuation of the Jewish people. Our partnership with them seems so uneven. And as I get older, the faces of the fallen soldiers posted on websites look so much younger. 18, 19, 20. So much younger.

If your heart is breaking for Israel, for the innocent blood shed, for all those children dying around the globe through war, famine, disease and poverty, then you are awake.

Share your thoughts with others. Thank the IDF for sticking up for us, for securing us. Think about our Israeli family on a daily basis. We must never forget that young Jewish boys and girls are fighting, often to the finish, to make sure that we in Canada and the rest of the world fear less those who are intent upon destroying the Jewish people.

There are many innocent people suffering, Jews and Arabs, as this war continues. There are many children dying in wars throughout the world. We are meant, as Jews, to be conscious of this and to pray, and to stand up in defence of peace and truth.

Do so and perhaps one day our hearts will be fuller and cease to break so often. Let us hope that the other side does the same.

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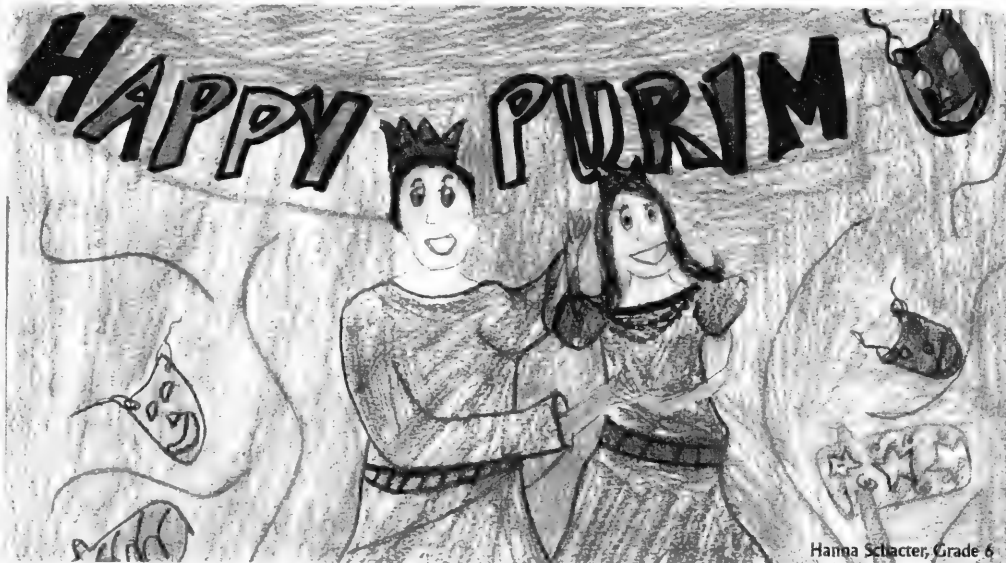
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Hanna Schacter, Grade 6

A summons to the people

Judging by her playful depiction of some of its well-known celebratory aspects, there can hardly be any doubt that sixth-

grader Hanna Schacter loves the holiday of Purim. She delightfully conveys the joy of the occasion wrought by the costumes, smiles, laughs, masks and noisemakers that are its merrymaking instruments.

Second-grader Shaina Gotovsky more forcefully emphasizes the imperative only implied by Hanna: "Celebrate Purim in Canada," she writes affirmatively without even slight compunction.

She summons her people, both young and old, to raise the flag of

happiness in memory of Persian Jewry's rescue from genocide some 2,500 years ago.

Of course, where children fling themselves with playful delirium, adults tread more warily.

Indeed, the commemoration of thwarted genocide, it must be acknowledged, is a religious space, in which wariness is a most appropriate antecedent to revelry and merriment.

Our ancient rabbis understood this very well. That is why they ordained a protocol for celebrating Purim that combines the profound with the frivolous; the sombre with the light-hearted; high tension with sigh-laden relief.

In his essay about Purim, which is part of his superb, marvellously instructive book *The Jewish Way*, (Simon & Schuster), renowned educator Rabbi Irving Greenberg, expounds upon and explains the many-layered meanings of the holiday in its very obvious Diaspora context.

At every turn and twist of the dramatic narrative, Rabbi Greenberg points out its theological messages, hidden wisdoms and constantly recurring parallels to the modern and pre-modern Jewish historical experience of Diaspora life.

We, the older celebrants of Purim, cannot avoid thinking of the deeply cutting parallel in our own time to

the ominous existential condition faced by the Jews of Persia so long ago.

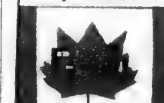
Ever since he ascended to power some three years ago, the observation has been often made that the genocidal threats of Iran's President Mahmoud

Ahmadinejad eerily, creepily, menacingly echo the threats made centuries ago by his vile countryman, Haman the Agagite.

Continued on page 8

Editorial

CELEBRATE Purim



IN CANADA

by Shaina Gotovsky

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German chancellor makes historic visit to Israel — see page 37

The News in Brief

CANADA

Trade Negotiator Dies

TORONTO — Simon Reisman, the feisty and outspoken chief Canadian negotiator of the 1988 Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, died March 8 in Ottawa of cardiac arrest. He was 88. He died in his sleep at the Ottawa Heart Institute after having a pacemaker operation a few days earlier. The Montreal-born Reisman joined the federal public service in 1946 and left in 1975 to become a consultant. He returned in 1985 to lead the trade talks.

Chabad Opens Camp

TORONTO — Chabad of Mississauga is starting the first permanent Jewish day camp in the western GTA suburb. Camp Gan Israel, for kids three to 10, runs from July 7 to Aug. 10. Mississauga is home to some 3,000 Jews. For details, visit www.jewishmississauga.org, or call 905-268-4432.

WORLD

Cdn. Cities Promoted

NEW YORK — Edmonton and Vancouver are among

emerging Orthodox communities in North America that the Orthodox Union is encouraging observant New York-area Jews to move to. At an April 6 event in New York, the OU will showcase 13 cities, including Denver, Houston, Dallas, Edmonton and Vancouver. The cities were chosen for their religious infrastructure — including a day school, Orthodox shul and access to kosher food — and their growth potential.

Prayer Won't Change

ROME — The Vatican's point man on Jewish relations said the Pope plans no further changes to a prayer that has riled Jewish leaders. Cardinal Walter Kasper, speaking on German TV last week, said there's no need to change the Good Friday prayer because "it is entirely correct from a theological perspective." Cardinal Kasper was to meet with Jewish leaders last week to discuss the controversy. In June, Pope Benedict XVI upset many Catholic-Jewish interfaith leaders when he revived the Latin, or Tridentine, Mass, a liturgy that includes a prayer for the conversion of Jews. Last month, he released a revised

text of the prayer that removed the most offensive passages, but retained the prayer for conversion.

Bounty on Barak

TEHRAN — A radical Iranian student group placed a \$400,000 bounty on Israeli Defence Minister Ehud Barak. The Islamic Student Justice Seekers made the call March 9, the Iranian News agency IRNA said. It also offered \$300,000 each for the killing of two other senior members of the Israeli security establishment, Mossad chief Meir Dagan and Amos Yadlin, head of military intelligence. The bounties are revenge for last month's killing of Hezbollah mastermind Imad Mughniyah, for which the group blames Israel. It asked backers to donate a kidney to increase the bounties.

Former Senator Dies

CLEVELAND — Former Ohio Senator Howard Metzenbaum died March 12 at his home in Florida at age 90. Metzenbaum, Ohio's first Jewish Senator, was appointed by Ohio governor John Gilligan to fill an unexpired term in 1973. He won a seat in 1976 and served three full terms, retiring in 1995. The Cleveland-born Metzenbaum was a millionaire who co-founded an airport parking lot firm. A lib-

Belgium To Pay Holocaust Restitution

BRUSSELS — Belgium will pay \$170 million in Holocaust restitution.

Belgium's banks and the government agreed March 11 to pay the Jewish community and families of Holocaust victims whose property was stolen by the Nazis. Some \$54 million will be paid to claimants. The rest will go to a trust to promote Shoah education and help poor Jews.

Of the total amount to be paid out, \$69.8 million comes from the government, \$85 million from banks and the rest mostly from insurance companies.

About half of Belgium's 50,000 Jews died in the Holocaust. Last year, a government-sponsored report declared that Belgium had officially and unofficially collaborated with the Nazi persecution of Jews.

eral Democrat, he championed worker and consumers rights, and a law mandating a waiting period to buy a handgun. He backed the Jewish community on a variety of issues, including civil rights, hate crimes laws and religious freedom, and he voted consistently with supporters of Israel.

Jewish Amulet Found

VIENNA — University of Vienna archeologists unearthed an amulet in a third-century grave bearing the *Shema* prayer. The find in eastern Austria represents the earliest sign of Jewish inhabitants in present-day Austria, the university said. The silver amulet contains a gold scroll with the words of the *Shema* inscribed in Greek. The grave of the child is one of about 300 graves in an ancient Roman

cemetery discovered in 1986 near the town of Halbtun. The Jewish amulet was identified in 2006 and will go on public display next month in the Burgenland State Museum in Eisenstadt.

Israeli Part of Scandal

NEW YORK — The alleged procurer in the prostitution scandal surrounding former New York governor Eliot Spitzer has an Israeli passport. A federal magistrate in New York ordered Mark "Michael" Brenner, 62, a dual Israeli-American citizen, held without bail after his arrest last week related to allegations he headed the Emperors VIP Club, described by police as a high-priced prostitution ring. It reportedly supplied escort services to Spitzer, who resigned in disgrace last week over the affair.

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She'arim to close its doors in June

Financial problems cited as reason

By FRANCES KRAFT
 Staff Reporter

Parents and staff of the Dr. Abraham Shore She'arim Hebrew Day School reacted with dismay, confusion and — in some cases — anger to last week's announcement that the school will close in June, and that talks are in progress for its students to attend an existing Jewish day school next fall.

Under the new arrangement, students would be in a separate program that would address their special learning needs under the auspices of another school, which officials have yet to name.

"The sad conclusion is that [She'arim] in its current format is not financially viable," Sidney Braun, She'arim's co-president, said at a meeting last Wednesday night at the Bathurst

Jewish Community Centre (BJCC).

"We're carrying an accumulated deficit from previous years... It would be an irresponsible act on our part to continue in the current format."

Braun is one of five members of a joint management committee that was formed earlier this year to work with She'arim.

The decision was made by the school's board based on a recommendation from the joint management committee, consisting of two representatives each of She'arim and of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, as well as Paul Shaviv, director of education of the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto.

She'arim, which was established 27 years ago, is housed in rented premises at the BJCC, which is slated to be demolished and replaced starting in 2009.

The school serves 75 students from Grade 1 through Grade 8 with learning disabilities, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and mild forms of autism.

At its peak two years ago, She'arim had 97 students. This year, 25 students will graduate,

leaving only 50 at the school for next year. Increasingly, "feeder" day schools are attempting to address special education needs themselves, school principal Kathy Manoin told *The CJN*.

She'arim has been dealing with funding issues for some time. Last year, it experienced a deficit that its executive director, Faigie Davids, attributed to a large 2007 graduating class and a subsequent loss of tuition.

The school, which has a \$1.5-million annual budget, received cash advances from the federation's Centre for Enhancement of Jewish Education (the Mercaz — formerly the Board of Jewish Education), so that it could pay its staff.

Robert Harlang, who chairs the joint management committee, fielded most of the questions at the meeting. He became chair at the request of the federation, but doesn't work for the federation and is not on its board.

Parents also wanted answers from Seymour Epstein, the federation's senior vice-president for the Mercaz, who was seated toward the back of the room, but took the microphone at the audience's request.

One woman expressed confusion about how the proposed changes would help, because

much of the school's financial problems have had to do with the low ratio of students to teachers at a special needs school.

Harlang said there were also factors relating to overhead, rent, the school's ability to fundraise, and declining enrolment.

The cost of educating one child at She'arim for a year is about \$20,000, Epstein said. Annual tuition is about \$18,000.

Last year She'arim fundraising events netted about \$500,000.

But, now, "no one will give money to a sinking ship," protested one mother.

Parents were trying to understand how things could have changed so dramatically since a December meeting, when they say they were told that the school had no debt.

"We have an operating deficit that has caught up with the school," said Braun, adding that the school has been operating with a deficit for the past eight years.

"Our fundraising ability cannot cope with our operating costs. Every month, we are going deeper and deeper into a situation that is not sustainable."

Continued on page 17



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Greater Toronto Area

Glimmers for the future

There are, of course, wide cultural, historical and sociological similarities between American and Canadian Jews. But in terms of the Jewishly manifested aspects of our kinship, there are also certain differences between us that are worth noting and have, in fact, often been noted by various authors in the pages of *The C.J.N.*

Nevertheless, despite those differences, we always pay close attention to news about the Jews of America.

Such is the way of kinkfolk love. Moreover, current trends within American Jewry may portend future behaviour among Canadian Jews.

Thus it was with great interest that we read of a study released two weeks ago by the Steinhardt Social Research Institute at Brandeis University that brought into doubt existing beliefs concerning a diminishing affinity among young American Jews to the State of Israel.

The study is titled *American Jewish Attachment to Israel: An Assessment of the "Distancing" Hypothesis*. Its lead researchers are Theodore Sasson, Charles Kadushin, and Leonard Saxe.

The press release announcing the results of the study was straightforward: "There is no consistent evidence in surveys conducted among national samples of American Jews that either younger individuals or adults have grown more distant from Israel. On the contrary, the survey evidence reveals surprising resilience of American Jewry's connection to Israel."

This is a very important and a wonderfully heartening finding.

But is it a correct finding?

Not everyone agrees.

It seems that those "surveys conducted among national samples of

American Jews" to which the Steinhardt study refers are the surveys conducted by sociologist Steven Cohen.

Cohen, the renowned chronicler of Jewish life in America has long warned of the decrease in the number of Jews in the United States and of the worrisome disengagement of younger Jews in particular from interest in the State of Israel.

As JTA noted in its coverage of the study, "the Steinhardt paper looks like a stab at Cohen, who has long been at intellectual odds with Steinhardt researchers – who are based at Brandeis – and, in particular, with the director of the Steinhardt Center, Len Saxe."

The key *machloket*, difference of opinion, between the respective Cohen and Saxe groups of researchers centres on the interpretation of data related to intermarried families.

"What is really happening, says the Steinhardt report, is that Jews tend to become closer to Israel as they grow older," JTA noted. "So, when one looks at age cohorts year by year, there tends not to be a dropping off in affinity for Israel. Older Jews simply feel closer to Israel."

Cohen draws a less sunny conclusion, based, once again, on his sterner views of the impact of intermarriage on collective Jewish life.

"The Steinhardt survey does a good job of showing that Jews who identify as Jewish are indeed staying close to Israel," Cohen told JTA. But "it is missing the point that intermarried Jews and their children are falling away from Israel."

But both the Saxe and the Cohen groups agree that there is a relatively new and potentially watershed development that may have a profoundly positive impact on the nature and

extent of the engagement of future generations of American Jews with Israel: birthright Israel.

"The success of birthright Israel," the Steinhardt study notes, "which has brought more than 120,000 North American Jewish young adults to Israel for educational trips, challenges old patterns of engagement with Israel and is creating a generation of adult Jews who have a different relationship to the Jewish state."

That Steinhardt himself, and Charles Bronfman, were the driving philanthropic forces behind birthright Israel in no way diminishes the soundness of the conclusions concerning the program's success. Birthright Israel and the like-minded and even follow-up programs that it spawned may yet prove to be a saving intervention in the Jewish or at least Israel-oriented evolution of a large portion of future American Jews.

Irrespective of the correctness of competing interpretations of the impact of intermarried couples on the future of Jewish life, one conclusion is certain: visiting Israel fosters attachment to the country. The more that Jews travel there, the more they develop a sense of responsibility towards the country.

Since the inception of birthright Israel, greater numbers of young Jews are consistently travelling to Israel. We can therefore hope, and perhaps, expect, that in the coming years, increasing numbers of younger Jews will feel for Israel – and for their own sense of belonging to this small but rather remarkable people – more than they do now.

The report, *American Jewish Attachment to Israel: An Assessment of the "Distancing" Hypothesis*, can be downloaded at www.brandeis.edu/ssri.

—MBD

From the editor's desk

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ADAR ON THE BEACH: With three feet of snow on the ground, blowing winds and slippery ice, students at United Synagogue Day School's Beth Tikvah campus dreamed of basking in the sun as they celebrated the beginning of Adar II with "Beach Day." Sunglasses, shorts, bathing suits and towels helped keep students smiling. Pictured, from left are Grade 5 students Max Ashley, Aron Weingarten, Tyra Morton, Dekkel Bachar, Jaime Cohen, Tamar Zecharia, Holli Greenwald, Shira Gol and Robyn Sirkin.



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Shuls write to premier urging action on poverty

***'We are guided by tikkun olam,
and we need to put
[it] into action'***

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

An open letter to Dalton McGuinty from 18 Ontario synagogues urging the premier to keep an election promise to

fight poverty was co-ordinated by a Darchei Noam Congregation committee.

The Reconstructionist synagogue recently formed a social justice advocacy committee to lobby the government on this issue.

Val Hyman, chair of the congregation's social action committee, said its focus has always been on housing and homelessness, and its projects include running an Out of the Cold program and volunteering for the City of Toronto's three-year-old Street to Homes program, which provides housing for people living on the street.

The congregation has also sponsored two affordable housing buildings near Lawrence Avenue and Bathurst Street. "This is all well and good, but nothing will change unless

we try to influence the government," she said.

Hyman praised Rabbi Shalom Schachter, a member of the social justice advocacy committee and spiritual leader of Beth Israel Congregation in Peterborough, for "having the energy to contact all the synagogues and pull the whole thing together."

The shuls represent all four major denominations — Reform, Conservative, Orthodox and Reconstructionist.

Hyman said Darchei Noam is part of two interfaith social action groups, because its members believe that faith groups need a Jewish voice. "We are guided by tikkun olam, and we need to put [it] into action. We believe that housing is a right, not a privilege."

In December, Miloon Kathari, the United Nations special rapporteur on adequate housing, visited Canada, "and said he was mystified [to discover] that we are the only G8 country without a social housing strategy. He could not understand why we are not looking after our most vulnerable citizens," Hyman said.

"As Jews, we have a special reason for asking the premier to stick to his promise."

Myer Siemiatycki, co-chair of the newly formed advocacy committee and a professor of politics at Ryerson University, said Darchei Noam has always addressed homelessness on the front lines, "but this advocacy piece is new. We had our first meeting of the new year in January, and we realized that the Ontario government would soon be coming out with a budget. We wanted the Jewish voice heard."

"We realized that the best format would be to have as many synagogues behind us as possible."

The committee spent about two weeks getting congregations to sign on, "and we were thrilled and delighted with not only the response, but the breadth of the response," Siemiatycki said.

"This is an important reminder that the call for justice is a common ground that all Jews can share," he said.

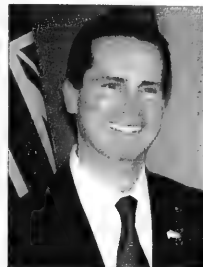
In the letter, the shuls praised McGuinty for his commitment to target poverty, but said that "time is of the essence... and a child who missed a year's good nutrition or education, whose family dissolves under grinding economic pressure, will not easily make it up next year."

"We urge your government to put a down payment on its poverty fighting strategy in its upcoming spring budget."

He said that Rabbi Schachter received a fax from the cabinet office acknowledging the letter and asking for his return address.

"We're hoping this will lead to a meeting with senior officials," Siemiatycki said.

The synagogues that signed the letter were Beth Ezekiel, Owen Sound; Beth Israel, Peterborough; Beth Jacob, Kitchener; Beth Torah, Toronto; Darchei Noam; Holy Blossom Temple, Toronto; Am Shalom Congregation, Barrie; Lodzer Centre Holocaust Congregation, Toronto; Or Shalom Congregation, London; Shaarei-Beth El Congregation, Oakville; Solel Congregation, Mississauga; Temple Emanu-El, Toronto; Temple Har Zion, Thornhill; Temple Israel, Ottawa; Temple Kol Ami, Thornhill; Temple Sinai, Toronto; Temple Shalom, Waterloo; and Adath Shalom, Ottawa. Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl of Beth Tzedec Congregation also signed the letter.



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A LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY ABOUT SHEARIM HEBREW DAY SCHOOL

For many painstaking months, UJA Federation and the Dr. Abraham Shore She'arim Hebrew Day School, Sara and Sam Hennick Education Centre, have been working hard, through a Joint Management Committee, to resolve many challenges facing the school. We have discussed together possible options for She'arim, which is in the midst of a severe financial situation.

However, after meticulous analysis, and based on the advice of the Joint Management Committee, the She'arim Board has decided that She'arim, as it presently exists, cannot sustain itself financially.

Our top priority is the well-being of She'arim's children and their future education. With that in mind, the objective is working toward the concept of transitioning She'arim students from a free standing school to a unit within an existing Jewish school that would offer the best possible education, in a caring and supportive environment for children with learning disabilities.

In pursuit of this objective, we will not only be consulting with experts on special needs education, but also She'arim parents, who have so eloquently and passionately expressed their concerns, to which we are carefully listening.

Our goal is to place every single She'arim child next year in a Jewish school that understands and supports his or her unique needs. At the same time, UJA Federation and She'arim are committed to the successful conclusion of this school year.

The present crisis is primarily due to financial factors. It is not a reflection on She'arim's outstanding contribution to our community for 27 years. She'arim has given children with learning disabilities the opportunity of a Jewish education, which may have otherwise been inaccessible.

We are certain that, by working diligently together, we can assure She'arim's children of a high quality special education and sensitive consideration under these new circumstances.



Robert Harlang
Chair, Joint Management Committee

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Plea for unity

Continued from page 1

Ahmadinejad's threats against Israel and the Jewish people are real. They are not the demagogic stumpings of an election campaign or the cynical scapegoating of a faraway people for the ills of a local electorate. Like Haman before him, Ahmadinejad plots the destruction of Israel and the annihilation of Jews.

As loving parents and grandparents, we do our best – as did our forebears – to shield our own anxieties from the discerning eyes and knowing glances of our children and grandchildren.

But as Jews who are grateful for the majesty and privilege of belonging to this wonderful people, we are ever vigilant, constantly coiled, ready to spring to the defence of Jewish life, peoplehood, sovereignty, and of course, our children.

That is one of the reasons we celebrate the festival of Purim so earnestly, with such joyful intensity. As Rabbi Greenberg noted, "the celebration of Purim grows out of a wise acceptance of vulnerability. The truth is that life is deeply vulnerable."

The awareness of life's deep vulnerability, however, does not mean resignation or acquiescence in the face of superior odds or larger forces. And that is another of Purim's unique lessons related by Rabbi Greenberg in his essay.

"The Persian Jewish community as reflected in the Book of Esther, responded to the entire episode with a determination to survive as Jews and with a discerning reaffirmation of its Jewishness."

Human beings play a critical role in their own redemption, Greenberg writes. "One cannot pass the buck to the forces of history," he notes with succinct clarity. He is telling us, just as our sages did, that we cannot rely on miracles. We have to be the agents of our own redemption if we are to trigger Divine partnership.

Finally, Rabbi Greenberg emphasizes that Purim is also a plea for Jewish unity. The story reminds us of the steely strength that results when Jews – regardless of ethnic background, socio-economic status, education, affiliation, level of observance and shul membership – unite in common purpose in protection of our common destiny.

"Never write off assimilated Jews," he wrote. "They come out of the historical closet in the greatest crises, and when they are least expected. After the Holocaust, and in defence of Israel, thousands of hitherto marginal Jews rallied to fight for Jewish survival. I once heard the late [Rabbi] Jacob Herzog [a member of Haganah] tell of a key mission in a banana republic, trying to buy weapons for Israel in 1948. He ran into strong resistance. All appeared lost, when suddenly he obtained desperately needed arms through the intercession of a general. Afterward, the general secretly revealed to him that he was a Jew whose family had 'passed' to get into the aristocracy."

Therefore let us abide by Shaina's instruction to "celebrate Purim." But as we do, let us recall Rabbi Greenberg's lessons, and as always, let us also thank God that he has brought us to this unique day when we and our families convert fasting, mourning, weeping and worry into "light, joy, gladness and honour for all the Jews."

Chag Samayach.

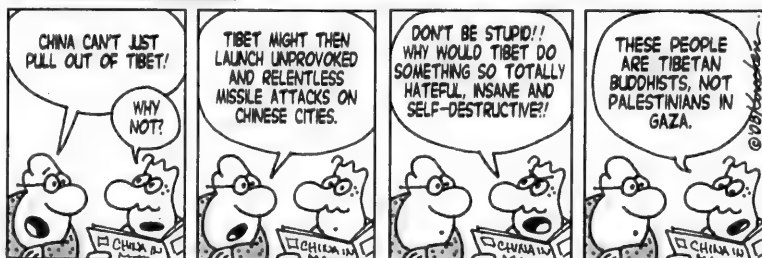
—MBD

25 years ago in The CJN

Newspaper coverage of the Lebanon War was criticized at a conference of the Canada-Israel Committee as being inadequate and unsympathetic to Israel. Journalists attributed this to a lack of understanding of the issues involved, a desire to please the general public and the need to compete with television coverage.

Editorials & Letters

Dry Bones THE TERNIS



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Gov't's statement about Gaza disappoints

The Board of Rabbis of Greater Montreal finds it necessary to voice its great disappointment with the statement made by Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier on the current situation in Gaza ("Canada 'concerned' over Israeli measures," *CJN*, March 6).

Ever since 2007, more than 2,000 rockets have been launched against Israel for the sole purpose of indiscriminately slaughtering Israeli citizens. More than 200,000 Israelis are within range of these rockets.

No country on earth would tolerate such murderous tactics against its civilians. To suggest that Israel's response was excessive is indeed deplorable. Israel has a right and a duty to protect its citizens. It is the terrorists' use of civilians as human shields that is the reason for the loss of life.

We have in the past found most commendable the support given by the current federal government for Israel's stand against those who seek to destroy her. It is the terrorists who are solely responsible for the current violence. Let them cease and desist, and the violence in Gaza will come to an end.

Rabbi Michael Whitman
President
Montreal Board of Rabbis

Articles lacked context

Your March 6 issue contained two articles about events at York University. Both, unfortunately, lacked any context that might have helped readers understand the issues at York and in the community at large.

"Anti-Semitic graffiti discovered at York U" reported the discovery of anti-Semitic graffiti in Scott Library. Unfortunately as such graffiti are, they are not unique to York, and they are not unique to Jews. Anti-black and anti-Italian graffiti have also been found recently at the university, and anti-Indian and anti-Pakistani graffiti are present there and elsewhere. University students should be immune to the ideas and expressions of the kinds of prejudice the graffiti manifest. Sadly, they are not, but it is important to situate the *CJN*'s reporting in the larger context, to ensure an adequate understanding of the world in which we live and of the ways in which we can combat hatred and prejudice, whether they are directed at Jews or at others.

York takes very seriously its obligation to promote understanding. That might have been clear to readers if the second article, "Educators discuss challenges of Holocaust education," which reported on a panel discussion at York about teaching the Holocaust in set-

tings that might not be expected to be receptive to it, had received proper contextualization.

The article did not note that the panel was presented by the Mark and Gail Appel Program in Holocaust and Anti-Racism Education at York University. That program, co-ordinated by the writers of this letter, is a unique initiative by York to fight prejudice at home and abroad by equipping future educators from Canada, Germany and Poland with the knowledge and skills to teach about the Holocaust and against anti-Semitism and other forms of racism and prejudice. It has been supported by the Appels and other individuals, as well as by governments, universities and charitable foundations in Canada, Poland and Germany since 2001. Almost all of its participants are non-Jews. The program is evidence of the strong, ongoing commitment of

York to fighting all manifestations of prejudice, which is worthy of note.

Professors Michael Brown and Mark Webber
Toronto

Media neglects Holocaust memorials

Holocaust memorials seem to receive less and less attention as time passes and as the ranks of survivors shrink. Jewish media would perform a service to those who lost their lives by continuing coverage for the new generations, lest they forget.

"Neighbours Who Disappeared" an exhibit from the Jewish Museum in Prague, Czech Republic, supported by the Forgotten Ones Civic Association, is on display at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre until the end of March. It was considered important enough that the prime minister of the Czech Republic came to Toronto to officiate at its opening.

Ernest Zucker
Toronto

Seeks information about Niewiadomski

Jan Niewiadomski (also known as John Hansen) was a Polish Jew born in 1926 in Poland and the son of Jadwiga and Kazimierz Kowalewski. He used to live at 182 Jameson Ave. in Toronto and worked for a car insurance company. He died about six years ago. If you have any information about his burial place, please let me know.

Peter Jassem
Chair, Toronto Chapter
Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation of Canada
pjassem@rogers.com
416-775-1572

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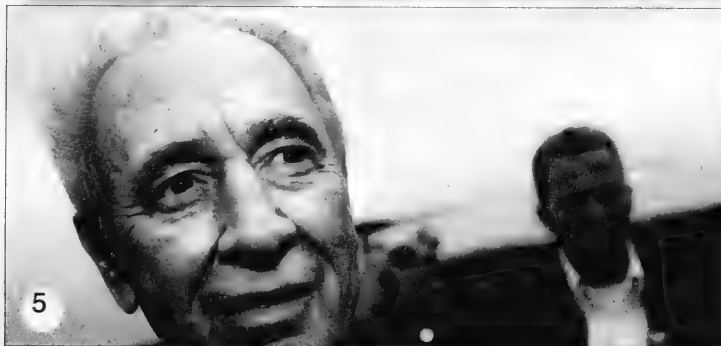
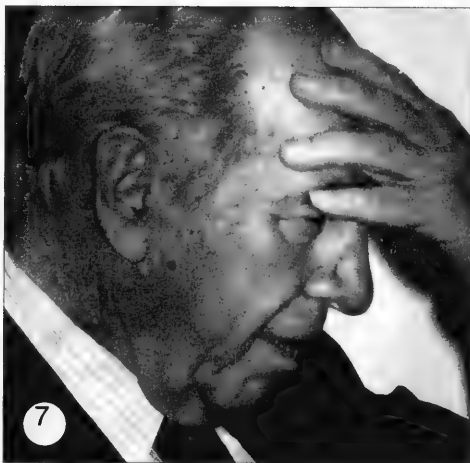
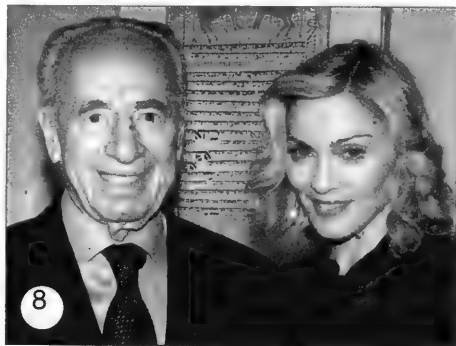
Perspectives

A Purim shpiel of President Shimon Peres



The duties and obligations of the president of the State of Israel are many as well as onerous. This small photo montage of Israeli President Shimon Peres depicts just some of the official state duties that he must discharge. Clockwise from top: 1. He helps some schoolchildren cross the busy streets of Jerusalem. 2. He tickles French President Nicolas Sarkozy during his recent visit to France. 3. He tries to remember the name of a fruit given to him by a youngster. 4. He gets fitted for a new tallit inside the presidential sukkah. 5. He ponders how he will be able to control his fly-away hair. 6. He listens to and appears to enjoy his favourite music aboard an IAF helicopter. 7. The music gives him a headache. 8. He freezes in the aura of Madonna's mystical glow.

[Isranet and Israel Sun photos]



Is McMaster the new frontier?

First held in 2005 at the University of Toronto, "Israeli Apartheid Week" has since broadened its scope considerably. Last month, there were "Israeli Apartheid Week" activities on 28 campuses across the globe, including eight in Canada. There is no evident shortage of funding to stage these events and, with each passing year, the week's programming has become bolder and more egregious.



Lawrence Hart
in Hamilton

And it now appears that what began as a university-based hatefest is now infiltrating our school system as well. This year, for the first time, high school students were bused in to take part in the Toronto event, thus setting a precedent that has obviously worrisome implications.

Whenever challenged, proponents of "Israeli Apartheid Week" have invoked their "right" of free speech as the foundation for their tendentious arguments and, almost without exception, university administrations have gone along with such subterfuge. That the very notion of "Israeli apartheid" is a recognized falsehood and an absurdity, and that even minimal acceptance of the term violates basic tenets of intellectual honesty, seems not to faze them.

However, there has been a ray of hope at McMaster University. In response to complaints from the Jewish Student Association on campus and a member of the community regarding an "Israeli Apartheid Week" banner and offensive anti-Israel handouts, McMaster's new provost, Ilene Busch-Vishniac, intervened. She called to account "Israeli Apartheid Week" organizers, telling them that their banner would not be permitted and that "their activities must show respect and tolerance for everyone" or there would be further consequences. It was a small step, but a very significant and courageous one, fully supported, incidentally, by the university's Human Rights and Equity Services and the McMaster Students Union.

Because of their actions, it was entirely predictable that university administrators would have to withstand a torrent of protest, some of it quite ugly. And they did. But despite what was perceived as some possible backtracking, it's still apparent, based on reported statements by university president Peter George, that the administration is defending its initial position.

Among his comments, George was quoted as affirming that "provost Busch-Vishniac had acted correctly three weeks earlier when she had disallowed a banner headlined 'Israeli apartheid' on the basis that it was unduly inflammatory."

It's perhaps too early to tell how all of this will play itself out both locally and nationally. Has McMaster become the new frontier in the fight against the hateful travesty that goes by the name of "Israeli Apartheid Week"? Only time will tell.

In future columns, I shall expand on what has brought us to this point at McMaster, with a particular focus on the roles played by our students, our faculty and our Jewish communal leadership.

A time to think about social justice in Israel

Aside from merrymaking, during Purim, observant Jews must perform four different deeds: read the Megillah; partake in a festive meal (seudat Purim); send gifts to friends and acquaintances (mishloach manot); and give charity to poor people (matanot le'evyonim).

The fourth of these mitzvot that gives occasion for a broader reckoning about poverty in Israel.

A report published last month by the National Insurance Institute on "Poverty and Inequality in Income Distribution in Israel," covering the period from July 2006 to June 2007, noted that the scope of Israeli poverty has been relatively stable in the last few years. It found that 24.7 per cent of the country's people are poor, with 20.5 per cent of families classified as "needy," and that the incidence of poverty among children is 35.9 per cent. That's 420,000 poor families, with 1,674,800 people, of whom 805,000 are children.

Particularly troubling are figures showing that 54.8 per cent of non-Jewish families live in poverty. A different study, also published this year, found that a whopping 56 per cent of Jerusalem's children are poor (a fact attributable to large haredi and Arab populations in the city). There was also an unexpected rise in poverty among the elderly: it increased from 21.5 per cent in 2006 to 23.5 per cent during the period studied. Other data shows that one-third of the country's dwindling number of Holocaust survivors are living below the poverty line.

By comparison, in Canada, where there's some debate about how to gauge poverty, figures show

that between 4.9 per cent and 10.8 per cent of Canadians (up to 3.5 million people) are poor. According to one study, there's been a six-fold decrease in Canadian poverty over the past 55 years.

By contrast, there is other information that shows Israel's economy is robust. Unemployment is continually falling; inflation is low; wages, private consumption, investments and exports are rising; the GDP has been rising annually at more than five per cent for several years; Israel has the second-largest number of startup companies in the world (after the United States), and it has the largest number of NASDAQ-listed companies outside North America.



Yair Luorstein
in Jerusalem

Despite these signs of optimism, the poverty statistics are worrying.

Israel is moving away from social democratic economic policies and developing into more of a free market economy. The move began in earnest during Benjamin Netanyahu's tenure as finance minister from 2003 to 2005. Many of the economy's successes can be credited to the correct implementation of his policies.

Economic growth has indeed created many new jobs for those who want them, the notion being that these people and their families will become less of a burden on the public purse. However, Netanyahu's strategies also required deep slashes in government handouts, such as child and guaranteed income allowances, which in turn gave rise to further hardships among those who subsist on these allowances. As these payments were cut, many individuals and large fam-

ilies dropped below the poverty line.

The picture is still far from rosy. Complaints are being heard that, like too many other things, our financial system is imitating that of the United States and its laissez faire economy, in which the rich get richer while weaker elements in society are left by the wayside. Many view the situation as a social time bomb, an internal existential threat that's capable of affecting Israel's political situation.

But there are signs of hope, as both the private sector and the government have stepped in to help. NGOs, supported by good people from Israel and abroad, have set up a wide array of aid organizations that provide ample solutions for assorted groups of needy people and their problems. Soup kitchens have sprouted up around the country like mushrooms after a good rain. Volunteerism is flourishing.

The government, which was lambasted for allowing private groups to replace it in dispensing social services, has started implementing a partial about-face. Among other steps, it has boosted child allowances and old-age stipends, as well as payments to Holocaust survivors. It could do so because the treasury is currently full, with surplus shekels from taxes collected from successful businesses and a larger number of employees.

Poverty is both a personal and collective affliction, and no surefire elixir has yet been found. Much must be said for Netanyahu's policies and his setting the economy on a sounder track, but Israel needs a more progressive economic route, based on free market designs but also on social justice and Jewish ideals, such as *matanot le'evyonim*. Let's hope that many fewer poor people will be receiving charity next Purim.

Durban 2009: will the NGOs join Canada?

As the first country to pull out of the United Nations' planned 2009 Durban Review Conference, Canada has re-established its leadership in the field of human rights. Ministers Maxime Bernier and Jason Kenney have boldly declared that the 2001 UN-sponsored World Conference Against Racism (WCAR) "degenerated into open and divisive expressions of intolerance and anti-Semitism that undermined the principles of the United Nations." And the backing provided by both the Liberals and NDP shows that there's broad national support for their position.

This statement provided moral clarity, as well as belated recognition of the mistakes made in 2001, when Canada naively funded many of the participants in the NGO (non-governmental organization) forum at Durban. More than 4000 "delegates" adopted a declaration accusing Israel of "apartheid" and perpetrating a "holocaust." To prevent a repetition, Canada has pledged that any funding that it provides to NGOs can't be used to help them take part in the second Durban conference in 2009.

Following Canada's lead, French President Nicolas Sarkozy also declared that his government would stay away if the 2009 conference was likely to repeat the hatred of 2001. Other European governments are expected to follow, and U.S. officials have made similar statements, although they stopped short of a formal withdrawal. Israel — which pulled its delegation from the 2001 meeting — predictably announced that it would boycott a conference that promoted anti-Semitism.

In contrast, the silence — and in some cases

active complicity of the NGO community — has been disturbing. Predictably, pro-Palestinian groups such as the Canadian Arab Federation attacked the decision for Canada not to participate, absurdly claiming that denunciation of anti-Semitism was a blow to "tolerance and multiculturalism in Canada."



Gerald Steinberg
in Jerusalem

Officials of wealthy and powerful groups such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, which claim to support universal human rights, are hiding behind vague formulations. Both organizations were active in the 2001 forum and failed to speak out against this travesty, and they've been active promoting the Durban strategy of boycotts, divestment and sanctions. Their recent statements condemned

Israeli attempts to end the rocket attacks from Gaza, with false accusations of "collective punishment" and "war crimes."

And the leaders of the radical Montreal-based group Alternatives, which is funded by the Canadian International Development Agency, absurdly said in a press release that "Canada should ask Israel to pay for damages caused by its army," immorally promoting the Palestinian strategy of terror.

Amnesty and HRW have also abstained from adding their names to a mild statement written by the Magenta group in Holland and the Jacob Blaustein Institute. More than 20 groups, including Human Rights First and Rabbis for Human Rights, declared that the 2001 conference included "violations of procedure in the preparatory and drafting processes... racist treatment includ-

ing violence, exclusion and intimidation against Jewish participants, and the misuse of human rights terminology... With a few notable exceptions, the vast majority of groups was silent or refused to speak out."

The signatories pledged to reject hatred and incitement in all its forms, including anti-Semitism, to learn from the shortcomings of the 2001 WCAR, and to work together in a spirit of mutual respect. The members of the Canadian branches of Amnesty International and the donors to Human Rights Watch should demand that the heads of their organizations adopt this pledge.

They can point to the Ford Foundation, whose funds were also used by many anti-Israel NGOs to participate in Durban 2001, but which has since adopted a policy like Canada's to prevent a repetition in 2009. While some gaps in implementation have been uncovered by NGO Monitor (of which I'm executive director), Ford officials have said that they will examine each case. In contrast, the New Israel Fund has yet to adopt a position, which is disturbing, particularly for a group whose members are strong Zionists. The NIF has received \$40 million (US) from the Ford Foundation in recent years, of which a considerable amount goes to radical Arab groups such as Adalah, which also played a major role in the NGO forum in 2001.

Adalah and other recipients of NIF "civil rights" donations are at the forefront of the anti-Israel delegitimation campaigns, often using terms such as "apartheid" and "racist" in documents submitted to UN groups. An NIF pledge to prevent its funds from being used for the 2009 Durban Review Conference would be of particular importance in preventing a rerun.

The Kirshner File

Iraq remains a troubled and divided nation

Five years after the United States and its allies invaded Iraq in a landmark preemptive strike, Iraq is mired in sectarian violence.

On March 20, 2003, the United States, supported by Britain and smaller forces from Australia and Poland, launched a massive land, air and sea attack on Iraq, bent on changing the political landscape in the Middle East. The objectives of Operation Iraqi Freedom, as enunciated by U.S. President George W. Bush, were to disarm Iraq, oust the Baathist regime in Baghdad and bring democracy to that long suffering country.

The Americans failed to find nuclear, chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction, but they did manage to overthrow the Iraqi government, headed by President Saddam Hussein. Whether they can build a civil society in a nation unaccustomed to democracy remains to be seen. Parenthetically, the war was not about oil, since Saddam, his animosity toward the United States notwithstanding, was only too glad to sell the precious commodity to the Americans. In other words, the Bush administration did not have to commit blood and treasure to secure Iraqi oil supplies.

Although it is now fashionable to dismiss the invasion as a catastrophic blunder, it made sense. Iraq was a serial aggressor, having precipitated a protracted war with Iran in 1980, briefly occupied Kuwait in 1990, fired 39 Scud missiles at Israel during the 1991 Gulf War and encouraged Palestinian suicide bombers. Iraq was also a brutal dictatorship where the rule of law was flouted, where civil liberties were ignored and where minorities, such as the Kurds, were routinely oppressed.

Saddam, emboldened by ancient Babylon's empire, was driven by visions of subjugating the Middle East to his imperialist whims. He was a great destabilizing force, a megalomaniac Arab leader whose naked ambitions exceeded his reach and whose inten-

tions posed a clear and present danger to his neighbours.

Although the "coalition of the willing" conquered Iraq in less than three weeks, with a minimum of casualties, the struggle for Iraq really began after Bush, striking a triumphant pose aboard the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln, declared an end "to all major combat operations" on May 1.

The optimism he projected was premature, to say the least. The United States soon faced an insurgency characterized by roadside ambushes and suicide bombings. The perpetrators, who exacted a fearsome toll, were disaffected Baathists who resented foreign intervention and yearned to return to power and

starry-eyed jihadists – mainly Saudis – in the thrall of Al Qaeda's Islamic fundamentalism.

With Baghdad's fall in April, widespread looting broke out, leaving Iraqis with the disheartening impression that the Americans were not in full control. With an insufficient number of troops on the ground, the United States could not maintain order on a consistent basis. Donald Rumsfeld, then-U.S. secretary of defence, had disregarded a recommendation from a former army chief of staff, Gen. Eric Shinseki, that several hundred thousand soldiers would be required to pacify Iraq.

Not having heeded his sage advice, the United States paid the price for its misplaced confidence. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, the former commander of the U.S. expeditionary force in Iraq, said recently that the Bush administration's handling of the war was "incompetent" and that its outcome has been "a nightmare with no end in sight."

Facing the grim prospect of getting bogged down in a quagmire, the United States, in line with a proposal made by the Iraq Study Group in December 2006, has adopted a new strategy, popularly known as the "surge."

Since January 2007, 30,000 additional U.S. troops, backed by Iraqi soldiers, have been

ordered to stamp out violence, first in Baghdad and then in other trouble spots. If the Americans cannot end the suicide bombings, roadside attacks, assassinations, random murders and kidnappings, they will not be able to stabilize the country and persuade Shiite and Sunni Muslims to work together for its greater good.

The "surge" has succeeded to some extent. Gen. David Petraeus, the top American commander in Iraq, said recently that violent attacks have fallen by 60 per cent, a development that can be attributed to tougher U.S. tactics in the form of stepped up patrols and raids against insurgent strongholds, the formation of pro-American militias known as Awakening Councils, and the decision by the Mahdi Army – led by the virulently anti-American Shiite cleric Moktada al-Sadr – to observe a ceasefire.

But as Petraeus added in a note of caution, the security gains of the past several months have been "tenuous" and "fragile," and "still much hard work" lies ahead. Suicide bombings still rip through Baghdad and other cities. Since the deployment of more U.S. troops to the Iraqi capital, the insurgents have shifted their focus from Anbar province to the provinces of Diyala and Salahuddin. Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia has established something of a beachhead in Iraq. Still, the downturn in violence has resulted in a reduction of U.S. casualties so far in 2008. Last year, 899 U.S. soldiers were killed, compared to 822 in 2006. Since the invasion, nearly 4,000 Americans have died in combat.

Petraeus' success in curbing violence, however, has not dramatically altered the dynamics of sectarianism. These rifts, which rarely surfaced during Saddam's era, have displaced millions of Iraqis in fierce outbursts of ethnic cleansing. In Samarra, one of Islam's holiest cities, terrorists firebombed a sacred shrine and pushed Iraq into civil war. In Baghdad, mixed neighbourhoods are almost a thing of the past. In Mosul, Sunnis have virtually

erased the Kurdish presence in the western half of that northern city.

The National Intelligence Estimate, an assessment compiled by 16 American spy agencies, holds out little hope that Iraqi politicians – who define themselves by their ethnicity and religion – can bring the warring groups to heel. The current Iraqi prime minister, Nuri Kamal al-Maliki, has turned Iraq's security forces into an instrument of Shiite domination and intimidation and failed to enact some important parliamentary bills, such as legis-

lation to share oil revenues fairly. Maliki wants to empower the majority Shiite community, which was marginalized by Saddam and his predecessors. Maliki's implicit sectarian agenda, which is clearly at odds with U.S. policy, has thwarted efforts to implant a model of democratic governance in Iraq.

True, Iraqis have voted in national elections, elected a national assembly and provincial parliaments and adopted a constitution. But these achievements may become irrelevant if sectarianism persists.

Iraq, which was suffocated by United Nations sanctions prior to 2003, is still experiencing problems in improving the delivery of basic services such as electricity and health. By one account, 70 per cent of Iraqis do not even have access to adequate water supplies, while 90 per cent of Iraqi hospitals lack proper medical and surgical supplies.

Despite the unpopularity of the war in the United States, the Bush administration has no intention of withdrawing from Iraq in the foreseeable future. Robert Gates, the U.S. secretary of defence, has said that the United States will remain in Iraq for years to come, while Bush has warned that a hasty pullout would unsettle the region, encourage Al Qaeda and hand a victory to Iran. Israel's prime minister, Ehud Olmert, has sounded a similar theme, saying that a "premature" U.S. withdrawal would be dangerous. But if the Democrats defeat the Republicans in November's presidential election, there will probably be a phased American pullout from Iraq.



Sheldon Kirshner
in Toronto



Gen. David Petraeus

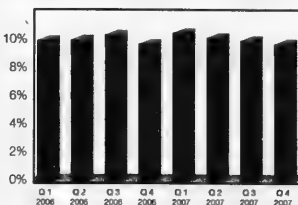


Nuri Kamal al-Maliki

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Westmount Shul promotes Israel's 60th

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Thornhill's Westmount Shul and Learning Centre is commemorating Israel's 60th anniversary with a two-month long series of lectures and learning activities.

Titled "60 Days for 60 Years," the shul will host 13 speaking engagements by various local rabbis and experts on Israel. The campaign is part of a new global initiative spearheaded by Britain's TRIBE: Young United Synagogue, with cities in the United States, United Kingdom and Israel all taking part.

The series is patterned after TRIBE's 2006 worldwide education initiative, titled "60 Days for 6 Million," honouring the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz with a book containing 60 essays about the Shoah.

As part of the latest campaign, the Westmount Shul is distributing a new book, *60 Days for 60 Years: Israel*, that contains essays

from international scholars and rabbis honouring those who've died defending Israel since its birth.

So far, 5,000 copies have been distributed in the Toronto Jewish community, and another 150,000 have been distributed worldwide through TRIBE.

The book also comes with a learning card containing 60 chronological events, starting from Israel's Independence Day to a January 2007 suicide bombing in an Eilat bakery.

Marc Lavine, a Westmount Shul member and co-chair of the Canadian program, said the objective of the "60 Days" campaign is to get people thinking and learning more about Israel through Torah.

"Our shul took a lead in the '60 for 6 million project,' and that touched a lot of member families who went home and sat down to take a few minutes and learn a little something from Torah," he said.

This year's campaign lecture series kicked

off March 10 with an event at the Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation (BAYT) shul in Thornhill.

It featured Rabbi Reuven Bulka, spiritual leader of Ottawa's Congregation Machzikei Hadas and co-president of Canadian Jewish Congress, who gave a talk addressing the question "Do Jews in the Diaspora Have the Right to Criticize Israel?"

Prior to ceding the podium to Rabbi Bulka, Rabbi Yossi Michalowicz, the Westmount Shul's spiritual leader, led off the evening by telling the nearly 100 people assembled that only a return to the Torah can save Israel.

Referring to the ongoing woes in Israel and how best to overcome them, Rabbi Michalowicz said, "The best way to reconquer the land is to... learn the forgotten Torah. Unfortunately, many Jews are no longer people of the Book. When we can reconquer the Book, then who knows what can happen in Israel."

Peppering his discourse with various biblical and talmudic references, Rabbi Bulka delivered a 45-minute speech castigating people who condemn Israel.

"Do Jews have a right to criticize Israel? The short answer? Absolutely, yes. But is it right to do so?" he asked rhetorically, adding that the Torah gives Jews the right to do what they want, but asks them to "do what's right."

Rabbi Bulka continued: "We assume that when someone criticizes Israel... they understand the full nuance of the situation. But it's arrogant to assume [Diaspora Jews] know more than what Israelis know. [Israel] is a country besieged by all sides... in all of history, there's no other country [that has been] so kind to the people who want to harm it."

He added that at least Canada's current government is not one of those condemning Israel for its actions.

"They get it," Rabbi Bulka said.



Rabbis Reuven Bulka, right, and Yossi Michalowicz at the "60 Days for 60 Years" opening lecture last week.

[Rick Naor photo]

Hammering home another point, Rabbi Bulka said Jews who criticize Israel pose an even greater danger for the country, because it gives non-Jews a way to mask the real reason they critique Israel: anti-Semitism.

"Deep down, the people who criticize Israel won't shed a tear if Israel disappears," he said. "This is the danger of a world mindset in which people [who hate Israel] can say, 'I'm not so bad, because there are Jews who agree with me.'"

Rabbi Bulka said Jews now have an obligation to never speak ill of Israel.

"Anytime anyone opens their mouth to criticize Israel outside of context, is irresponsible," he said. "They have a right to do it, but it's morally corrupt to do it in these times. We need to rejoice at [Israel turning] 60. The enemy would deny us to rejoice. We need to deny them this."

In the upcoming weeks, the Westmount Shul will present weekly lectures on topics ranging from historical perspectives on Israel to current Zionist philosophy on the Holy Land.

The closing program for the "60 Days for 60 Years" campaign is on May 6 which is also Yom Hazikaron, and will feature a discussion on the topic "Insanity or Inspiration: Why Risk Living in Israel?"

For more information, visit www.westmountshul.com.

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by Adolf Ratzka 2005

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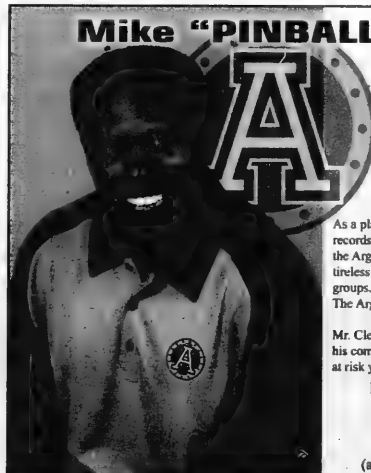
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Greater Toronto Area

Leo Baeck director resigns over explicit poetry

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The school director at the centre of a controversy over sexually explicit and violent poetry posted on the Internet has resigned.

David Prashker, director of the Leo Baeck Day School, tendered his resignation late last week. The resignation will take effect Aug. 31 and he remains on a paid leave of absence until then, said Brian Simon, president of the school's board of directors.

Simon declined any further comment.

The school, which teaches 800 students from kindergarten through Grade 8, has been shaken over the poetry, which appeared on Prashker's personal website. Parents were alerted to it through an anonymous e-mail that was sent in early March. Many reacted with concern over the explicit nature of the poems and their references to rape and murder.

In one poem, *Voluntary Admission*, Prashker wrote, "I raped her lust I con-

dess," while in *A Song of Self-Overcoming*, he writes, "The first act of killing is the hardest yet the bullet like a body pierces the pool of flesh and blood is much thicker than water and the second time is remarkably straightforward."

Leo Baeck's board of directors responded to parents' concerns by establishing a sub-committee to review the website, make recommendations and report to the board.

In a letter to parents prior to Prashker's resignation, Simon also stated that "the board intends to retain an information technology specialist to review the security of the school's electronic mailing lists. The fact that this e-mail was sent to so many parents suggests the possibility that someone accessed proprietary electronic information of the school without authorization."

As of *The CJN's* press time, there was no indication who was responsible for the e-mail.

Continued on page 32

Anti-Israel resolution bumped at teachers' meet

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

A resolution that called on Ontario Catholic teachers to discuss a boycott of Israel and suggested that Israel practises apartheid failed to make it to the floor at the group's annual general meeting last week.

The resolution, presented by the Toronto secondary unit of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA), was not discussed because of a backed-up agenda, a source who requested anonymity told *The CJN*.

More than 200 resolutions were presented to the meeting, but only about half were addressed. "I can tell you it was not a burning issue that anyone was discussing," the source said.

B'nai Brith Canada described the resolution as one-sided, discriminatory and biased against Israel.

The document, obtained by *The CJN*, incorporated a 2005 statement by the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic & Cultural Boycott of Israel, which was endorsed by 170 Palestinian organizations.

That document claimed Israel's occupation had damaged Palestinian society and led to "the denial of educational rights for

Palestinians by invasions, closures, checkpoints, curfews and shootings and arrests of teachers, lecturers and students."

It accuses Israel of ethnic cleansing, "persistent violations of international law" and constructing "the colonial wall" (the security barrier). It calls on supporters to boycott Israel and "to pressure your respective states to impose embargoes and sanctions against Israel."

In a news release that preceded the teachers' meeting, B'nai Brith stated: "We were first alerted to the problem by an OECTA union member concerned that the two resolutions whitewash Palestinian terrorism and call for a boycott against the Jewish State."

"The disturbing trend of what appears to be a growing anti-Israel mindset at the union level that is now beginning to permeate schools as well as universities," said Frank Dimant, B'nai Brith's executive vice-president.

"We urge the OECTA to adopt a principled stance by rejecting categorically the anti-Israel mindset... OECTA teachers should raise their democratic voices to demand that the good name of their union is not hijacked by a politicized anti-Israel agenda," Dimant added.



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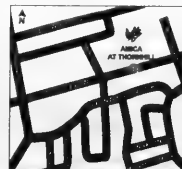
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Greater Toronto Area

Darchei Noam lecture memorializes young academic

By RITA POLIAKOV
Special to The C.J.N.

A life was celebrated March 9 at the first annual Elka Klein Memorial Lecture, held at Congregation Darchei Noam.

Klein, a professor of Judaic studies at the University of Cincinnati, died three years ago at the age of 39 after battling ovarian cancer. Most of her professional life was spent studying Jewish medieval history.

"She was a very serious intellectual," said her father, Martin Klein, a Darchei Noam member and a professor emeritus of African history at the University of Toronto. "Death interrupted an ongoing seminar in Jewish history."

This lecture, which featured University of Toronto history professor Natalie Davis, was the first in a series that aims to spread Klein's infatuation with history and Judaism.

Davis, a former professor of Klein's, looked out over a packed room as she spoke about the relationship between 18th-century Jews and their slaves in the Dutch colony of Suriname, a subject, she assured the audience, that would have fascinated her former student.

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The Canadian Jewish News
extends its heartfelt condolences
to our colleague and friend

Honey Mahl

on the passing of her husband,

Jerry Mahl ז"ל

Dear father and father-in-law

to Jill & Ken Daiter, Tammy,

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torney General of Canada.

"I think Elka would have liked the topic I'm talking about tonight," she said with a smile, allowing her glasses to slide to the tip of her nose.

Using information gleaned from archives, Davis examined how Jewish citizens would convert their slaves to Judaism.

This, she surmised, would have impressed Klein.

"She loved archives, and I share that with her. There's lots of [information] in the archives in the Netherlands and it's just exciting to work with them, and Elka [would agree.] I evoke her spirit as I talk about it," Davis said.

Davis' lecture, which was taken from her upcoming fourth book, shared some similarities with Klein's work: both historians shared the idea that in order to understand Jewish history, one must examine not just a Jewish community but its surroundings and the communities around it.

While speaking about Klein's work, her mother, Suzanne Klein, agreed with this sentiment.

"[Elka's] conception of Jewish history was that the Jews lived in two worlds and those worlds were intimately connected. [She believed] that you cannot understand Jewish history and the lives of Jews without placing them in the context of the world. [Jews] affected the world they lived in and that world affected them," her mother said.

While Klein lived in the United States, her parents chose to memorialize her in Toronto at her first congregation, Darchei Noam.

"Elka grew up in Toronto and Toronto is very much a part of her," her father said.

Klein's interest in her religion started from a young age.

"We were a secular family, but [Elka] wanted to be bat mitzvahed. She really went on from there," her father said. "At a certain point, she wanted to study medieval Jewish history."

Her pride in Judaism was contagious and spread throughout her circle of friends.

"She had no self-consciousness about being Jewish in genteel company. Many of her gentle friends said she got them to understand the significance of Judaism," her father said.

Through what will become a yearly event, Klein's parents hope to get others interested in her area of study.

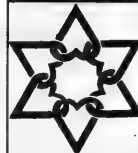
Ricki Grushcow, one of many to attend the lecture, said Davis' presentation did just that.

"It was very interesting. It was something I had known nothing about, and I'm intrigued by the slavery-conversion connection," Grushcow said. "It's important to know as much as you can about your heritage and culture. I grew up with a narrow framework. [The lecture] spurred me on to do more."

Klein's father, who describes himself as secular, said he was able to learn from his daughter.

"She got me interested in Jewish history. There's no better way to remember her by," he said of the lecture series.

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UJA, CIJA honour Italian publisher

By **ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF**
Staff Reporter

Two leading organizations of the Jewish community have awarded its 2008 Words and Deeds Leadership Award to Toronto businessman Tony Gagliano, executive chair and CEO of St. Joseph Communications.

Gagliano, who is Italian, received the award March 6 from UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and the Canadian Council for Jewish Advocacy (CIJA) — co-hosts of the gala dinner event at Toronto's Sheraton Centre hotel — in recognition of his commitment to and achievements in the Canadian community.

The national award, established in 2006, recognizes "Canadian leaders whose contribution to humanitarian causes, tolerance and inclusion in Canadian society has been outstanding."

Prior recipients include Gordon M. Nixon, president and CEO of RBC Financial Group and Ted Rogers, president and CEO of Rogers Communications.

"Tony's record of community support is superb and he has really just begun," said CIJA co-chair Brent Belzberg in a release. "[Gagliano] is full of ideas on how to improve quality of life in our cities, including hugely creative and successful initiative such as the Luminato cultural festival in Toronto."

David Koschitzky, chair of UJA Federation, echoed Belzberg's remarks, saying the Jewish community was happy to "celebrate Tony Gagliano and his remarkable work to benefit all citizens."

Aside from his business accomplishments,

Gagliano, 49, is also an honorary board member of Scouts Canada; a member of the Young Presidents' Organization; on the boards of Toronto's St. Michael's Hospital, the Toronto Community Foundation, the Canadian Club, and the Ryerson Foundation; and he's vice-president of the Art Gallery of Ontario.

He was also named to Canada's Top 40 under 40 list in 1995.

In 1996, Gagliano founded the St. Joseph Foundation, through which his company donates 10 per cent of its yearly profits to causes such as children's charities, health care, education and the arts.

In accepting the award, Gagliano emphasized how he was raised with strong family values, and he paid respect to his parents, Gaetano and Giuseppina, who founded St. Joseph's as a family business in 1956 in their home's garage, just two years after they immigrated to Canada from Italy.

Gagliano also thanked and paid homage to both the Jewish and Italian communities.

"There can be no denying the contribution, in words and deeds, made by the Jewish community to culture and life here in Canada," he said. "Many of our greatest public, artistic and business leaders have hailed from the Jewish community and have worked tirelessly for the betterment of our society. I am honoured to be able to say that many of these people are also my friends."

He continued: "The fact is that the Jewish and Italian communities share many values in common: values of hard work, integrity, family, giving back to society, love of the arts... not to mention a love of great food. As a group we are allies, friends and

collaborators and will always be."

Gagliano also extolled the virtue of hard work to bridge cultural gaps and unite Canadians via projects such as Luminato, a multicultural arts festival that he co-founded last year.

"The core values of Luminato are accessibility, collaboration and diversity, the very same values that are reflected today in the UJA and CIJA. Quite frankly, they are Canada's values," he said.

"It is in the spirit of those values that I am proud to report that, this June, at Luminato 2008, as part of more than 100 events that are taking place, the works of the renowned Nobel Prize-winning author, Isaac Bashevis Singer, will be celebrated by two modern novelists, Dara Horn and David Bezmozgis... [Singer] believed in the power of creativity and the arts. He spoke of the arts as having the power to change the world."

Gagliano said he hopes that the "cultural renaissance" being experienced by Toronto will influence people to become more tolerant of each other and lead Canadians to embrace their cultural differences and lead the world as a compassionate society.

"To build a great life, it is essential to help build great communities first. My father, who is now 90 years old, has shown me through his words and deeds that we all have a responsibility to serve a cause that is greater than our self-interest," Gagliano said.

Luminato 2008 will begin June 6 with an opening night performance by Jewish Montreal jazz starlet, Nikki Yanofsky at Yonge-Dundas Square.

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Remembering the Past, Shaping the Future

Financial problems force She'arim to close

Continued from page 3

In December, he said, the committee was "still working toward finding a solution."

Although month-to-month costs remain the same, the funds advanced by the federation at the beginning of the year have already been used up, Harlang said.

By the end of the school year, he said, the deficit will probably be "in the \$600,000 to \$700,000 range."

One of the reasons for the timing of the board's decision was to allow sufficient time before the start of the 2008-2009 school year to put a plan in place, Harlang said.

Many parents expressed concern about their kids returning to the type of school where they had negative experiences before starting She'arim.

"What makes you think it's going to work now?" asked one angry parent.

Others cited social issues, including bullying and teasing. "I would ask you, please, do not compare what the plan is for next year with anything you have experienced before your children went to She'arim," said Epstein.

To help ease the transition, each parent and child will be interviewed, and each child's individual education program carefully analyzed, Epstein said.

"The reason it may work," Harlang said, "is because they're going to take a different approach."

He added that parents must bear in mind that the "status quo can't continue."

Several parents expressed the Jewish community of not caring about the school.

"The [proposed new building that is to replace the BJCC] had no allowance for this school. To me the writing was on the wall years ago," said one. "There are hundreds of millions of dollars being spent on buildings... Why aren't we getting the money?"

"The fact is, you do get money from the federation," Harlang replied.

"Obviously not enough," muttered one audience member. "Every single organization asks for more money," Harlang said. "[The federation has] formulas, and there's not enough for every good project to be funded."

Some parents suggested moving the teachers as well as the students to the new location. "You have all these people with years of experience. They know what they're doing," said one.

Audience members also asked about the availability in the

new school of the kind of non-teaching staff found at She'arim, such as social workers, psychologists and art and music therapists.

"My hope is that we can provide everything these children need," Epstein said.

"In my heart, I can't believe that you have really put the children first," one father said.

Harlang and Braun stressed the importance of doing what is best for the children.

"And not just these kids," Harlang said. "There'll be more in future years."

A transition team will include parents of She'arim students, said Harlang.

Shaviv, whose school takes in about nine incoming She'arim alumni a year in Grade 9, told *The C/JN* that they have "been very well trained in techniques to compensate for their learning disabilities."

Several parents wondered what would happen if the other school did not agree to house current She'arim students.

A few parents proposed taking the effort and money being put into closing the school and putting them into keeping it open instead, at least for one more year.

But Harlang said that, as time progressed, "we had to make a decision."

The committee "didn't want to come to this conclusion in May or June," he said. "We didn't want to come to this conclusion at all."

One father asked, "When ever have the Jewish people decided that a budget would stop a good thing going? When [Jewish] doctors could not find a place to work, mothers did not say being a doctor is not a viable option."

"We built our own hospital," he said.

Rabbi Joseph Kelman, a founder of She'arim, told parents that he wanted them to help him raise money so that the school could remain open.

"I realize that we may have to close, but my feeling was: What's the rush? Let's give the community a chance. I'm hoping the Toronto Jewish community will help out and prevent the closing," he told *The C/JN* the day after the meeting.

Epstein told parents that there are "models" other than the She'arim approach that have worked successfully in other cities.

At the meeting, Manoim lauded the teachers, who she said put their concern for the students "at the top of their agenda," over and above their own now-uncertain future.

Her voice breaking, Manoim said she and her staff "are totally committed to working with the Mercatz and the federation to make this transition the most comfortable and efficient one possible."

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WHAT SHOULD CANADA DO?



Dr. Payam Akhavan, an expert in International Humanitarian Law, is Associate Professor, Faculty of Law at McGill University, a former Senior Fellow at Yale University, and an authority on Iran. He was war crimes prosecutor in International Criminal Tribunals for former Yugoslavia and Rwanda.



Jonathan Kay is Managing Editor for *Comment on the National Post* newspaper and op-ed columnist. An award-winning journalist, he contributes frequently to *Commentary Magazine*, *The New York Post*, among many other leading publications.

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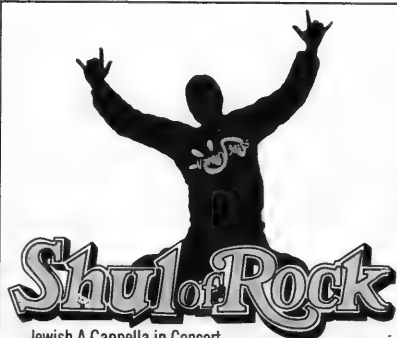
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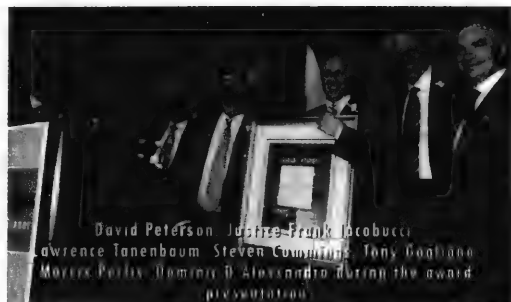
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One Thousand Participants Attend UJA Federation and CIJA Host



David Peterson, Justice Frank Iacobucci, Lawrence Tanenbaum, Steven Cummings, Tony Gagliano, Morris Perlis, Dominic D'Alessandro during the award presentation.

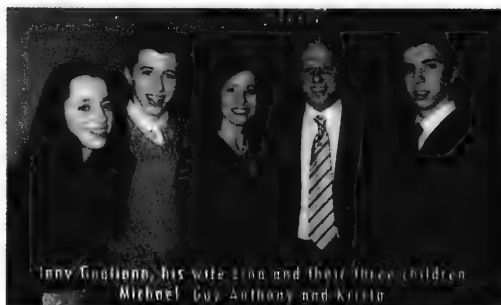
UJA and CIJA Sponsor Community Celebration

The shared values and strong friendship between Toronto's Jewish and Italian communities were recently highlighted in a glittering evening attended by close to 1000 of Canada's top business, political and cultural leaders. This year's annual Words & Deeds Leadership Award Dinner, hosted by UJA Federation and the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA), was held on March 6th. Award recipient Tony Gagliano was celebrated throughout the evening by guests as a shining example of how great communities are built and sustained by great leadership from within our diverse Canadian cultural mosaic. The Executive Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of St. Joseph Communications was recognized for his contributions to the economic, cultural and social wellbeing of Toronto.

"In Tony Gagliano, CIJA and UJA are proud to be able to honour the strong historical and cultural ties between the Jewish and Italian-Canadian communities as well as the tolerant Canada we have all contributed to building and strengthening for the future," said Steven Cummings, founding Co-Chair of CIJA, and honorary Co-Chair of the evening.

The evening also shone a spotlight on both UJA Federation and CIJA and their roles in creating caring communities, practicing social justice and fighting against extremism and antisemitism. "We are delighted to be here representing the vital work that these two organizations do – not only for the Jewish community but also for the country as a whole, working together for the preservation of Canadian values of peace, respectful discourse and diversity," noted UJA Federation Chair David Koschitzky.

The Dinner Co-Chairs were Dominic D'Alessandro, President and Chief Executive Officer of Manulife Financial, and former Ontario Premier David Peterson, Senior Partner and Chairman, Cassels Brock & Blackwell LLP. They were joined by Honorary Co-Chairs Steven Cummings, John Cassaday, Frank Iacobucci, Morris Perlis, and Lawrence Tanenbaum. The event was emceed by David Peterson, and attended not only by Ontario Lieutenant Governor David Onley but also by many elected representatives.



Tony Gagliano, his wife Gina and their three children: Michael, Guy, Anthony and Krista.

Gagliano Praised by Diverse Communities

Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel once said that "Words can sometimes, in moments of grace, attain the quality of deeds." In honouring Tony Gagliano, recipient of this year's Words & Deeds Leadership Award, UJA Federation and the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA) recognized one of Canada's most committed community leaders whose actions reflect the values that drive both organizations. As the Executive Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of St. Joseph Communications, Gagliano oversees a publishing empire that includes *Toronto Life Magazine*, *Fashion Magazine*, *Canadian Family*, *Wedding Bells*, and countless cultural and philanthropic enterprises including St. Joseph Foundation, which allocates funds to the relief of poverty, the advancement of education, and the environment.

"It is particularly fitting that the Jewish community, through UJA Federation and CIJA, be our hosts in honouring Tony Gagliano tonight. Fitting because the Jewish community – perhaps more than any other – has, for such a long time, understood the moral obligation of helping one's neighbours and fellow citizens. Indeed, 'giving back' is a distinction of Jewish people everywhere. And giving back is what Tony Gagliano is all about," said Dominic D'Alessandro, Co-Chair of the dinner.

Gagliano has been involved with the Young Presidents' Association, St. Michael's Hospital and St. Michael's Hospital Foundation, Ryerson University in Toronto, the Art Gallery of Ontario, and Scouts Canada. St. Joseph was the first corporation in Canada to receive the prestigious *Financial Post* award for environmental excellence and has become a member of the Forest Stewardship Council – an international non-profit organization founded in 1993 to support environmentally appropriate management of the world's forests.

As a passionate supporter of the arts, Gagliano is a founding partner and Co-Chair of Luminato, Toronto's Festival of Arts & Creativity, which last year attracted a million people.

"The fact is that the Jewish and Italian communities share many values in common. As a group we are allies, friends and collaborators and will always be. I am honoured to be here tonight to receive the Words & Deeds Leadership Award," said Gagliano.



Steven Cummings, CIJA Co-Chair, Tony Gagliano, Words & Deeds Award recipient and David Koschitzky, UJA Federation Chair.

Gina and Tony Gagliano.

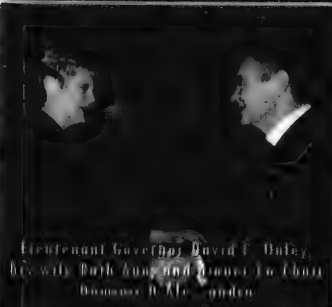
Sarah and Morris Perlis, Honorary Co-Chairs with Tony Gagliano.

Words & Deeds Dinner 2008

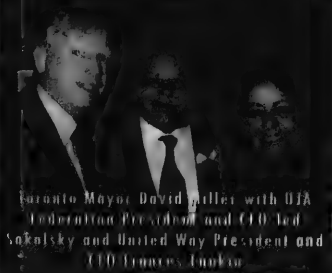
Evening to Honour Tony Gagliano

Dignitaries who attended this year's Words & Deeds Leadership Award include:

MP Navdeep Bains
 MP Carolyn Bennett
 MP Maurizio Bevilacqua
 MP Olivia Chow
 Toronto Archbishop Thomas Collins
 MP Dr. Ruby Dhalla
 Dinner Co-Chair Dominic D'Alessandro
 Senator Consiglio de Nino
 Deputy Mayor of Markham Jack Heath
 Mr. Justice Frank Iacobucci, retired Justice of The Supreme Court of Canada, and honorary Co-Chair of The Words & Deeds Leadership Award Dinner
 Vaughan Mayor Linda Jackson
 MP Susan Kadis
 MP Jason Kenney, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism and Canadian Identity)
 MPP Monte Kwinter, Parliamentary Assistant to the Provincial Minister of Economic Development and Trade
 Mississauga Mayor Hazel McCallion
 Senator Michael Meighen
 Toronto Mayor David Miller
 Ontario Lieutenant Governor David C. Onley
 Dinner Co-Chair David Peterson, former Premier of Ontario
 Italian Consul General Emanuele Punzo
 Former Ontario Premier Bob Rae
 MPP Greg Sorbara, Former Minister of Finance for Ontario
 Honorary Co-Chair Lawrence Tanenbaum
 MPP David Zimmer, and Parliamentary Assistant to the Attorney-General of Ontario



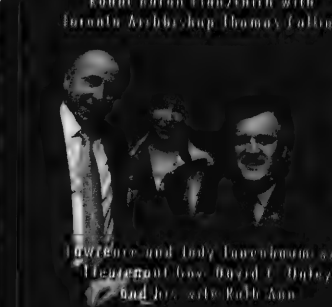
Lieutenant Governor David C. Onley, with Ruth Ann and Daniel in their homes in Toronto.



Toronto Mayor David Miller with UJA Federation President and CEO Ted Sokolsky and United Way President and CEO Frances Jackson.



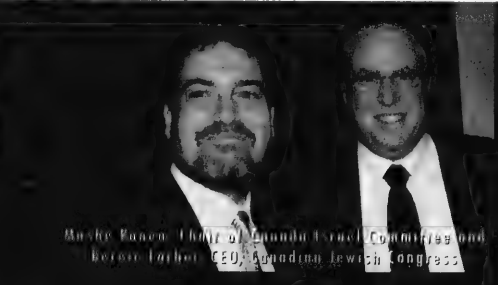
Rabbi Aaron Glanzberg with Toronto Archbishop Thomas Collins.



Lawrence and Judy Tanenbaum with Lieutenant Gov. David C. Onley and his wife Ruth Ann.



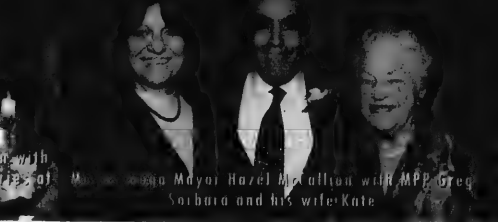
Alan Winer, Senior Vice Chair, UJA Federation, with members of the Gagliano family and dignitaries of the event.



Musky Ramon, Chair of Canada-Israel Committee and former Israeli CEO, Canadian Jewish Congress.



Linda From, CEO, and her husband Howard Sokolow.



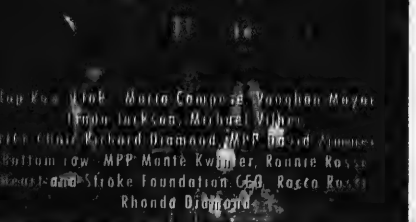
Mississauga Mayor Hazel McCallion with MPP Greg Sorbara and his wife Kate.



Former Ontario Premier David Peterson with UJA CEO Hershel Litzin.



Linda Fislower, CEO, and Rachael Fisher, President, UJA Federation Canada.

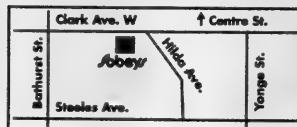


Top Row: Rick Martin, Composer, Vaughan Mayor Linda Jackson, Michael Vilner, Vice Chair, Richard Diamond, MPP David Zimmer, Bottom Row: MPP Monte Kwinter, Ronnie Rove, Heart and Stroke Foundation CEO, Ragot Rove, Rhonda Diamond.

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Greater Toronto Area

Israel Museum gets youthful support

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Through a new organization called the Young Associates of the Canadian Friends of the Israel Museum, two twentysomethings hope to expose Toronto's young professionals to one of Israel's world-renowned institutions.

Jessica Waks and Rina Zigler, the CFIM Young Associates co-chairs, are working to raise the public profile of Jerusalem's Israel Museum, which is home to about half a million works of art, Judaica and archaeological finds.

On March 13, Waks and Zigler attracted about 130 young professionals to the group's official launch with an event called Red, White and Moose, held at contemporary Canadian artist Charles Pachter's private gallery, called the Moose Factory.

"I think a lot of people my age are starting to get interested in culture, wanting to start their own art collections, and this is a great way for them to learn about a great museum, a great institution, to give back to Israel in some way, but also to enrich themselves culturally," said Waks, 23, who works as a communications co-ordinator for the Discovery Channel at CTV.

"Obviously, we're not saving lives here. We're not curing cancer, but culture is so important. Culture and art is people's way of channelling creativity."

CFIM is one of 14 organizations that financially support the Israel Museum. Funds raised by CFIM go to providing free admission to Israeli children of all faiths and ethnicities.

Zigler, a 22-year-old McGill University art history graduate, said she always wanted to find a way to get involved with CFIM.

In June 2005, Zigler moved to Jerusalem for seven months to go to Hebrew University and to intern in the Israel Museum's contemporary art department.

She said that when she returned, she was disappointed to learn that so few young adults and art enthusiasts knew anything about the museum.

"You don't know that it has an amazing contemporary section, that it has a beautiful sculpture garden... You don't know about the youth wing," Waks said.

This past summer, Zigler volunteered to help organize the Royal Ontario Museum's Canada Collects event, which was held in October.

During the planning process, she decided to contact Waks, whom she had known since high school, to see if they could inject more of a youthful presence into the event.

After attracting a few young professionals to Canada Collects, they organized an informal wine-and-cheese CFIM event at Toronto's Lonsdale Gallery in November, and from there, they formed the CFIM Young Associates committee, which consists of about 12 young adults in their 20s and 30s.

"Jessica and I got in touch, and the two of

us, before we knew it, were the co-chairs of the Young Associates, and we've been starting up this program ever since. This is our first major event, our first independent event, our debut on the Toronto scene," Zigler said.

Pachter, who is best known for his mural, *Hockey Knights in Canada*, in Toronto's College Street subway station, lent his private gallery to the sold-out event, which had a Canadian red-and-white theme.

"[The venue] is a modern masterpiece," Waks said. "It has won a bunch of architect-



Rina Zigler, left, and Jessica Waks are co-chairs of the Young Associates of the Canadian Friends of the Israel Museum.

tural awards, and the thing about Charlie is that he has such a connection to the museum. He is an artist, he's Jewish and his mom was [the late] Sara Pachter," who was an avid supporter of Israel and led countless tours to the Holy Land.

Although there was a strong Jewish aspect to the launch, the invited crowd wasn't exclusively Jewish.

"Our belief is that the museum is one of Israel's best institutions, and to help project Israel for her democratic values and for her cultural identity, it detracts from another side of the country that the media often projects," Zigler said.

Waks said that at the event at the Lonsdale Gallery, they showed a video about the children involved with the museum's youth wing.

"After the Katyusha rockets in the north [of Israel] destroyed all the forests [during the 2006 Second Lebanon War], the kids from the youth wing in the museum came and painted these beautiful installations on wooden tree cut outs in the forest. It was such a powerful image to have kids from Christian, Muslim and Jewish backgrounds all coming together and expressing themselves through art and promoting the idea of peace."

Zigler said she hopes the Young Associates will help expose Torontonians to one of Israel's finest institutions.

"It's a really great way for the international arts community to get a better understanding of the country, and we think it's a really great institution to support. We want to target young people who, if they're not interested in Israel, they're interested in art, and by virtue of being interested in arts, they'll come to the events and learn about the museum."

Ten tips to help celebrate an environmentally friendly Purim

Purim celebrates unity and community. We give one another gifts of food and distribute money to the poor to remember how we were rescued from Haman's plot to destroy the Jewish people by pulling together for three days of communal fasting, prayer and self reflection.

Sadly, in today's consumer-oriented society, our community spirit is being smothered in layers of cellophane, excessive packaging, a surplus of junk food and expensive costumes. This needless glitter is damaging not only to our pocket and our health, but to our environment as well.

Sviva Israel offers the following suggestions for creating a more eco-friendly Purim:

1) **Trash the baskets** – What can you do with so many straw baskets and gift bags? Package your mishloach manot in useful, reusable containers such as storage containers, glasses, mugs and pasta drainers for year-round usability.

2) **Wrap it up** – For the more creative, wrap your food items up in a pretty hand towel, an apron, cloth table napkins, oven mitts or other useful fabric item.

3) **Use sustainable stuffing** – Instead of padding your package with shredded cellophane or coloured paper, use banana chips, sunflower seeds or popcorn (only for recipients over three years old).

4) **Bag it** – Follow the fashion trend and give your gifts in eco-friendly cloth bags that your friends can reuse for shopping.

5) **Include naturally sweet foods** – Replace the candy and chocolates with fresh and dried fruit or fruit leathers, unsweetened fruit juices and other healthy products.

6) **Swap costumes** – Your son doesn't want to wear last year's cowboy outfit? Many costumes are perennial favourites. Create a neighbourhood swap shop with everyone's unwanted, worn-out Purim costumes.

7) **Raid mom's or dad's closet** – Introduce your kids to the old Purim tradition of creating their own costumes from your (old) clothing, hats, shoes and jewelry. Encourage their imagination to run wild!

8) **Recycling can be cool** – Making a costume from cardboard boxes, kitchen roll tubes, etc., needn't be old-fashioned. Your child could become an iPod, a cellphone or a digital camera!

9) **Join a Purim co-op** – Give mishloach manot as a community. Compile a list of all the members in the community (neighbourhood, synagogue, seniors group). People can check off the names of those they would like to send a gift to, contributing a set amount for each name. Volunteers prepare and deliver one nice-sized food gift to each person, with a note listing all of their friends who thought of them. The beauty of this idea is that it saves the time and excess food and packaging of multiple gift-giving, creates a strong sense of community fellowship, and any profits can be given to charity.

10) **Share the Spoils** – Purim is over and you find yourself overloaded with unwanted food gifts. Bring unopened food items to a local charitable organization to distribute to needy families.

Sviva Israel is an organization that develops and implements programs to promote environmental literacy and explore the connection between Judaism and the environment. To learn more, visit www.svivaIsrael.org.



GETTING READY FOR PURIM: Grade 8 students and teachers at Bialik Hebrew Day School welcomed Adar II with joy and song as they paraded through the halls spreading the tradition of "Mishenichnas Adar marbin b'simchah," meaning, "When Adar comes, our joy increases."

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RABBI MORDECAI E. ZEITZ

Purim and Pesach! Pretty exciting times! They're well worth waiting that extra month for this year. With Purim this week and Pesach coming within a month, there is much to celebrate.

Each has its distinct traditions and storyline.

Purim is about our rescue from the jaws of physical destruction by Haman and his cohorts, while Pesach is about our transformation into a nation with that great gift of freedom. Reflecting upon these great events, we have every reason to celebrate.

But what about those who, in those days and throughout the ages, were not saved by the great miracles of Purim or Pesach or have suffered unduly because of enslavement and persecution? Yes, we remember them with special prayers, the spilling of drops of wine during the seder, eating some maror or having the Fast of Esther before Purim to remember how close we came.

But is it not a contradiction to celebrate in the face of someone else's suffering?

For that reason, we offer a disclaimer. What happens is beshert, part of destiny. It's really out of our control. Some laugh, some cry, and some rejoice while others grieve. Don't even try to figure it out. It's complicated, and just when you think you've got it, God tosses you another curve ball and you're back to square one.

While we might not be able to understand the intricacies of beshert, we can definitely pick up some pointers about

Purim, Pesach teach us the value of agency

modifying the equation. Even if the outcome might be the same, beshert is not without the human touch.

Reb Zussya and his brother Rebbe Elimelech, two renowned chassidic leaders, used to travel among the people in disguises so as to get the pulse of the people and, when necessary, share in the pain and suffering that was so bountiful.

On one particularly cold night, they stopped at an inn and warmed themselves together by the fire. At the same time, at the same inn, some local peasants were having a party. A bit drunk, the peasants danced in a circle, and one decided to kick Reb Zussya in the head each time he passed.

After a while, Reb Elimelech could no longer bear seeing the pain of his brother, but the two of them were no match for this group of drunks. Reb Elimelech suggested that he switch places with Reb Zussya. After some insistence on the part of Reb Elimelech, they changed places.

But the next time the peasant passed, he said: "It's not right to keep hitting this one Jew. Next time around, I'm going to hit the one alongside." Said Reb Zussya: "One cannot outsmart God. What is beshert to Zussya will come to Zussya!"

Exactly! Often unknowingly, we are fulfilling God's mandate through our very actions. But beshert is not about lying back and letting destiny take over. We are neither robots nor puppets without independent power or ability to chart our own course.

Bashert really means that we're psyched to accept the final outcome, whatever it may be. But until that point, it's incumbent upon us to play our hand – and head and heart – to the fullest. It might just be that I hold the key to a decision that's yet to be set into motion.

I take the maror of life, which comes in its many different forms, and I sweeten it with my ability to celebrate life. I might reduce the extent of my recitation of Hallel, as I do on Pesach, but I don't diminish my ability to offer thanksgiving and praise for those things that fill my life with joy today.

I lament the fact that there are poor and hungry in this world, so I share what I can, but I enjoy and celebrate the blessings that are mine, as we do on Purim.

In the face of past and present adversity, I celebrate my ability to move forward and through my positive actions, make the world a bit better for all.

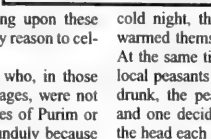
Purim and Pesach! Yes, much sacrifice has been made throughout the ages. How best to honour it? By not getting stuck in beshert mode and looking at life as futile, but rather by creating new and successful realities with our celebration of life and all that it affords us.

The reality of having a yom tov reminds us that we are beshert to have joy and gladness, light and enlightenment – and that with our personal touch, we can create happier endings.

Chag Purim samayach!

Rabbi Mordecai E. Zeitz is spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Tikvah Ahavat Shalom Nusach Haari in Montreal.

Rabbinic Reflections



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The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

Rationale: "Kosher style" is considered to create the impression that the food is kosher, and therefore the food must meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish style" food may not necessarily create this impression."

The CJN makes no representation as to the kashruth of food products in its advertisements.

By ELLIOTT MALAMET

Dear Mr. Obama,

I read with interest your remarks that you would meet with Iran's leaders and offer economic inducements if they promised to "change their behaviour," stay out of Iraq and co-operate on terrorism and nuclear issues.

As a parent, I was struck by the paternal tone of your comment that "there are both carrots and there are sticks available to them for those changes in behaviour." Will this language of reward and punishment be enough to sway the mullahs? I don't know. But permit me to share with you some of my people's experience with a similar situation in our version of an Iranian bedtime story.

You see, a long time ago we were also confronted by a genocidal Persian. This fellow, Haman, did not obfuscate about his plans to rid the kingdom of all Jews. The ostensible catalyst for this ethnic cleansing was the annoying habit of one Jew named Mordechai who refused to bow down to Haman. A careful reading of the Book of Esther tells us that Haman did not seem to notice this contrary behaviour until he was prodded by the rest of the king's servants, who basically snitched on

Mordechai until Haman was made aware of the problem.

Even then, had Mordechai been unable to overcome his aversion to bowing, he could have perhaps avoided the dilemma by simply walking away whenever Haman passed by, a thought posed by the famous medieval commentator Abraham Ibn Ezra.

But Mordechai seemed hellbent on picking a fight. He wasn't going to bow, come what may. Ostensibly, this defiance of evil may seem rash, irresponsible, even hawkish. But perhaps Mordechai wasn't so foolish after all. Perhaps it seemed to him that the bowing issue was just a pretext, and that had he succumbed to that demand, many more would follow in its wake, and that those demands would be false pretexts as well. Perhaps he reasoned that true evil regards genocide not as the tragic endgame when negotiations fail, but the very goal in the first place, and that perhaps such goals are less amenable to rational discourse than one might surmise.

We Jews have not inconsiderable experience with men who mean what

Sleep tight, Barack

they say when it comes to our liquidation. So when Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad states, as he did in August 2006 in Malaysia, that "the solution to the Middle East crisis is the destruction of Israel," I'll take him at his word. According to historian Daniel Goldhagen, who is currently studying the history of genocide in the 20th century, I have every reason to do so.

Goldhagen has noticed that those who planned genocides and carried out rarely concealed their intentions in advance. Whether the victims were Armenians, Jews, Bosnians or others, the perpetrators felt there was no reason to hide their plans.

Thanks for listening to my ancient Jewish bedtime tale.

Good night, Mr. Obama, and sleep well. Hopefully, my brethren in the Land of Israel will be able to as well, without having to rush into shelters or fear that when they sit down to study Torah, someone who seems immune to carrots and sticks will end their lives.

In memoriam: Segev Pnuel Avichayil, Neriah Cohen, Yonatan Yitzchak Eldar, Yonadav Haim Hirschfeld, Yochai Lipshitz, Doron Maharata, Avraham David Moses and Ro'i Roth.



Foreskin's Lament: A Memoir by Shalom Auslander, Riverhead Press.

I don't know what to make of this coming-of-age memoir. On the one hand, it is funny, filled with risible episodes from a disordered youth. On the other hand, it is a highly emotional, almost hysterical, rant against traditional Judaism.

Shalom had to endure long, boring hours at a haredi Yeshiva in Monsey, N. Y., and reside in a strict, socially restricted community. Also, he had to counter the drunken violence of his foul-mouthed carpenter father.

Somewhere in his youth, Shalom began to view God as a personal antagonist, an enemy ready to punish him and thwart both his desires and practices. "There was no need to provoke Him. I've been on God's chessboard long enough to know that every move forward, every bit of good news – Success! Marriage! Child! – is just another Godly gambit, a feign, a fake, a setup; it seems as if I'm making my way across the board, but soon enough God calls check, and the company that hired me goes under, the wife dies, the baby chokes to death. God's pick-and-roll. The Rope-



Books
Bernard Baskin

An angry rant relieved by humour

a-Lordy-Dope. God was here, God was there, God was everywhere."

In neurotic rebellion, young Shalom turns his back on tradition and family and immerses himself in things forbidden: masturbation, dope smoking, shoplifting and eating treif (non-kosher food). Filled with guilt and anxiety, he is certain of discovery. "I lived in constant fear of being caught. My friends at yeshiva would never understand. I'd be lucky if they ever spoke to me again. If their parents found out I was treif, they would forbid their children from being my friend. My rabbi would pray for my

forgiveness. My father would throw me out of the house. And my mother? My mother would bury me in the dirt until I was kosher again."

Arrested for shoplifting, Shalom is shipped off to a less rigorous Orthodox-style yeshiva in Israel. He remains bewildered and insistent. "The people who raised me say that I am not religious. They are mistaken. What I am is not observant. But I am painfully, crippling, incurably, miserably religious." Again,

"I believe in a personal God, everything I do he takes personally."

An adult Shalom moves to Manhattan, visits an expensive shrink twice a week and worries about his pregnant wife. Is God going to allow a normal birth and a healthy child? Is this God's opportunity to punish him for his blasphemous tongue and numerous iniquities? An e-mail to the almighty would read: "Dear God, please don't kill my son during birth. And don't kill my wife during birth. I know You're probably pissed at me, but I'm pissed at You, too, so let's just keep this between. Thanks. S."

Perhaps the book's best written chapter is a description of the 14-mile hike on the Sabbath that Shalom and his wife took in sweltering heat to Madison Square Garden to watch a hockey game on a JumboTron TV feed. Maybe God will reward them for not riding on the Sabbath and give the New York Rangers a long-overdue Stanley Cup victory.

This book is an angry, irreverent rant against what the author believes is the unwholesome misuse of authority. It is relieved by humour, conviction and a measure of contrition.

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

Other Purims? Most of us are familiar with the Purim that begins Thursday night. Well, it turns out that aside from that Purim tale, there are dozens of other Purims out there.

These Purims can be divided into two types: communal Purims that mark the salvation of a community from impending disaster and personal Purims "established by individual families marking their own personal redemptions." [tinyurl.com/3x68ou]

Why are these holidays named after Purim "and not Pesach or Chanukah, each of which likewise celebrates Jewish redemption from the designs of our enemies?" Rabbi Shlomo Jakobovits points out that Jews are not supposed to rejoice in the downfall of an enemy. We don't celebrate the death of the Egyptians, and there is no mitzvah of feasting and revelry on Chanukah. Purim is different.

The Megillah tells us that Purim's villain, Haman, is a descendant of Amalek, the tribe said to confront Jews from generation to generation. Just as Jews are commanded to celebrate the defeat of Haman on Purim, communities or families who have defeated their own "Haman" have proclaimed their own "Purims." [tinyurl.com/3x7e3c]

They include:

- Purim Vincent – In 1614, a baker named Vincent Fettmilch organized attacks on the Jews of Frankfurt-am-Main and forced them to leave their city. "After several months, the king of Germany learned that a flagrant injustice had been done to the Jews. He com-



manded that the baker be killed, his house destroyed, his body beheaded, quartered and hung on the gates of the city." The king called on the Jews to return to their homes with full honours.

The Jews proclaimed a "Purim Vincent" to be celebrated on the 20th of Adar. [tinyurl.com/2j9sol]

- Purim Verona – The Jews had moved into their ghetto, and in 1600 they completed building their synagogue. They celebrated a Purim since many felt that the ghetto provided protection, and in an unusual move, the keys of the ghetto were given to the Jewish leaders. [tinyurl.com/2vifqw]

- Purim Hitler – Observed on the 20th of Kislev, 1942, the day the Jews of Casablanca were liberated from the Nazi invaders. The "Hitler megillah" proclaimed: "And the month which was turned for us from sorrow to rejoicing and the making of holiday and the giving of gifts to the poor. Cursed be Hitler, cursed be Mussolini." [tinyurl.com/33hrto]

The Jewish Encyclopedia lists more than two dozen other special Purims [tinyurl.com/2wb87b] with more info at MyJewishLearning.com [tinyurl.com/386yxl] and stories for kids at Chabad. [tinyurl.com/2kdbbe]

As for family Purims, one of the most famous is Purim Povidl (Plum Jam Purim) in 1731. David Brandeis, a Jewish grocer from Bohemia, was imprisoned along with his family for selling some plum jam (povidl) blamed for causing the death of a gentile, An

investigation revealed tuberculosis was actually to blame and the Jews were released. Descendants of Brandeis celebrated the 10th of Adar as a family festival. [tinyurl.com/2g7czg]

Rabbi Barry Leff's personal Purim occurred not too far from Haman and Mordechai territory. On Feb. 16, 1979, Rabbi Leff found himself trying to get out of Iran just after the fall of the Shah. "We drove through the deserted streets of Tehran; it was almost eerily quiet... One of the Revolutionary Guards in the lead car was riding on the trunk, on the outside of the car. The car hit a little dip, and his gun went off, shooting out the back window of the car." You can read about the rest of the journey to freedom on the Rabbi Leff Digest. [tinyurl.com/33a34g]

How do you actually commemorate a personal Purim? Rabbi Daniel Yaakov Travis explains that a thanksgiving feast is appropriate and that the day acquires the status of Purim for the survivor and his descendants. This tradition hits home for Rabbi Travis. Years ago, while on the way to buy food in honour of his newborn daughter, he was involved in what appeared to be a fatal car accident. "HaShem had other plans for me and, in an act of infinite kindness, He graciously spared my life. Chai Sivan (the 18th day of Sivan), the day that I was saved, became a personal yom tov for me and my family." [tinyurl.com/2w24al]

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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On Campus

YouTube contest has students express their love for Israel

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

The Canadian Federation of Jewish Students (CFJS) is banking on the popularity of YouTube to encourage students to express their emotional connection to Israel.

As part of the Israel@60 campaign to celebrate 60 years since Israel's independence, the CFJS is holding a YouTube contest to have post-secondary

students across the country produce videos about their love of and appreciation for the Holy Land.

"Basically, we're looking for anything that expresses a sense of students' attachment to Israel. We're looking for things that are uniquely creative. It could be anything. Some ideas that were floating around were skits or artwork. They can present their artwork on video. They can do a song. Any number of things. It is limited only by imagination," said Dario David Hunter, CFJS' Israel affairs chair and a law student at the University of Windsor.

"A lot of us got together and realized what a great idea this was and decided to put in our two cents on how to shape this idea," Hunter said, adding that he was approached by Yacov Fruchter from National Jewish Campus Life (NJCL) with the idea.

He said this contest is exclusive to Canadians and is run by the CFJS, but other Jewish organizations are helping them get the word out and provide incentives.

"There is the American Jewish Committee that is helping us in terms of putting together a part of our prize. There is a prize that involves a trip to Washington, D.C. for their annual meeting, so they've helped us with some of the work and publicity," Hunter said. The grand prize is \$1,000 towards a trip to Israel.

To participate, join YouTube or log in to an existing account. After you upload the video, it will be reviewed by Hunter who will then post it on the CFJS channel. To view the videos that have been posted to date, visit www.youtube.com/CFJSIsrael60.

"Our committee is going to select finalists from among the various videos and we're going to put the finalists on the CFJS channel and we're going to have the students vote," he said.

Hunter said the contest will give students the opportunity to express how

they feel about Israel and connect with other like-minded students in the process.

"Students can... experience other students' expression of their feelings and spark discussion across the country about our connection to Israel. That is something that is going to be very important and very vital to what we do as an organization."

Michael Khardas, a Jewish student at York University, submitted a video in which he spoke about what the existence of the State of Israel means to him.

"It means that I'll be able to live safely in my homeland. It means peace with my Palestinian brothers. It means security to learn and study and grow. It means pride that we've gone this long, that we've fought for our home and that we've kept it secure and safe. It means peace and hope for our children's future and peace between the religions in the region."

Although the contest is run by a Jewish group, Hunter said it is not limited to Jewish students.

"We felt it was important that people be able to express their attachment to Israel whatever their background is, because we're interested in hearing those viewpoints," he said.

"Someone contacted me about putting together a video to discuss how he feels about Israel as a Vietnamese student because he had heard about the foreign aid that Israel is doing in Vietnam."

University of Windsor student Nguyen Le Quang submitted a video after having read about an Israeli humanitarian organization launched last May to send 54 Israeli doctors and nurses to provide medical treatment, food and clothing to 2,500 people in Vietnam.

"My dreams, my target in the future is to help my own people, as Israeli people have done for my country. The existence of Israel means a lot to me because they help my country and they make the world a better place."

Hunter hopes that the videos will give people a better understanding of the Jewish state.

"Hopefully, things like this will allow people to understand and know what is going on with Israel."

Videos must be submitted by March 28, and Hunter expects to have the students vote in April. For more information about the contest, visit www.cfjs.ca.

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EVENTS**

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8 days preceding issue date

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Sunday, March 30, 2008 - Loggia Gallery, 4588 Bathurst St., Toronto
Crafts Sale: 10 am - 2 pm, Atrium
Art Exhibit Opening & Reception 2 pm, Loggia

*Exhibit on view from Sunday, March 30 - April 13, 2008

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For more information, please call: 416-630-6481, ext. 28



Varsity Jews in Concert: The Varsity Jews, a Jewish capella group at the University of Toronto, seen here performing at the Accappelloza concert earlier this year at the Diesel Playhouse in Toronto, are preparing for their fourth annual charity concert, *Shul of Rock*, on March 30 at Holy Blossom Temple. All proceeds go to Latet-Israeli Humanitarian Aid, an organization that provides food and social assistance to needy families in Israel. For more information or tickets, visit www.varsityjews.com.

[Kyle Ng photo]

Only paid Family Moments announcements can be guaranteed to appear in a specific issue, when received by deadline, 10 days prior to publication date. All other items will appear on a first come - first served basis as space allows.

Mazel tov announcements featured on onlismchas.com will appear once a month.

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish News

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos and enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Please keep all announcements to 25 words, maximum. Send your photos to:

The CJN, Family Moments,
1500 Don Mills Rd., #205
North York, ON. M3B 3K4

or email to:
cblackman@cjnews.com



Mazel tov to Britta & Mike Montgomery and big brother Blake on the birth of Markus Wolfgang.



Mazel tov Bill & Gert Nyman on your 65th anniversary March 20. Love from your children and grandchildren.



Mazel tov Dana and Wayne Potashner on your shared birthdays. Dana is becoming a bat mitzvah and Wayne is turning 50. Love from Melissa and Zach.



Betty & Norm Garson, 50 blissful years together. Mazel tov on your golden anniversary. With love and best wishes from your children and grandchildren.



Melanie & Adam Seigel and big sister Jaime announce the birth of Taylor on Jan. 25. Grandparents are Honey & Jerry Mahl, Susan Seigel and great-grandfather Harry Seigel.



Mazel tov Corbin Eric Greenwald on your bar mitzvah. Love, Mom, Dad, Blake and Holli. Grandparents, Ray & Ethel Pasternak and Lena Greenwald.



Proud parents Earl & Magda Gardner and Patricia Stauder announce the marriage of Sabrina & Nicholas who married in July. Wishing you a wonderful life together.



I love having Shabbat dinner with Great-Bubbie Mollie and Great-Zaidie Paul. Love, Benji. P.S. Happy 30th birthday, Auntie Mindy.



Rhoda & Paul Smith, Susan & Jeff Tabachnick and Mark Grenville are happy to announce the engagement of their children Michelle & Jared.



Beautiful Lena, born Feb. 12 to Ian Epstein & Erin Awalt of Halifax. Grandparents Linda & Reginald Awalt, and Paula & Stanley Epstein.

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What's New

By REBECCA NADLER



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What's New deadlines: Monday, March 24, is the deadline for the April 3 issue, and Monday, March 31, is the deadline for the April 10 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Purim Events

THURSDAY, MARCH 20

Solel Congregation's Purim family program begins at 5:30 p.m. with pizza dinner and service, followed by carnival games and hamantaschen. Family admission, \$10. 905-820-5915 or www.solel.ca

The Beach Synagogue's Purim party begins at 6 p.m. with a children's fun and games costume party. The reading of the Book of Esther begins at 7 p.m. 416-694-7942 or info@beachsynagogue.com.

Beit Rayim Synagogue and

Hebrew School host Purim with the Fab Four. Includes a version of the Ma'ariv service plus a Megillah reading, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Ross Doan Public School, 101 Weldrick Rd. school@beitrayim.org

Shaarei Shomayim Congregation celebration begins with a children's pre-Megillah party, 7:00-7:45 p.m. Ma'ariv and Megillah reading 8 p.m., followed by a Purim carnival. Second Megillah reading 9:30 p.m.

Purimania at the **Anshei Minsk Synagogue**, with Megillah reading followed by Purim party with live music, dancing, hamantaschen and other treats. 7:45 p.m.

FRIDAY, MARCH 21

Megillah reading for women by women. Shacharit 8:50 a.m. Megillah 9:20 a.m. At Shaarei Shomayim Congregation.

Purim Family Fun Day at the **BJCC**, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. No registration required. All facilities free and open to the community. Includes Megillah reading, arts and crafts, and more. Info, 416-636-1880, ext. 367.

MORE

Beth Tzedec Congregation presents its third annual Purim Family Musical, "The Sound of Music...er...Purim," featuring the Shut-Your-von-Trap Family Singers and a live orchestra. Thursday, March 20, following 8:30 p.m. Megillah reading; Saturday, March 22, 9 p.m.; and Sunday, March 23, 3 p.m. \$5, children under 13 \$2. 416-781-3511

Saturday, March 22

B'NAI SHALOM SERVICES

Join B'Nai Shalom, an egalitarian Conservative synagogue in the Oakville, Mississauga, Burlington area, for a special Purim Shabbat service followed by kiddush and conversation. 10 a.m. Info and location, www.bnaishalom.ca or 905-901-9889.

Sunday, March 23

YU KOLLEL YOM RISHON

Rabbi Kenneth Brander, dean of the Center for the Jewish Future, speaks on "Cohen vs. Clone: Contemporary Issues and Ethics of Cloning" at Yeshiva University's Sunday learning program. 9 a.m. at Kehillat Shaarei Torah. Info, www.kolleyomrison.com or 416-783-6960.

Monday, March 24

BEING A MENSCH

Beit Rayim Synagogue and USDS present **Rachael Turkienicz** on "Mussar: The Methodology of Being a Mensch" for the Rabbi Sol Tanenzapf Memorial Lecture, 7:30 p.m. in the Reena Battle Centre.

Tuesday, March 25

LUNCH AND LEARN

Beth Tikvah Synagogue's series concludes with "Ethiopian Jewry: An Insider's View" with **Judie Orin**. Lunch noon, program 12:45 p.m. \$20. Reservations required. 416-221-3434, ext. 352

FAREWELL ISRAEL

Beth Torah Congregation presents

Continued on page 27

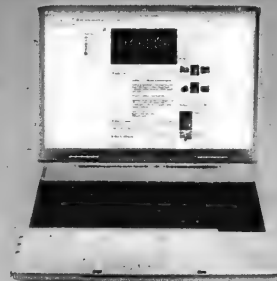
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What's New

Continued from page 26

the Toronto premiere of *Farewell Israel: Bush, Iran and the Revolt of Islam*. 7 p.m., followed by a discussion with **Joel Gilbert**, the film's writer, director and producer. \$10. RSVP: farewellisrael@live.ca

ART LECTURE

Rabbi Tina Grimberg speaks on "*Ken Anachnu B'Yadcha: Seeing Art Through Jewish Eyes*." 7:30-9:30 p.m. at Darchei Noam Congregation. 416-638-4783 or www.darcheinom.on.ca

SAR-EL INFO MEETING

Find out about the Sar-El program, civilian volunteers working on Israeli army supply/maintenance bases. 7:30 p.m. 788 Marlee Ave. 416-781-6089 or www.sarcanada.org

COMPARATIVE JUDAISM

Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism hosts a "Comparative Judaism: Chassidic Judaism" with **Rabbi Eva Goldfinger**. 7 p.m. 18 Wynford Dr. \$15. 416-385-3910 or roby@oraynu.org

Wednesday, March 26

SINGLES 40-60

York Region Jewish Singles Club welcomes singles 40-60 to join them for social gathering at Country Style Donuts, 16th and Yonge Street every Wednesday 7-9 p.m. Look for the lady wearing a red hat.

CHRISTIAN-JEWISH TALKS

The Christian-Jewish Dialogue of Toronto presents "Metaphors For a Unique Relationship," Christians and Jews in candid conversation. 7:30 p.m. at Adath Israel Synagogue.

DEALING WITH ABUSE

Beth Tzedec Congregation presents *Flowers Aren't Enough*, a one-woman show on abuse in relationships, written and performed American-Israeli **Naomi Ackerman**, followed by a question-and-answer period. 8 p.m. \$25. Reserve. 416-630-9313.

LISTEN TO HER VOICE

Rachel Adelman will speak on "*HaShmi'in et Kolekh*: When Women Call for Divine Intercession." 8 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. 416-789-3213

ISRAEL @ 60 CONCERT

Holy Blossom Temple celebrates Israel @ 60 with an evening of Israeli music with the Jerusalem Lyric Trio. 8 p.m. \$25; youth under

25 \$15. Info, call **Mari**, 416-789-3291, ext. 224, or see Musical Heritage Concert Series at www.holyblossom.org.

UN, CANADA & DURBAN

Rochelle Wilner, of B'nai B'rith International, speaks on the "United Nations, Canada and Durban II" at the Lodzer Centre Congregation. 8 p.m. 416-636-6665

Other News

300 WAYS TO ASK

Murray Spiegel speaks on "300 Ways to Ask the Four Questions: From Ugandan to Maori, From Sign Language to Klingon," a multimedia talk. Tuesday, March 25, 7 p.m. at Darchei Noam Congregation, and Wednesday, March 26, 7:30-9:30 p.m. at Kolel at the BJCC.

AGING & THE ELDERLY

Beth Tzedec Congregation presents a seminar on "Insights on Aging and the Elderly," with **Dr. Nathan Herrman, Ian Hull, Rabbi Roy Tanenbaum** and **Charles Wagner**. Thursday, March 27, 7 p.m. \$10 donation to Beth Tzedec Chesed. Register, 416-633-6224, ext. 128, or hreichmann@bnaibrit.ca

MOSES ANALYZED

Beth David Congregation presents a two-part series with **Arnold Ages** on the image of Moses in literature and art. Thursday, March 27, 7:30 p.m., "Moses in the Loom of Literature"; Thursday, April 3, 7:30 p.m., "Moses and the Artistic Vision." 416-633-5500

TIP OF THE ICEBERG

Temple Sinai Congregation presents the series *The Tip of the Iceberg: Modern Sound Bites, Ancient Wisdom* with **Rachael Turkienicz**. Thursday, March 27, "Jewish Environmentalism"; Thursday, April 3, "Spirituality and Angels"; Thursday, April 10, "The Heart of My Relationships." 7:30 p.m. Series: members \$36, non-members \$60. Registration required. education@templeisrael.net or 416-487-3281

CHARITY BINGO

Simcha/Kadima chapter of Na'amat Canada hold their 13th annual Charity Bingo Extravaganza at the Borochoy Centre, Saturday, March 29, 7:30 p.m. Tickets, \$20, includes cards, live auction, refreshments and door prizes. Call 416-636-5425.

SPRING BOUTIQUE PLUS

Bnei Akiva Spring Fashion Boutique for great fashion, jewelry, gift-

ware, Judaica finds and more. Sunday, March 30, 12-4 p.m. at 45 Canyon Dr. Free admission.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The Speakers Action Group hosts a business lunch lecture on "Human Rights Under Attack: How Can Canada Contribute to Significant Global Challenges?" with **Payam Akhavan**, of McGill University Law School, and **Jonathan Kay**, of the *National Post*. Tuesday, April 1, noon, in the offices of Heenan Blaikie, 200 Bay St., Suite 2600. \$20, reservation required. Call 416-488-7468.

TIKKUN TORONTO 2008

Join Jewish youth repairing the world one day at a time. Give back to the community, gain service hours and have fun. Sunday, April 13, 12-5 p.m. For grades 5 to 12. Info and registration, www.tikkuntoronto.org or **Missy**, 416-398-2004, ext. 223.

YESHIVA U DINNER

Canadian Friends of Yeshiva University hold a dinner launching the Yeshiva University Toronto Partnership Project with honorees **Doctors Cheryl and Joseph Greenbaum, John and Lori Ulmer** and in memory of **Bill Rubinstein**. Monday, April 7 at the Copper Creek Golf Club. 416-783-6960

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. Information/registration 416-638-7800 or www.jfandcs.com. Call **Shawna**, ext. 215, for info and registration.
• Couple Communication: A four-session group for couples wanting to learn communication skills to help deal with day-to-day issues, resolve conflicts and build a more

satisfying relationship. Begins Wednesday, March 26, 7-9 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

• Widow/Widower 65+ Bereavement: A six-session group for men and women who have recently lost a partner or spouse. Coping with grief, living with loneliness and new beginnings to be discussed. Begins Tuesday, April 1, 1-2 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.
• Adult Children Losing a Parent: A six-session group for adult children to discuss coping with grief, loss and legacy, and resolving unfinished business. Begins Tuesday, April 1, 7:30-9 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

FOR SENIORS

Chai Shalom Social Club hosts a luncheon with entertainment by **Raiza, Victor and Marcell**. Sunday, March 30, noon. \$20. Info call **Sandy** at 416-633-3838.

55+ Forward for Seniors at the MNJCC presents Museum Adventures, a guided tour of a new exhibit at the Gardiner Museum, Wednesday, April 2, 1:45 p.m. RSVP by March 31 to **Phyllis Fien**, phyllisf@mnjcc.org or 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Casino Rama, April 9, 30. Info, Tuesday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 416-395-7881

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

"Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy" a lecture by **Barry Fluxgold**. Tuesday, March 25, 10 a.m. \$3, non-members \$6.

Wellness Lecture, "Give Yourself a Lifestyle Makeover" with **Terri Dunnigan**, yoga therapy practitioner. Thursday, March 27, 1:30 p.m.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

5th Annual Artistic Creations Art Exhibit and Crafts Sale - works by Jewish artists new to Toronto and to our community. Sunday, March 30, in the Loggia Gallery and Atrium, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

New for toddlers, two Monday morning classes, March 24-April 14. Messy: discover different materials, including paint, water and whipped cream. Tumbling Toddlers: a safe and stimulated opportunity to climb, slide, roll and jump. Register, ext. 235.

Get ready to celebrate Passover at themed art class where 3 to 6-year-olds will create special crafts to use at the seder. Wednesdays, 1-2 p.m. March 26-April 16. Ages: 3 to 6-year-olds. Register, ext. 390.

The jVIAnetwork, a group for Jewish vision-impaired active adults will hold its first meeting on Monday, March 31, 7 p.m. in Room 202. If you are vision impaired or know of someone who is and would be interested in attending or learning more about this group, call **Bess** at 905-508-2892.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www.mnjcc.org.

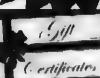
Purim Carnival @ the J, Sunday, March 23, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Don't forget to wear a costume. \$10/family, \$5/child, food and drinks \$1 each. Info, ext. 154.

Life in a Jar, a play about Polish heroine **Irena Sender**. Thursday, March 27, 7:30 p.m. at the Al Green Theatre. Info, esthera@mnjcc.org or ext. 606.

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SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 24

OBITUARIES and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Zlobin, Semion	Feb. 29/08	Private
Kofman, Boris	Feb. 29/08	Private
Oziel, Franco	Feb. 29/08	4415 Bathurst St
Rosenfeld, Lazar	March 2/08	10 Terrydale Rd
Finkler, Len	March 2/08	205 Cummer Ave
Botnick, Harry	March 3/08	339 Hillhurst Blvd
Dinabursky, Yuri	March 3/08	97 Cairnes Ave
Kerzner, Bernice	March 4/08	471 Coldstream Ave
Svedzin, Zaida	March 5/08	1121 Steeles Ave. W.
Tchoulski, Villa	March 5/08	2 Mascot Place
Ziegler, Susan	March 5/08	9 Overbrook Place
Binder, Izrail	March 6/08	Private

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Gladys Zaldin	Feb. 29/08	10 Torresdale Rd
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Quebec labour federations join in condemning Israel

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The Quebec-Israel Committee (QIC) expressed shock that a dozen Quebec labour, non-governmental and community groups have joined with a local pro-Hezbollah organization in condemning Israel.

The coalition was announced March 7, a day after the shooting deaths of eight students at a Jerusalem yeshiva. Some sources have implicated Hezbollah in the terrorist act.

It includes Tadamon (Arabic for solidarity), which is actively campaigning to have Canada remove the Lebanese-based Hezbollah from its list of terror groups, as well as for an economic and academic boycott of Israel. The campus group Solidarity With Palestinian Human Rights is also in the coalition.

"How can representatives of civil society accept to associate with an organization that boasts of putting into question the definition of Hezbollah as a terrorist organization and at the same time claims to work for peace in Palestine?" asked QIC executive director

Luciano Del Negro.

"Hezbollah, like its ally Hamas and their Iranian sponsor, are opposed to any peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and call for the destruction by force of a United Nations member state, Israel."

Quebec's major labour federations have signed on, including the Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN), the

QIC sides with Hezbollah gorup

Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ), and the Fédération des enseignants et enseignantes du Québec, as well as the Fédération des Travailleurs et Travailleuses du Québec (FTQ), which has not been historically as pro-Arab as the other three.

Others groups involved include the Association québécoise des organismes de coopération internationale, the Confédération des organismes de personnes handicapées du Québec, and the Fédération des femmes du Québec.

The coalition called on the Canadian

government to press Israel to stop its military actions in Gaza immediately.

It also launched a public campaign to raise \$100,000 to rebuild a clinic in Gaza that's said to have been destroyed in an aerial bombardment.

The coalition said at a press conference that Israel's alleged strike on a major health care centre was the final straw that drew the disparate groups together.

Louis Roy of the CSN said the air strike not only destroyed the building but also an ambulance, medical supplies and equipment for handicapped people.

"For months, more than one million people have been taken hostage by the Israeli government and the uninterrupted operations of its army," said Réjean Parent of the CSQ in a press release.

"The sealing off of the territories is accompanied by daily bombardments and regular military incursions. Each day, civilians, very often children, are killed. This must stop immediately."

René Roy of the FTQ added: "It is imperative that the violence on both sides stops immediately and that human rights are respected."

Kuwaiti column is the exception to Arab media's anti-Israel bile

The Palestinian Authority has long had two different official voices. Its leaders, such as PA President Mahmoud Abbas, send moderate messages to the western media. Meanwhile, the Palestinian media—controlled by the

According to Reports

By
PAUL MICHAELS

PA—incites the general public with strident anti-Israel propaganda.

This duplicity, not often exposed in the Canadian media, was the topic of "Parsing words in Israel-Palestinian conflict" by Paul Schneidererit in the *Halifax Chronicle Herald* on March 11.

Schneidererit wrote that following the March 6 massacre of students at the Mercat Harav Yeshiva in Jerusalem, "Abbas issued a statement condemning the attack.

"On [March 8], however, one of the Palestinian Authority's daily newspapers, *Al Hayat Al Jadida*, published on its front page a story, with prominent photo, praising the killer, Ala Abu Dhaim. According to Palestinian Media Watch, the article—still available on the paper's website—called the man who shot eight unarmed religious students 'the Shahid,' or holy Islamic martyr."

Schneidererit explained that "[w]hat

westerners must understand...[is] that Palestinian newspapers do not publish anything contrary to the wishes of the ruling faction, which in the West Bank is Fatah, headed by Abbas. So it's rather inconceivable that the glowing article on the attacker was not a reflection of the true feelings about the incident by most in the organization."

To be fair, unlike his predecessor Yasser Arafat, Abbas has spoken to his people, in Arabic, about the need for peace with Israel.

Yet the broader issue remains: the Palestinian media maintain a steady stream of anti-Israel invective. It's the same or even worse in the media throughout much of the Arab world. Egypt, which has signed a peace treaty with Israel, perhaps leads the field in anti-Israel and even anti-Semitic rhetoric.

There are exceptions. In "Right to self-defence," in Kuwait's *Al-Watan* newspaper (March 6), senior columnist Abdullah al-Hadlaq wrote that Israel has a right to defend itself against Hamas' "terrorism."

Al-Hadlaq focused on Iran's extremist agenda in the Middle East, in particular its financial and military support for Islamic extremist groups such as Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Gaza, as well as its effort to develop nuclear weapons.

Perhaps most surprising, al-Hadlaq concluded that, in the end, despite its small

population, "Israel will triumph as usual."

In "Palestinian Twins Under Rocket Fire from Gaza" (*Der Spiegel*, March 11), Christoph Schult reported on Iman Shafii, a Palestinian woman who gave birth to twins in an Ashkelon hospital, where "she experienced what it is like to be the target of rocket fire from the Gaza Strip."

Schult wrote: "In the past, Shafii saw the Israelis exclusively as perpetrators, but in Ashkelon she is encountering, for the first time, victims of the acts of terror committed by her own people. One of them is nine-year-old Yossi, who is sitting in a wheelchair. A steel frame holds his left shoulder together. It was fractured by shrapnel from a rocket that landed in the city of Sderot. 'The people in Sderot are suffering just as we are in Gaza,' she says."

Schult included quotes from Shafii's husband, who "describes how young, masked men repeatedly set up their rocket launchers under the cover of houses... 'They shoot at Israeli civilians, which is completely unacceptable,' says [Ashraf] Shafii. 'And they put us Palestinian civilians in grave danger, because the Israelis shoot back.'"

"Why doesn't he object? 'They are armed,' says Shafii, 'and they shoot at anyone who gets in their way.'"

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canadian-Israeli Committee.

Coast to Coast

Winnipeg rallies to support Sderot

By RHONDA SPIVAK

Special to the CJN

WINNIPEG — A community rally in support of the residents of Sderot, who have been bombarded with unceasing Qassam rockets by Hamas terrorists, was held here on March 11 at the Berney Theatre.

Tzafi Weinberg, an Israeli living in Winnipeg who is an art therapist for kids, ini-

er as Jewish and non-Jewish people and that we say that this [the firing of Qassams on Sderot] has to stop and that Israel does have the right to defend itself," she said.

Melnick also noted that "Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East where I as a woman could be a member of a government."

Conservative MP Joy Smith (Kildonan-St. Paul) sent a letter in which she echoed the words of Foreign Minister Maxime Bernier, who recently said: "It is clear that Hamas and other groups responsible for the growing number of rockets fired on Israel are determined to target civilians and create even more instability and misery. These actions are deplorable. Canada calls on those groups to stop immediately for the sake of those suffering both in the Gaza Strip and in Israel."

Liberal MP Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre) sent a letter with greetings from Liberal leader Stéphane Dion and the Liberal Party of Canada.

NDP MP Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre) wrote a letter expressing his solidarity with the residents of Sderot and people of Israel.

"I can't think of any other country in the world that has shown such restraint and discipline in the face of regular acts of military aggression against it, and yet it is often Israel who gets blamed when the conflict escalates and they react in defence of their citizens. Friends of Israel cannot remain silent in the face of such unfairness," he wrote.

NDP MP Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North) sent a message "of courage to the people of Sderot as well as a show of support for the State of Israel and its right to self defence."

The president of the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg, Jonathon Kroft, also addressed the gathering.

"We are here to encourage peace loving people in Gaza to persuade their Hamas government to stop attacking innocent civilians of Sderot," he said, adding that "we will have progress" when the murder of Jews in a yeshiva "isn't celebrated in the streets of Gaza."

A video titled "Children of Sderot Just Want Peace" was shown. Guitarist Cindy Bass sang a number of Hebrew songs throughout the event, ending with *Yehiyeh Tov*, a song of hope written by Israeli pop star David Broza.

Retired IDF Colonel Yoram East also spoke, saying: "When a rocket flies over the people of Sderot, it's a rocket that flies over us too."

East said a video of the event is being made, and "we are going to send the Mayor of Sderot a report of everything that has happened here."

Participants were also asked to sign a large card of support for Sderot residents that will be sent with the money raised.



Rally organizer Tzafi Weinberg stands in front of a card for Sderot residents.

tiated the idea as a way of helping Sderot's children. "I have been thinking of what the children of Sderot are undergoing, and wanted to find a way of supporting them," Weinberg said.

Weinberg contacted Ron East of Canada Sheli — a Winnipeg group for expatriate Israelis — who, along with other Israelis living here, began to organize the event in conjunction with the Canadian Friends of Hebrew University, the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg and others.

"This was a real grassroots initiative," East said.

Money raised from the rally will go to the Helping Hands Initiative, which will buy TVs, DVDs, activity kits, video game consoles and cellphones for children in Sderot bomb shelters.

"The equipment will be purchased from Sderot businesses so as to help the local economy," Weinberg said.

Rally participants were asked to wear red. "The siren that goes off in Sderot when there is an incoming rocket attack is called 'tzevah adom' [colour red] and that is why we asked people to wear red," Weinberg said. "The siren initially was called 'shachar adom' [red dawn], but it was changed so children with the name Shachar wouldn't have a negative connotation associated with their name."

Sderot Mayor Eli Moyal spoke to the rally via a recorded video message, and he thanked the community "for everything you are doing for the people of Sderot."

Manitoba's minister of water stewardship, Christine Melnick — who has been to Israel numerous times to develop a Jewish National Fund scholarship program for graduate students from Manitoba pursuing water-related studies in Israel — addressed the gathering on behalf of the provincial NDP government.

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Mother fears for kids' safety if deported to Israel

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — An Israeli woman with two children is fighting deportation from Canada, claiming that she fears returning to Israel because a rabbinical court there has granted custody of the children to their abusive father.

Last week, one day before she was to be removed from the country, Renata Makias won a temporary stay from a Federal Court judge pending a judicial review of her case.

Judge Sean Harrington wrote that Mrs. Makias and the children "face imminent peril on their return" to Israel because the rabbinical order makes clear the children must be handed over to their father, Yossef Makias, immediately.

While Harrington said it may be correct, as the immigration department argued, that Mrs. Makias could apply to a civil court in Israel for review of the rabbinical decision, "it is strongly arguable that [this] did not take into account the best interests of the children..."

"While no one denies state protection is available in Israel, the status quo there is not the status quo here... It is far better to preserve the Canadian status quo until the matter is fully heard."

He ordered that her case be heard as soon as possible.

Mrs. Makias' lawyer, Mitchell Goldberg, said the stay gives his client about a six-month reprieve. She was being held in a detention centre near Montreal, after being arrested recently, although that was to be reviewed last Friday.

The children, daughter Shany, 13, and son Or, 12, are in hiding, and she is refusing to divulge their whereabouts. The immigration department has warned that she will be deported without them if she loses her appeal for permanent resident status, Goldberg said.

Mrs. Makias pleaded to be allowed to remain in Canada

on humanitarian grounds. That was refused by the Federal Court on March 5. Mr. Makias has been living in Israel since 2005, when the family was ordered deported.

The rabbinical court decision is at odds with a Quebec Superior Court judgment granting Mrs. Makias custody of the children and apparently does not take into account the fact that Mr. Makias was charged in British Columbia with uttering threats of death and violence against his family and with breaching a restraining order.

The family came to Montreal five years ago and, for undisclosed reasons, claimed refugee status, which was eventually refused. They moved to Richmond, B.C., where Mrs. Makias' parents and siblings, who are Canadian citizens, live.

Renata Makias wins temporary stay from Federal Court

Mr. Makias was charged with uttering threats to cause death or bodily harm to his wife, but he was released on conditions that included a restraining order that forbade him from having any contact with his wife or their children. He did not respect those conditions and was convicted of breach of the order.

The marriage fell apart and Mrs. Makias and the children moved to Montreal. After her legal resources ran out, she and the children went into hiding.

Harrington seemed to show compassion for her.

"The [Citizenship and Immigration] Minister complains

that she is a scofflaw because she will not reveal the whereabouts of her children. If she does, they shall be put into the custody of a man who has threatened to kill them. She has even gone to jail. What mother would not do the same?" he wrote.

She was granted a divorce by Quebec Superior Court in March 2006 and in November of that year, she was given custody of the children. Yossef Makias is appealing the divorce.

Harrington wrote that he finds it "disturbing" that, despite Yossef's record and the decisions of Canadian courts, the Regional Rabbinical Court of Tel Aviv has ordered that the children be handed over to him "immediately and with no further delay," quoting the rabbinical court.

Or, the couple's son, testified that he was afraid to go back to Israel because his father beat him and his sister frequently and "always used to threaten to kill" them. "He would run after me with a hammer in his hands to hit me with it."

The boy also stated that his father "almost killed my mom once by throwing a very heavy cup of glass and he would throw stuff at her like cellphones and plates."

Goldberg said he did not argue that the State of Israel does not take seriously the issue of domestic violence, or that its civil laws do not offer recourse, but he said the fact remains that the kids would have to stay with their father until any civil judicial process was completed.

He did have harsh words for the zeal with which the Canadian government is going after Mrs. Makias.

"I can't believe the resources that are being put in to try to remove a terrified woman who has never been charged with a crime, and, in fact, is a victim. It seems that only those being held under national security certificates are allowed to stay here for years," he said.

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Coast to Coast

Supreme Court won't rehear *get* case

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The Supreme Court of Canada has turned down a request to rehear a case in which it upheld that damages be paid to a woman whose ex-husband denied her a *get* for 15 years.

Anne-France Goldwater, the lawyer for Jason (Jessel) Marcovitz of Montreal, filed a motion with the high court in January arguing that she should have an opportunity to argue against the constitutionality of a 1990 amendment to the Divorce Act, intended to alleviate the problem of former

spouses refusing to grant or receive the traditional Jewish divorce.

Goldwater felt she had the right to reopen the case, although such a request is rarely granted, because the Supreme Court's 7-2 decision, handed down in December in favour of appellant Stephanie Bruker, cited that amendment as part of its reasoning. Goldwater noted that the parties had agreed a few years ago not to introduce the constitutionality of the amendment, section 21.1 of the Divorce Act, into the case.

"No reasons were given [by the Supreme Court not to rehear the case]," said Bruker's lawyer Alan Stein. "It was just dismissed with costs."

The decision means Bruker will finally be paid the \$47,500 in damages that the Quebec Superior Court awarded her in 2003, which with interests and costs amounts to about

\$103,000 today, she said.

However, she expects it will all go to pay legal fees. Bruker, reached in New York where she now lives, said the lesson of her long ordeal in court, which began when she sued Marcovitz in 1989 for damages, is that every Jewish couple should have a prenuptial agreement that makes clear what they will do in the event the marriage fails.

"And it should be written by a lawyer, not a rabbi," she added. "The language has to be correct."

She and Marcovitz did not have a prenuptial agreement, but did draw up a consent to corollary relief in 1980 as part of their divorce proceedings, in which they agreed to appear before a rabbinical court for the purpose of carrying out the *get* transaction immediately upon completion of the civil breakup.

Leo Baeck director resigns

Continued from page 13

Prashker, a native of London, England, was recruited in 2004 to run Leo Baeck, Canada's only Reform day school. The school operates two branches, one at Bathurst and Eglinton, the other in Thornhill.

In a biography that he provided to *The CJA* when he first came to Toronto, Prashker stated, "away from work, I play guitar reasonably, piano very badly and spend a lot of my free time writing and researching for my books, of which there are now about a dozen, mostly novels, but also two scholarly books."

His website, which was taken down last week, contained some of his poetry spanning the period from 1973 to 2003, which pre-dated his arrival at Leo Baeck.

Lawyer Allen Kaufman, whose son attends Leo Baeck, said Prashker's poetry was "sexist and degrading."

He said it's irrelevant that it was penned on Prashker's personal time outside the school. "It shows an appalling lack of good judgement for the head of a school to put these kinds of sexual fantasies on paper and think it's alright to disseminate them on his personal website."

Kaufman added that Prashker held a "very sensitive position."

"If you want to be head of a school, your behaviour has to be above reproach... We hold them to a higher standard because we entrust them with the care of our children," he said.

Prashker did not return a call for comment last week.

Former PQ leader to visit Israel

BY DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Former Parti-Québécois leader André Boisclair was among a group of Canadian academic figures who were to leave for Poland and Israel on March 20 to attend conferences in each country on how immigrants can achieve a sense of belonging in their new communities.

Boisclair said in an interview that he welcomed the opportunity to describe for Poles and Israelis how the Quebec model for integrating immigrants has worked so well, despite obvious challenges.

"I think Quebec has shown the way it can be done," he said.

Israel has also shown a keen interest in how immigrants and other minorities adapt, and it seemed a logical place to describe the Quebec model, he added.

Boisclair, who is also a former immigration and cultural communities minister, now teaches strategic communication at Concordia University's school of public affairs. This is his first trip to both countries.

Other participants from Canada include former Quebec Superior Court justice Herbert Marx, president of the Association for Canadian Studies (ACS); York University history professor, Irving Abella; Victor Rabinovitch, head of the Canadian Museum of Civilization; historian Jocelyn Letourneau of Université Laval; Environics Research head and best-selling author Michael A. Ams; and Gerald Gall, an expert on constitutional law and civil liberties who teaches at the University of Alberta and is a regular *CJA* columnist.

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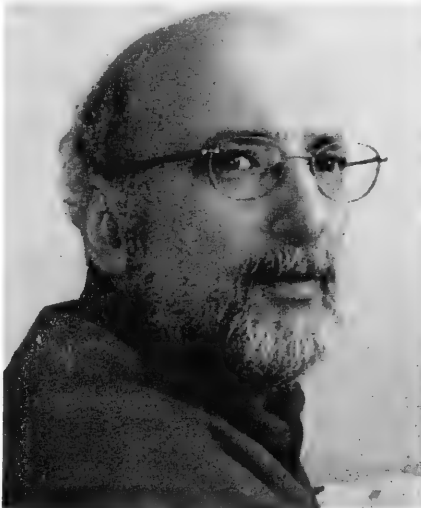
Coast to Coast

ALS forces *Bulletin* editor to step down

By DIANE KOVEN
Ottawa Correspondent

OTTAWA — The editor of the *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin* has been forced to step down as he battles Lou Gehrig's Disease.

After being diagnosed in 2006 with the disorder, whose official name is amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS, Barry Fishman continued to work, adapting his hours and working from home as his condition progressed.



Barry Fishman

But his illness — a progressive, usually fatal, neurodegenerative disease caused by the deterioration of nerve cells that control voluntary muscle movement — has reached the point where he is unable to fulfil all of his duties and he has gone on disability. He will become editor emeritus and remain involved with the paper on a volunteer basis, writing articles and columns when he is able to do so.

Mitchell Bellman, CEO of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, which publishes the *Bulletin*, called Fishman "an incredible editor... He really brought a very human and personal face to the paper... everyone respects him as just one of the nicest people they have ever met and someone who cares deeply about serving the Jewish community and the newspaper."

Fishman, 57, a graduate of Ryerson University's radio and television arts program, had a background in radio, television, public relations and sales prior to joining the *Bulletin* seven years ago.

The Sault Ste. Marie native said his goal when he became editor was to make the paper a true community institution, open to all its members.

"What I am most proud of is opening the paper to diverse voices in the Jewish com-

munity," Fishman said. "I wanted to do stories about Jewish people doing interesting things, both within the Jewish community and outside the Jewish community, and to give a voice to those who may not have been well represented in the paper before."

There have been challenges, he said.

"One of the biggest has been circulation," Fishman said. "It's a constant battle to keep the circulation up. The other big challenge is space. There is a lot going on and we have a limited amount of space for editorial, for financial reasons, so we are not always able to include everything we would like to."

Fishman said a highlight for him has been meeting and writing about many interesting people, including Holocaust survivor and author Elie Wiesel when he spoke at the opening of the annual UJA campaign in 2005.

"I interviewed him, and afterwards he sent me a nice note," Fishman said.

"I also enjoyed participating in two missions to Israel; interviewing many of the wonderful local people who have interesting stories to share; and was always interested in covering our local politicians when they were running for election."

Louise Rachlis, a member of the *Bulletin*'s advisory committee, has known Fishman for a number of years.

"I have long been an admirer of Barry's wonderful attitude," she said. "I've watched him modestly and quietly do what he believes in, whether following a longtime vegetarian diet [which he has been forced to abandon, on doctor's orders] or biking the MS Cycle Tour from Ottawa to Kemptville [Ont.] and back, or working with him as a member of the *Bulletin* advisory committee where, as editor, he was always open to suggestions, and handled political minefields, with diplomacy."

"While we are all concerned about his illness, he continues to make us comfortable with his usual grace and good spirits."

Fishman remains optimistic as he continues to battle the disease.

"I am not giving up hope and am doing my best by trying to have a positive attitude as I face the challenge of living with ALS. I plan to stay involved as much as I can as a volunteer and will, as editor emeritus, write the occasional column," he said.

"I have been humbled by the outpouring of concern and willingness of the readers of the *Bulletin* to help in any way they can. People who know me only through my work have phoned to offer their assistance. I feel privileged to be part of such a wonderful caring community."

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Uniform standards good for converts, community

By RABBI REUVEN TRADBURKS

The new agreement between the Rabbinical Council of America (RCA) and the Chief Rabbinate of Israel concerning conversion is a welcome and important development. It is unfortunate that this agreement was overshadowed by a small but vocal group of dissenters.

Guest Voice

I am a member of the committee of the RCA that drafted this agreement. The committee consists of 10 members, including the directors of the conversion programs of the batei din, the Jewish courts, of Chicago, Los Angeles, Washington and the New York area, as well as present and past leadership of the RCA and myself as director at the time of the Toronto Beis Din (a position now occupied by Rabbi Asher Vale).

I would like to outline why I feel the agreement is an important step.

Telling a person who views themselves as Jewish that we have doubts about their Jewish status is tragic and painful. During my 10 years as director of the Toronto beit din, which handled all Orthodox conversions in Toronto, I went through many boxes of tissues in my office. "How many people cried in my office today," I would think to myself. I would dread the meetings when I

knew what was going to transpire, and I would often choke back tears myself.

Conversion is a spiritual, emotional, beautiful, personal – and legal – process. The convert goes through a process of spiritual growth, growing into Jewish behaviours and Jewish belief to the point where they are prepared to accept all the mitzvahs of the Torah. This is a deep life transformation. Upon conversion, the new Jew accepts to be a part of the Jewish people and of Jewish history, as well as to accept Jewish belief and to live a life of complete observance of Jewish law.

The reality of the modern world created chaos in the area of conversion. Although the RCA is a national organization, there is no Sanhedrin, no organizing central body of conversions. Over the past 75 years, each rabbi undertook conversions for their congregants. And often, due to the great erosion of observance in North America, it became very difficult for an Orthodox rabbi to require a convert to keep Shabbat when no one in the congregation except the rabbi kept Shabbat.

And so many rabbis felt that they had to stretch the limits of the Halachah in order to preserve some semblance of attachment to Jewish life, hoping that maybe in the future the children of this family will become fine, connected Jews. So in order to save David Goldberg when he came to see the rabbi with his fiancé, Christine, the con-

version was done without requiring the full acceptance of the mitzvot. And that is not even mentioning the pressure a rabbi would feel from the president or the big giver when their children were dating non-Jews.

This is the reality of North American Jewry. But it created chaos. Rabbi Cohen doesn't require a convert to keep Shabbat, but Rabbi Levine does. And Rabbi Levine rejects Christine's conversion if it was done by Rabbi Cohen.

The range of standards in any area brings chaos – or at least bruised feelings and feelings of rejection. Doctors who move here to Canada from foreign countries face the same thing – differing standards inevitably bring rejection.

So that is the choice: do you want to perpetuate the freedom of the individual rabbi to set the standards himself, with the inevitable rejection by others, or do you want to ensure that after all that a convert goes through that they will be accepted by all others as Jewish?

The second path was chosen, and as a result, approximately 25 years ago an effort was begun at the RCA to set standards for conversions done by its member rabbis. From the beginning, the standards required that the convert live a fully observant life, including keeping kosher, keeping Shabbat and making blessings over food. In Toronto, the Orthodox rabbis at that time decided to centralize all conversions into one beit din, one body, in order to have one standard for all Orthodox conversions – and save the tissues and the pain of rejection that inevitably comes with differing standards.

However, even with the drive by the RCA to have uniform conversion standards, individual rabbis continued to do conversions according to their own standards. I must add as an aside that even though I have always personally demanded full observance of converts, I do not impugn the sincerity or competence of other rabbis. There is a rationale in trying to reach out and keep as many Jews connected as we can – and some great halachic authorities have taken this view.

However, that is not the view of the greatest authorities of our day, nor has it ever been the view of the majority of authorities. So the rabbis who were more lenient may very well have been sincere, but I feel, as has the RCA for 25 years, that this leniency does not serve the Jewish people well – and it certainly does not serve the new Jews, the converts, well.

And that brings us to today. A few years ago, the RCA reorganized its central beit din, the Beth Din of America. Rabbi Michael Brody, a professor of law at Emory University, created a professional court of the highest order to deal with divorces, monetary disputes and conversions.

Many requests for definitive rulings on conversions done by RCA members came to the Beth Din of America – both from north American rabbis and from the Chief Rabbinate in Israel. The director, Rabbi Yona Reiss, a Yale University law graduate, and

others in the beit din began to speak of helping to create a system that would allow conversions to be done and not have to be scrutinized afterward for their acceptability. The guidelines for conversions that had been previously distributed were not being universally followed.

I personally told Rabbi Reiss a number of years ago that I felt the Toronto model of a central beit din that is accepted by all was a model to copy throughout North America. So, when the committee on conversion standards announced its interest in creating such a system, I became a member of the committee.

The new process is now in effect. There are regional batei din in all the major metropolitan areas in North America. People outside those cities who want to convert will work with their local rabbi in consultation with the regional beit din, and when the conversion is done, it will be done at the regional beit din. The standards will be completely transparent, the judges will be well-known rabbis and the documentation will be easily recognizable as part of this system.

I think this is good for the Jews, and especially for the new Jews. This move has been incorrectly identified as a demand by the Chief Rabbinate of Israel. That is simply not true. It has also been called a shift to the right. But these standards have been the standards of record for 25 years – there is no shifting.

It does remove the holy work of performing conversions from local rabbis themselves, but I think co-operation in the system for the greater good is more important than maintaining individual autonomy. And it is not intended to cast aspersions on any previous conversions – these conversions can continue to be accepted based on their merits.

The motivation of this entire process is to help people in the process of conversion. We want to help. We want to be available to people in this journey. Our Orthodox community – the one I am most familiar with – has gained immensely from the wonderful converts in our midst. We are a better community because of their presence. There is no desire to build barriers to welcoming new Jews. This entire process is to help people who want to convert, and for that conversion to bring them peace of mind and acceptance.

Rabbi Reuven Tradburks is the spiritual leader of Kehillat Shaarei Torah in Toronto.



Rabbi Reuven Tradburks

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Practice and patience pay off

We all have gurus or mentors who dazzle us with their words, thoughts, actions and achievements. For me, one such guru is Robin Sharma, whose books, motivational talks and personal blogs are always inspiring.

A motto that Sharma borrowed from comedian Steve Martin, "Be so good [that] they can't ignore you," is absolutely true. I think it is great advice for kids and adults alike. In his latest book, *The Greatness Guide, Book 2: 100 More Insights To Get You To World Class*, Sharma writes: "Sometimes discouragement sets in. Happens to all of us. We try hard, stay true to our dreams and pursue our ideals. Yet nothing happens. Or so it seems. But every choice matters. And every step counts."

"Life runs according to its own agenda, not ours. Be patient. Trust. Be like the stonemason, steadily chipping away, day after day. Eventually, a single blow will crack the stone and reveal the diamond. An enthusiastic, dedicated person who is ridiculously good at what they do just cannot be denied."

So when you apply this attitude, whether it's on the hockey rink or football field, in a ballet, yoga or spinning class, at home with your loved ones, at work, at play, in your community and even in the world at large,

you can't lose. "Having the courage to present your gifts and your highest capacities will yield magnificent rewards. Life is always fair in the end. Trust it," Sharma says.

So where do we trip up? Well, often we lack patience, and we don't practise hard enough. Piano lessons are a perfect example of this. How many children have stopped playing piano altogether because practising was way too hard, and when children don't practise, it means they don't enjoy it very much. Ironically, what is needed is to practise even more.

We have a wonderful piano teacher, Melanie, who obviously figured this out, and asked our children to practise twice a day. Our son, who is brilliant when he tries but wasn't practising as much as he could, now springs out of bed in the morning to practise the piano and then does it again at night. Our daughter, who was already practising every day, will now sometimes practise four times a day. So what's happening is they are enjoying it even more, because every time they practise, they get better at it, and they know it, and as a result, they love playing the piano.

"The best practice is practice," says Sharma. He talks about how cyclist Lance Armstrong could never have won the Tour

de France without his daily disciplined regimen and how basketball player Steve Nash would never give up on his "crushing daily workouts and post-game analyses. How can you get better if you don't practise? Success just doesn't occur. The finest things in life take patience, focus and sacrifice. To get to world class, you need to work at it. Daily. Relentlessly. Passionately."

We do improve dramatically when we work at it. Daily hard work does amount to staggering results over time. So if patience and practice help us achieve brilliant results, how do we stay patient when things are not happening as quickly as we'd hoped?

Well, it helps to look at the big picture and put yourself on the back for the good work you have done and are doing. And be patient not only with yourself, but with others as well.

Also, take heed of what Martin believes, "Be so good [that] they can't ignore you." He achieved success by figuring out what the masters in the field were doing and then doing it even better. He also never let himself lose focus and would work on one project or goal at a time and master it, before moving on to the next challenge. His excellence, determination and single-minded focus separate him from all the rest, making him arguably one of the funniest and most talented performers in the entertainment industry.

What will you do to be so good in your life, work or community, that they can't ignore you?

Judy Sibling-Librach is an Adler-trained coach. Website: www.findingyourbliss.com, e-mail: judyelle@ican.net.



Life Coach Corner

Judy Sibling-Librach

It helps to look at the big picture and pat yourself on the back for the good work you have done and are doing

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Food, Scrumptious Food

Hamantaschen – the signature food of Purim

By NORENE GILLETZ
Special to The CJN

Arthur Schwartz is passionate about the food he cooks and the food he eats. I met him several years ago at a culinary conference – I overheard him discussing the merits of schmaltz with cookbook author Phyllis Glazer and knew instantly that this man and I were kindred spirits!

I've been waiting for months for a copy of his new book, *Arthur Schwartz's Jewish Home Cooking: Yiddish Recipes Revisited* (Ten Speed Press) and was thrilled when it arrived just in time for this article.

"Food can connect us to our past. In fact, food is often our very last and only connection to our pasts, enduring long after the old language has been forgotten and other traditions have died," Schwartz writes in the introduction.

Jewish Home Cooking is packed with nearly 100 recipes for appetizers, soups, sides, meat and dairy mains, Passover dishes, breads and desserts, along with the stories behind these dishes and the people who have cooked and eaten them. There are mouth-watering photos of Jewish delicacies to please your palate and your craving for real Jewish home cooking. You'll find soul-stirring, authentic (yet updated) recipes for dishes that connect us to our pasts, including Potato Knishes, Kasha Varnishkes, Carrot Tzimmes, Cholent, Gedempeh Fleish, Karnatzlach, Vegetable Cutlets with Ratner's Vegetarian Brown Gravy, Challah French Toast, Potatonic (Polish Potato Bread), Tzibeleh Kuchen, New York Cheesecake, Passover Pareve Apple Cake and Ingberlach.

You'll also find a wonderful recipe for the signature food of Purim, hamantaschen, with a luscious chocolate filling and with step-by-step colour photos on how to make them. Arthur even suggests that any leftover filling can be baked into brownies – in my book, he deserves brownie points for that terrific tip.

Arthur Schwartz writes: "It is said that Haman, the villain in the biblical story of Esther that is retold every spring and is the basis for the joyous festival of Purim, wore a three-cornered hat, or wore a robe with three-cornered pockets. That's why these Purim treats are made in a triangular shape,



either for the hat or the pockets, but more likely the pockets because *taschen* means pockets in German, the basic language of Yiddish.

"That is mythic folklore, of course. It makes more sense to say that they are called hamantaschen because they were originally filled only with *mohn*, poppy seeds – hence poppy seed pockets. Coincidentally, *mohn*-*taschen* sounds like hamantaschen, so they became hamantaschen. Then again, in the Jewish faith, there is no such thing as coincidence. Everything is by divine providence. It's all beside the point, actually. These are such beloved pastries that they are now made all year long."

The dough for these hamantaschen comes from Carole Walter's award-winning book *Great Cookies*. Schwartz writes that he couldn't improve on it. Traditional fillings are *lekvar* (prune paste), *mohn* (poppy seed), and apricot paste, or you can also use apricot preserves, marmalade, or other jam or preserves. Schwartz offers a delicious chocolate

filling. This cookbook is guaranteed to win your heart along with your appetite!

ARTHUR SCHWARTZ'S HAMANTASCHEN

Dough:

- 3 cups bleached all-purpose flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 10 tbsp. (1 stick plus 2 tbsp.) cold, unsalted butter or pareve margarine, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 2 eggs
- 2 egg yolks
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract

Chocolate Filling:

- 6 oz. semisweet chocolate
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) butter
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1/4 cup bleached all-purpose flour
- 1/4 to 1/2 cup finely chopped walnuts (optional)

- 2 large egg whites, lightly beaten with 2 tsp. sugar for the egg wash

In the bowl of a food processor fitted with the metal blade, place the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. Pulse several times to combine. Add the butter and pulse several more times, then process for a few seconds to form mealy crumbs.

In a small bowl, beat together the eggs, egg yolks and vanilla. Pour this egg mixture into the food processor and pulse several times to mix it in, then process for about 10

seconds. With a rubber spatula, stir the mixture up from the bottom, then process again until the dough begins to clump together, about another 10 seconds.

Turn onto a lightly floured surface and, with floured hands, press the dough together, divide in half and form into 2 disks. Wrap each disk with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 1 hour, or up to 3 days. (The dough may be frozen for up to 4 months.)

To prepare the filling, melt the chocolate and butter together in a small saucepan over low heat, stirring until perfectly smooth. Add the salt, vanilla, sugar, eggs, flour and walnuts, and stir until well blended.

Any unused portion of the filling can be frozen for up to 4 months, or it can be baked into brownies in a 325-degree oven for about 35 minutes.

If baking all the hamantaschen at once, on two baking sheets, position the racks in the lower and upper thirds of the oven. If making only one sheet at a time, the rack should be in the centre of the oven. Preheat the oven to 350.

Dab the corners of the baking sheets with butter and line them with parchment paper.

If the dough is coming straight from the refrigerator, let it warm slightly at room temperature (for about 20 minutes) so it can be rolled out. On a lightly floured board, roll the dough to a thickness of about 1/8 in. Using a 3-inch-round cookie cutter, cut circles of dough and place them on the prepared sheets.

When all the dough has been cut, place about 2 teaspoons of filling in the centre of each circle. Brush the perimeter of the circle with the egg wash. Using a dough scraper, lift the dough to partially cover the filling, spacing it at one-third intervals like a tri-cornered hat. Brush the tops of the formed cookies with the egg wash.

Bake for 15 to 18 minutes, or until the cookies are golden brown. If baking more than one sheet at a time, to ensure even browning, rotate the sheets top to bottom and front to back toward the end of the baking time.

Remove from the oven and let rest on the baking sheets for two or three minutes. Loosen the cookies with a thin metal spatula and trans-

fer to wire cooling racks.

Store the cookies in an airtight container, layered between strips of wax paper, for up to 5 days. These cookies may be frozen. Makes about 36.

Note: When re-rolling the scraps, do not gather them in your hand. Stack the scraps on a 12-inch-long piece of plastic wrap, bring the four sides to the middle, and using the plastic wrap as an aid, press the pieces of dough together forming a small rectangle. Refrigerate before re-rolling.

Norene Gilletz is a cookbook author, cooking teacher and food consultant. Her latest book is Norene's Healthy Kitchen (*Whitecap*).

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Historic joint session of Israeli, German cabinet ministers

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JERUSALEM — Israel and Germany upgraded their ties Monday, approving a host of joint projects and agreeing to hold annual government consultations.

During German Chancellor Angela Merkel's three-day visit to mark the 60th anniversary of Israel's creation, she and Prime Minister Ehud Olmert chaired a historic joint session of members of the German and Israeli cabinets, at which both governments signed off on a range of projects, including in education, the environment and defence. The two sides agreed to hold such meetings once a year, alternating as hosts.

The two governments seek to strengthen and intensify their political, cultural, economic and social relations as a partnership of democratic and pluralistic nations, a joint statement said.

Merkel was accompanied by eight German cabinet members. Germany already has similar arrangements with France, Italy, Spain, Poland and Russia. This is the first time Israel has entered into such an agreement.

Germany and Israel formed diplomatic ties in 1965, and Germany is Israel's second biggest trading partner, after the United States.

The session marked the first time cabinets from both countries have met for joint consultations, and the first time the German government held a joint cabinet session with a country outside Europe.

Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni was also due to hold a separate meeting with her German counterpart Frank-Walter Steinmeier. They were expected to focus mainly on the Iranian nuclear threat. Defence Minister Ehud Barak was also scheduled to meet with his German counterpart, Franz Josef Jung.

Olmert, addressing the joint cabinet session, said Israel is interested in talking with Syria, talks he said will lead Damascus to break with the "Axis of Evil."

He also said Israel has no interest in confrontation on its northern border with Lebanon.

As for the south of the country, Olmert said that "the government must do everything in order to defend its citizens, and it will do so."

"At the same time," he added, "it will act to advance the peace process. Negotiations are not a default option for us. We are conducting them because we believe that there is a chance to reach an agreement."

Earlier on Monday, Merkel visited the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem.

Accompanied by Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and eight ministers from each government, she attended a memorial service for the six million Jews killed by the Nazis during World War II.

Signing Yad Vashem's guest book, Merkel pointed to the historic joint Israeli-German cabinet session scheduled for that day, when she wrote: "In recognition of Germany's responsibility for the Shoah, the German government underlines with the first German-Israeli consultations its determination for a joint shaping of the future."

Upon arriving in Tel Aviv Sunday, and Merkel had expressed a similar sentiment, saying Berlin had a "special responsibility" toward Israel.

Olmert, for his part, described Germany, 63 years after the Holocaust, as one of Israel's "strongest allies."

On Tuesday, Merkel was to become the first foreign head of government to speak before the Knesset. In the past, the honour has been reserved only for heads of state and monarchs.

Last week, the Knesset house committee approved Merkel's request to address the Knesset in German, sparking a heated vote that passed seven to two.

The two rightist members of Knesset who voted against the approval, were critical of the decision.

"I cannot stand to hear German in the Knesset," MK Aryeh Eldad said. "My mother and father were murdered in that language."

Merkel said Sunday that this upgrade of ties between Israel and Germany will open a new chapter in the relations between the two countries.

She began her visit Sunday with a trip to the home of Israel's founding father, David Ben-Gurion, in Sde Boker, an Israeli kibbutz in the southern Negev.

Later, Merkel, a former physicist, was to visit the Weizmann Institute, one of Israel's top scientific research facilities.

Shimon Stein, a former Israeli ambassador to Germany, said the upgrade in ties is unique for Israel. For the first time, Israel will sign an agreement that will institutionalize annual meetings at the prime minister-chancellor level, he said.

Germany has emerged as one of Israel's staunchest political allies, and Israel has made use of German mediation in winning freedom for captured soldiers.

However, six decades after the end of World War II, a state visit by a German leader is still an emotional event for the Jewish state. Six million Jews perished in the Nazi Holocaust, and about 250,000 elderly survivors live in Israel.

This is Merkel's second visit to Israel since becoming chancellor in 2005. She is not visiting the Palestinian territories, but her government announced last week that it would sponsor a conference in Berlin in the coming months to help upgrade the Palestinian security forces and justice system.

Palestinian Foreign Minister Riad Malki said Merkel would soon pay a special visit to the West Bank to discuss German support for the Palestinians. Germany is a major donor to the Palestinian Authority, headed by President Mahmoud Abbas.

Meanwhile, U.S. Republican presidential candidate John McCain was also expected to visit Yad Vashem on Tuesday.



German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Israeli President Shimon Peres at David Ben-Gurion's resting place in Sde Boker in the Negev. [Israel Sun photo]

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French court unfreezes Iranian funds

JTA

PARIS — In a setback for terror victims, a French court lifted a freeze on Iranian state funds.

Victims of Iranian-sponsored attacks in Israel in 1995 and 1997 are suing Iran for compensation.

While the Paris Court of Appeal this week released the \$117 million held in the Natexis

Banques Populaire, it did not seek interest and court fees from the plaintiffs, their Paris-based attorney Christoph Martin Radtke told the JTA in a telephone interview.

The court told the attorneys to reapply for the Iranian funds once a decision is made on whether funds in the Iranian Central Bank may be confiscated to pay the damages in a U.S. court decision.

Federal judges in Washington ordered Iran to pay damages and interest of \$87.5 million to 12 U.S. citizens injured in the two terrorist attacks in Israel. The U.S. courts determined that Iran was liable for the damages due to its sponsorship of Hamas, which orchestrated the attacks.

Radtke said the French court decided to release the Iranian funds because "the law that protects state accounts does not allow an excep-

tion for provisional seizure measures."

In January, Radtke in another Paris court sought the enforcement of the U.S. court judgments. He told JTA he hoped for a decision within a few months.

In an e-mail to the JTA, the plaintiffs' U.S.-based attorney, David Strachman of Rhode Island, said they "are really disappointed with the outcome" in the French court.

Bomb scare forces Paris fair's evacuation

JTA

PARIS — A bomb scare forced the evacuation of the Paris Book Fair, which was being held amid boycott calls for honouring Israeli writers.

Attendees on Sunday were asked to leave the Porte de Versailles exhibition complex in southern Paris at 5 p.m. local time, Paris police officials said. They said the situation

appeared calm.

French radio reported that other fairs taking place at the complex also had been evacuated.

Israeli President Shimon Peres, under tightened security, had inaugurated the event last Thursday night.

"Those who want to burn books, boycott wisdom, prevent reflection, block liberty [and] condemn themselves to blindness," he said.

Arab nations called for a boycott of the fair, which invited 39 Israeli authors.

In late February, the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization asked its 50 member nations not to attend the event. Countries such as Iran, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Saudi Arabia backed the boycott.

Approximately 20 pro-Palestinian protesters stood near one entrance on opening night, but the dispute appeared to push many to

express their support for Israel by showing up.

"Even if it doesn't change much, for me it was important to be here tonight and show my real support for Israeli authors," said Jean Rouaud, a French writer and the 1990 winner of the Goncourt literary prize.

The fair, which typically attracts 200,000 visitors, was scheduled to be open to the public through Wednesday.

U.S. Senate denies funds to Durban II

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The U.S. Senate last week unanimously passed an amendment to the Fiscal Year 2009 Budget Resolution denying financial support for the UN's Durban II anti-racism conference.

The amendment introduced by Senator Norm Coleman prohibits funding for the conference, which is the follow-up to the UN World Conference on Racism held in Durban, South Africa, in 2001, and instead allocates the funds for domestic veterans' services.

The United States and Israel walked out of the first Durban conference over anti-Semitic and anti-Israel activities. Observers fear Israel-bashing will take centre stage at Durban II as well.

"American tax dollars should not be used to support an international platform for hateful, anti-Semitic propaganda under the guise of combating racism," Coleman said.

"Passage of this amendment sends a clear message from the Senate," he added. "We will not dignify this hypocrisy with funding, and we call on the State Department to formally

reject U.S. participation in it. The first Durban conference was bad enough — the late Rep. Tom Lantos, a Holocaust survivor and U.S. delegate, was part of the walk-out, calling it the most sickening display of anti-Semitism since the Nazi period. With Libya in the chair and Iran as a vice-chair, Durban II will likely be even worse."

Recently, Coleman and 26 of his Senate colleagues sent a letter to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice urging the State Department to shun Durban II. Coleman also passed an amendment to the Fiscal Year 2008 Omnibus Appropriations Bill preventing U.S. funds from being used to support the UN Human Rights Council, which serves as the planning authority for the Durban conference. The amendment was in response to the council's sole focus on demonizing Israel at the expense of reviewing urgent human rights situations throughout the world.

Forty countries joined the United States in voting against funding for Durban II in the UN biannual budget for 2008-09.



SDEROT COMES TO TEL AVIV

Last week, a two-day Sderot fair was held in Tel Aviv, in which Sderot businesses sold their wares. The city of Tel Aviv made a hangar building available to Sderot shopkeepers. The constant bombardment of missiles from Gaza into Sderot has significantly harmed commercial life there. The sign being held up in the middle of the photo expresses thanks to the people of Tel Aviv for their support.

[Isranet photo]



UJA Federations Canada
בגבולות המדינות היהודיות במוקד

The Board of Directors and Staff of UJA Federations Canada deeply mourn the passing of

Alec Rossman ז"ל
(Port Colborne, Ontario)

Husband of
Mrs. Anne Rossman

Our condolences go out to the entire Rossman family.
May they be comforted together with all the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.
המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

Linda Kislowitz
Chief Executive Officer
Dov Harris
Director, Bequests & Endowments

Barbara Farber
President
Perry Romberg
Director, UJA Campaign

April 30 for The YM-YWHA Alex Dworkin
Montreal Sports Jewish Hall of Fame.

Inductee: Montreal Canadiens hockey legend **Jean Beliveau**.
Special guests: Henri Richard, Dickie Moore, Ken Dryden M.P., Vvan Cournoyer, Rejean Houle, Pete Mahovich, Sen. Frank Mahovich, Darryl Sittler and others **AND THE STANLEY CUP**.

Other inductees: the **1936 Water Polo Team**: Lionel Caplan, Abe Feinholz, Max Goldstein, Henry Pesner, Abe Ofshitzer, M. Rabinovitch, Ben Silverman, Abe Sohmer, Abe Tafler, Larry Tucker, Morris Bruker, Oscar Holzberg, M. Weinstein; and
Beth Leboff, Albert Schneider; Terrie Brecher-Weisse and Robert Habert.

Looking for relatives of the water polo team to attend the event.
Information and ticket sales, Elsa Beker at 514-737-6551, ext. 595



YM-YWHA Montreal Jewish Community Centres
Ben Weider JCC
5400 Westbury Ave.



Israel & the Jewish World

Israeli police arrest rabbi

Israeli police arrested a U.S. born rabbi for inciting Palestinians. Police say Rabbi Arik Ascherman, executive director of Rabbis for Human Rights, has encouraged Palestinians to confront police securing archaeological digs in Silwan, an Arab neighbourhood next to Jerusalem's Old City. They also say the rabbi kept a wounded Jewish set-

ter in the neighbourhood from being evacuated. He denies the charges. He was arrested after refusing a police demand to keep away from the area for 15 days.

Israel Briefs

Israel to boycott Al-Jazeera

Israel plans to boycott the Arab news channel Al-Jazeera. The Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem said it would send notice to the Arab world's

most popular satellite news channel that Israeli officials would no longer offer co-operation. Qatar-based Al-Jazeera has Arabic- and English-language broadcasts and a Jerusalem bureau. The Foreign Ministry said its coverage of recent fighting in Gaza has been skewed toward Palestinian propaganda to the point that Israel fears it could perpetuate bloodshed by stirring up Arab ire. Al-Jazeera's Jerusalem bureau chief denied the network is biased.

Rockets resume in Sderot

Terrorists in Gaza fired three Qassam rockets at Israel last Friday as Deputy Defence Minister Matan Vilnai was visiting Sderot in the western Negev. A week-long lull in fighting between Israel and Palestinians in Gaza ended last Thursday as rockets and mortars rained on Sderot and other communities bordering Gaza. Palestinians said the rockets were in response to the March 12 killing of four Islamic Jihad leaders in Bethlehem.

Purim rallies for Israel

A global series of simultaneous pro-Israel rallies are planned for Purim night. The March 20 rallies will be presented live on the Internet by the sponsoring organization, One Family Fund, which supports victims of terror. A site created for the event, www.together4israel.org, will allow the public to participate. Harvard University law professor Alan Dershowitz and Canadian MP and human rights lawyer Irwin Cotler will begin the event from Sderot

with residents of the rocket-plagued town. "The world needs to know that Jews everywhere support Israel's right to defend itself," Dershowitz said. The rally will then move to Jerusalem, where psalms will be read at the Western Wall. At the same time there will be a gathering in London, followed by rallies in New York City at the Kehilat Jeshurun synagogue, in Los Angeles at the Simon Wiesenthal Center and finally in Australia.

—with files from JTA

Jews flee Paris suburbs for 'ghettos'

By DEVORAH LAUTER

JTA

VILLEPINTE, France — Rabbi David Altabe looks older than his 27 years when he talks about the future of the Jewish community in this working-class suburb of Paris.

Rabbi Altabe leans his elbows on a table set for the Sabbath and sinks his furrowed brow in his palms.

"We do what we can, but it's hard," he says. "I don't know why I stay. I ask myself that question all the time."

Over a period of just three years, roughly half the Jewish families in Villepinte have left. Some have gone to other suburbs or Paris neighbourhoods considered safer for Jews; a few have left the country.

Of 300 families three years ago, only 150 remain today, community president Charly Hannoun estimates.

The reason, he says, is anti-Semitism.

Now Villepinte's 40-year-old synagogue, which was torched in 1991 and 2001, is at risk of closing because there are barely enough regulars for a minyan. Jewish community leaders are wondering if Jews have a future here.

"It's a whole history that's being erased," says Hannoun, who worked with contractors and friends to build the town's synagogue. "It's the end of the synagogue, and I say that with rage in my heart."

Villepinte is one stark example of what is happening to many Jewish communities in the immigrant-heavy suburbs of the Seine-Saint-Denis region, north of Paris.

Scarred by the surge in anti-Semitism that swept through France between 2000 and 2005, roughly two-thirds of the mostly Sephardi Jews who once lived in these close-knit communities have left town.

Sammy Ghazlan, the president of the Seine-Saint-Denis Council of Jewish Communities, says more than 16,000 Jews have moved out of the suburbs since 2001. Left behind are synagogues weighing whether to close and mostly poor, elderly and religious Jewish families.

Experts say the Jewish flight from the suburbs is changing the demographics of France's Jewish community and increasing the ghettoization of Jews in the country.

All of France is experiencing the problem, says University of Paris sociologist Shmuel Trigano, the author of *The Future of the Jews in France*.

"It is a general shift, not a passing crisis," Trigano says. "The Jewish community is becoming a ghetto. It is no longer a community of choice but a community of necessity. In a democracy that shouldn't happen."

Though increased security has helped reduce anti-Semitic crime in France, bringing the level of anti-Jewish incidents in poorer suburbs down to the levels in Paris, the change has come too late for many suburban Jews fed up with worrying about what might happen.

Rabbi Altabe says he recently had a glass bottle thrown at him from a passing car while walking with his three-year-old child.

"If you hit us over the head enough times, we'll protect ourselves," says Marc Djebali, the president of the Sarcelles Jewish community, north of Paris.

Djebali says the Sarcelles community of 10,000 Jews lost about one-fifth of its population over the last decade.

"We don't attack," he says. "The Jews just take their bags and they go."

Jews from the northern suburbs who are wealthy enough to live in Paris are moving to eastern Paris and its suburbs, where anti-Semitism is minimal and Jewish schools are available.

"By the next generation, there will be practically no more Jews

in the northern Paris periphery," says Maurice Robert Fellous, the president of the Jewish community in Noisy-le-Sec, a northern Paris suburb. "In 25 years, we'll have to sell our synagogue."

Since 2000, nearly 40 per cent of Noisy-le-Sec's school-aged Jewish families have pulled their children from area public schools and enrolled them in Jewish institutions, Fellous says.

He attributes the shift to the area's general anti-Jewish environment and specific incidents students have encountered, such as being beaten up and subjected to insults and taunts. Many regularly hear the cry "dirty Jew!"

This shift to Jewish schools is apparent in many places in France, albeit to a lesser degree than in Noisy-le-Sec.

Exact numbers are hard to access because by law, public schools cannot identify or count their Jewish students. Patric Petit-Ohayon, the director of the education department at the Jewish community social welfare umbrella group, the Jewish Unified Social Funds, says Jewish school enrolment in the northern Paris suburbs increased rapidly during the 2000 to 2005 period.

In moving their children to Jewish schools or their families out of the suburbs, many Sephardi families make a direct comparison between this migration and their families' flights from North Africa some 40 years ago.

"They chased us from Algeria and they followed us here," Robert Sebbane, 81, says of the North African Muslims responsible for much of France's anti-Jewish crime.

In 2000, "we were shocked because we didn't think this would happen here," says Sebbane, who lives in the town of Creteil.

Even in Seine-Saint-Denis, which community leaders say is a comparatively safe area, Jewish residents are subject to anti-Semitic

taunts and youths regularly spit at synagogues as they walk past.

Some religious Jews in France have warned community members not to display their yarmulkes in public.

In Villepinte, Hannoun says families started departing "very rapidly" in 2004, when "the reality of the situation set in."

"It was horrible," he says. "You couldn't walk out of synagogue. Families couldn't take it."

Despite the drop in anti-Semitic crime, which Hannoun attributes to the declining number of Jews in town, Jews have continued to leave Villepinte.

Hannoun says he is torn between the desire to recruit new Jewish families to the neighbourhood to replace those who have left and discouraging potential community members from coming to a place he fears is not good for Jews.

"Honestly, I don't know if I want them to come," he says, adding, however, that he encourages couples who cannot afford housing elsewhere to settle here.

Though he has the financial means to relocate, Hannoun says he will not move so long as he is needed by Jews in Villepinte.

"After us, there'll be nothing left," Hannoun says. "We can't lower our hands while we still have a role to play. It's like being the captain on a sinking ship."

In 2002, Hannoun's son, Olivier, 40, moved with his family to Miami from France because of anti-Semitism.

Olivier Hannoun says he misses a lot about home, but his three children have become accustomed to life in the United States.

"They can't understand that it can be difficult to be a Jew elsewhere," Hannoun says. "They don't know what that is, which is exactly what I wanted."

JEWISH FEDERATION OF WINNIPEG

Machon Madrichim in Winnipeg Director

The Jewish Federation of Winnipeg is piloting a new youth leadership development program in cooperation with other Jewish community organizations, creating a school for Jewish youth leaders and counselors. The youth leadership program will engage Jewish teens, with the aim of developing their leadership skills which can be applied to community activities and programs. The curriculum provides non-formal education and experience in planning and conducting attractive recreational activities that include Jewish content.

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HEEBONICS

Theatre artist experiences a spiritual awakening

By RANDI BERGMAN
Special to The CJN

The struggle to find a balance between secular life and religion is one that most Jews are familiar with, and one that Roger Mehl is all too familiar with.

A full-time performer since the age of 16, Mehl, a dancer, singer and actor, is now going to synagogue.

"All my life I have been going through a transformation, an artist trying to re-invent the wheel," says Mehl. "I've always been trying to combine Judaism and art."

While growing up in Toronto, nobody, least of all Mehl himself, would have guessed that Judaism would become such a significant part of his life.

After studying ballet in Belleville Ont., during his high school years, Mehl moved to London, England, where he studied singing, dancing and acting at the internationally renowned London Studio Centre.

One of the centre's rising stars, he moved on to become a cast member in a German production of Andrew Lloyd Weber's *Starlight Express*, in which he performed on roller skates.

It was during his stint in Germany that Mehl, while practising a new trick, fell and injured his ankle, breaking it in three places.

"There were pins in my legs. I was told [by a doctor] I was never going to walk again," says 31-year-old Mehl.

Mehl, however, decided to prove the doctor wrong and was determined not only to walk again but to continue his dance career, as well.

"I attended dance classes with five-year-olds, just so I could remember how to bend my leg," Mehl says.

His injuries miraculously healed within a mere six months, and Mehl was back at work in London, at the prestigious Theatre Royal York.

Soon, opportunities in theatre, including with productions of *Les Misérables* and *Fame*, were within reach. But although Mehl's fire still burned for the stage, his heart yearned for something that had so far been untapped: his relationship with Judaism.

"I had been trying so hard to prove who I was on the stage, but I started to realize that there was more to me than just performing," Mehl says.

Slowly exploring his roots, he began to attend synagogue regularly and had weekly lessons with his rabbi. Eventually, he discovered that there was a whole world outside the bubble of stage life.

Within a year, he was completely enveloped in a

new role - that of an observant Jew. He became a regular attendee of various Jewish events, and at one of them, at the Jewish Learning Exchange in London, he met his future wife, Casielle.

They had more in common than a chance meeting. Not only was Casielle from a similar secular background as Mehl, but she was also a dancer from the Greater Toronto Area.

"The connection was instant," he says, smiling. Soon after, Mehl approached his rabbi for advice.

The rabbi counselled him to put the relationship "on the back burner for a year."

Both Mehl and Casielle were new to the process of dating as observant Jews, so hilarity ensued whenever they were together.

Once, attempting a gentlemanly gesture, he asked her to join him under his umbrella during a rainstorm. Casielle took him up on his offer, but nervous that it could be considered *yichud* - the seclusion of a man and woman, which is prohibited until the couple is married - she took off with his umbrella.

After keeping a distant relationship for a year - on the advice of his rabbi - the two dated for a few months before Mehl proposed. The couple were wed in Israel, where they decided to stay. Soon after, Casielle gave birth to their first child, Chana Ariella.

While living in Jerusalem, Mehl opened R.M. Studios, the first English-language acting school in the country.

When he was teaching, he began to realize that the struggle to balance religious life with the need to perform was also experienced by his students.

"It was such an awakening and empowering experience to be able to help other religious people who struggled with expressing themselves," Mehl says.

One of the students he helped was battling severe depression and having suicidal thoughts. When the class venue and its schedule changed, the student's father said he would pay whatever amount it took to ensure his daughter would remain in the class.

Mehl said that the student is now in a much healthier frame of mind, happily married and going to



Roger Mehl displays his talents during his one-man musical called *The Roll of a Lifetime* in Jerusalem in 2004.

regular therapy sessions.

In 2006, he returned to the stage, performing a one-person show, *The Roll of a Lifetime*, on roller skates. The play tells Mehl's story of becoming more religious and his struggle to reconcile a life in theatre with Judaism. It was a success, with Mehl performing to packed houses in Jerusalem.

"They were literally turning people away at the door," he says.

After four years of living in Israel, the couple moved back to Toronto, where their family grew with the recent addition of their one-month-old daughter, Zahava, who was named for Jerusalem.

"Aside from life being extremely expensive in Israel, we felt that it was important for our children to be near their grandparents [in Toronto]," Mehl says.

The Mehls live in the Toronto Beach neighbourhood and are part of the developing Chabad community there.

Now, taking on yet another role, Mehl runs the Canadian office of the publishing house Toby Press. The position was specially created for him.

"The fact that I can leave my work life at the office has completely opened me up as a person and a father," Mehl says. "But I would never have been able to do it without the constant support of my wife."



Mehl, with his oldest daughter, Chana Ariella, enjoys the spring blossoms near their former home in the Catamon borough of Jerusalem.

Mehl's attitude to performing has undergone a radical shift.

"Performing used to be about competition for me. Now it's more out of a desire to give to the world and the audience," he says. "At the moment I feel satisfied performing for my kids, which is something I never, never thought I would say."

CHECK OUT OUR BLOG @ HEEBONICS.CA

Israel & the Jewish World

Israel's new intelligence estimate paints gloomy picture

By LESLIE SUSSER

JTA

Last week's terrorist attack at a Jerusalem yeshiva and the new Israeli national intelligence assessment presented to the cabinet on March 9 underscore the acute security problems Israel faces this year and beyond.

The terrorist shooting spree in the Mercatz Harav yeshiva, which left eight students dead, raised questions about the vulnerability of Jews in western Jerusalem to terrorists emanating from the mostly Arab eastern part of the city. The gunman was from Jabel Mukhaber, a Palestinian village on the southeastern outskirts of the capital.

While the new intelligence assessment downplayed the risk of war in 2008, it painted a gloomy picture of an Iranian-sponsored missile buildup by Syria, Hezbollah and Hamas. It also said Iran is expected to pass the point of no return in creating a nuclear bomb.

As if all this were not enough, Israelis had another, more immediate concern: did the terrorist attack in Jerusalem herald the start of a third Palestinian intifadah?

Internal Security Minister Avi Dichter and the intelligence assessment say no. Dichter says there is no evidence of it, and the assessment says the probability of a widespread, sustained Palestinian uprising in the West Bank is low.

But the report added an important caveat: a new intifadah could erupt if Jewish extremists attack Muslim holy sites on Temple Mount or if new Israel Defence Forces actions in the Gaza Strip cause a high Palestinian death toll.

The fact that the gunman at Mercatz Harav was from eastern Jerusalem has been especially concerning here. There are no barriers or

checkpoints to stop Jerusalem's Arabs from crossing into western Jerusalem.

Since Israel officially annexed the eastern portion of Jerusalem in 1968, Arabs from eastern Jerusalem carry Israeli identification cards, making it easier for them than for West Bankers to slip through police or army cordons. That is why Jerusalem often is seen as a soft target for Palestinian terrorism.

On the flip side, the Palestinian standard of living in Jerusalem is higher than in the West Bank. Moreover, as Israeli residents, the Palestinian Arabs in eastern Jerusalem receive Israeli health care and unemployment services. Many are loath to put their relatively comfortable lifestyle at risk with a campaign of terrorism.

Nevertheless, 20 per cent of Jerusalem's 220,000 Palestinians have been involved directly or indirectly in terrorism, according to Israeli police sources.

The special status of Palestinian Arabs from eastern Jerusalem makes measures against would-be terrorists difficult. Dichter says he would deport to the West Bank all Jerusalemites involved in terrorism and their accomplices. But legal experts say that because the Arabs in eastern Jerusalem qualify as Israeli residents, Israeli law does not allow such deportations.

Danny Yatom, a member of the Labor party and former Mossad chief, advocates building a fence between Jerusalem's Jewish and Arab neighbourhoods. But right-wing critics say that would be tantamount to acquiescing to divide Israel's capital.

In the wake of last week's deadly attack, the situation in Jerusalem is even more volatile due to the nature of the target.

Mercatz Harav yeshiva, founded in 1924 by then-Chief Rabbi Avraham Isaac HaCohen

Kook, is religious Zionism's most influential theological seminary. It is one of the prime sources of messianic Jewish settler ideology, which sees Jewish settlement of the West Bank and Gaza as a holy mission.

Its rabbis and students are highly critical of the Olmert government's attempts to negotiate a territorial settlement with the Palestinians, which they believe flies in the face of the divine order.

The alienation of religious Zionists from the government — both because of Olmert's willingness to negotiate with the Palestinians and perceived past government betrayals, including prime minister Ariel Sharon's withdrawal of troops from Gaza in August 2005 — has Israeli police worried about Jewish right-wing violence.

Jewish threats aside, Israeli security's main focus is on the external threats to Israel. They were summed up harshly in the intelligence assessment on Iran.

The Israeli estimate is that without any preventive measures, Iran will be capable of producing a nuclear weapon in late 2009 or early 2010. This, the intelligence agencies agree, constitutes the gravest existential threat Israel faces.

In addressing the threat, the agencies suggest Israel is more or less on its own. They do not expect any U.S. military action against Iran, and they argue that international sanctions are having no effect on the pace of Iran's nuclear program.

The assessment has a wide regional sweep, providing a country-by-country and issue-by-issue accounting of the updated "threat map" as seen by Israel's intelligence agencies.

The main points include:

- Lebanon: the Lebanese government is too

tering and a real danger exists that Hezbollah will take over the country. If that were to happen, Israel would find itself facing a significantly enhanced Iranian forward base on its northern border. In any event, Hezbollah is preparing for another missile war against Israel, possibly on two fronts: Lebanon in the north and Gaza in the south.

- Gaza: Hamas is building up its rocket capacity, training personnel in Iran and preparing for a showdown with Israel.

- West Bank: Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas needs to be able to show his constituency achievements on the ground, such as the removal of Israeli checkpoints, if he is to make progress in peace talks with Israel.

- Israeli Arabs: there is a worrying radicalization among Israeli Arabs, evident in demonstrations and stone throwing in response to Israeli military operations against Hamas rocket crews in Gaza.

- Syria: the regime is stable, with President Bashar Assad firmly in control. Assad is focusing on a long-range rocket buildup in an attempt to reach a measure of strategic parity with Israel in the event of peace negotiations between the two countries. He may be ready to break with Iran and the axis of evil in return for a peace deal with Israel that entails the return of the Golan Heights to Syria and massive U.S. economic aid.

The probability of war this year with Syria is low, even though Damascus may still seek revenge for the reported Israeli raid last September on an alleged Syrian nuclear facility.

- Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia: despite ongoing radicalization in the Middle East, there is no threat to the stability of these so-called moderate regimes.

Winnipegger has front row seat to east Jerusalem riots

By RHONDA SPIVAK

Special to the CJN

Haskel Greenfield, a University of Manitoba anthropology professor who is living in east Jerusalem for the year, has found himself in the eye of a storm as violent Arab protests have erupted on his street.

Greenfield is living in residence for the 2007-8 academic year with his wife and young children at the W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research.

The rioting began on March 3 when hundreds of Palestinian teens pelted Israeli cars, police and passersby with stones and rocks on Salah-ed-Din Street in east Jerusalem in the wake of Israeli reprisals in Gaza against Hamas terrorists. Hamas terrorists have been firing Qassam rockets into Sderot and the western Negev, and Grad missiles into Ashkelon.

"The institute is on Salah-ed-Din Street [the main artery in east Jerusalem], which is where the rioting has been occurring. Damascus Gate is right down the street from us," said Greenfield, an anthropologist and archaeologist who is this year's annual professor at the Albright Institute.

"The riots appear to be co-ordinated and are not spontaneous. They are timed to start around 2 o'clock, just when the Arab teens get out of school. That way they can finish school and run to the riots. The shopkeepers down the street seem to know in advance when the riots will take place," said Greenfield, who will be returning to Winnipeg in the summer.

The Greenfield family, as well as another family and two other fellows, are the only Jews living in the residences at the institute.

"We never wear a kippah in the area. It is considered dangerous," he said.

Tina Greenfield, also an archaeologist, says that on March



Haskel Greenfield

were arrested by an elite unit of undercover Jerusalem police.

"We got a letter in our mailbox [on March 5] telling us that the American Consulate was warning us that we should be avoiding the area and we should not go near Damascus Gate as there may be more riots," Tina said.

"The day the riots first broke out [on March 3], we didn't know about them. None of the residents here knew anything, although the Arab shopkeepers in the area knew. My girlfriend walked into a shop and the Arab shopkeeper told her to turn around and go right back to the institute, as riots were about to break out," she added.

"We heard some shouting, but that was it," Haskel said.

Although there has never been a terrorist incident at the Albright Institute, the Israeli Ministry of Justice and the Jerusalem district court right across the street from it have

3, "there were two Jerusalem municipal workers who were attacked by east Jerusalem Arabs in rioting right across the street from us. If the municipal workers hadn't been inside their car when they were attacked, they would have been dead."

The car with the two city workers was blocked by burning garbage bins after it was pelted with dozens of stones and rocks by half a dozen teens, one of whom jumped on the vehicle and beat the window with a metal bar. The leaders of the attack

were frequently targeted by Arab rioters, especially during the second intifadah.

"The electric gate to the Albright Institute was open the first few hours of the day that the riot broke out. As soon as the director was informed about the riot, the gates were closed. The institute is generally open to the public. The electric gates to the Israeli Ministry of Justice and district court are always closed and monitored," says Tina Greenfield.

Founded in 1900, the Albright Institute in Jerusalem is the oldest American research centre for ancient Near Eastern studies in the Middle East. The entrance to the complex faces Salah-ed-Din Street, and the Greenfields drive their car down the street to get in and out daily.

In the aftermath of the riots and the terror attack at the Mercatz Harav Yeshiva on March 6, Haskel Greenfield said his family will still continue to walk around Salah-ed-Din and the area, although they are cautious not to reveal their Jewish identity.

"[Palestinian terrorists] lash out at whoever happens to be available at the moment, and that is unpredictable and therefore dangerous. People on the street [in east Jerusalem] and shop owners are generally friendly, as long as you don't display a Jewish identity. As Canadians, we are more welcome than as Americans. Our German colleagues are even more welcome."

As for the environment on the Albright campus, Haskel added, "We have made several [Palestinian] acquaintances while here... But, we have only been invited to one home, and this belonged to an Israeli Arab."

He said that when he first arrived, he tried to engage people on the campus in political conversation, but now he doesn't bother, because it's difficult to find "common ground."

David Copperfield uses magic to help the disabled

By BYRON PASCOE
and PAUL TELNER
Special to The CJN

In New Jersey, in 1956, Hyman and Rebecca Kotkin welcomed into their world a son they named David.

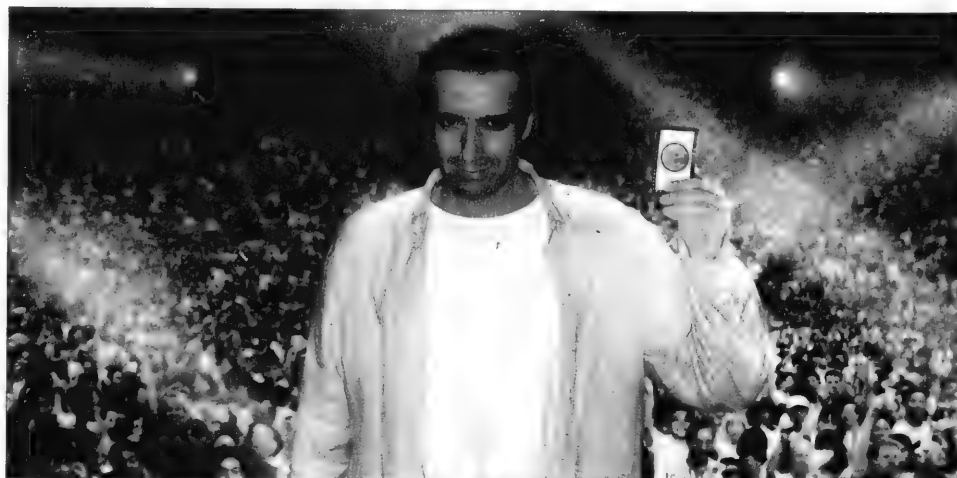
David became a magician, an illusionist, a performer and a storyteller, and at 18, he started using the stage name "David Copperfield," which he took from the Charles Dickens book.

Copperfield began learning magic at a young age. His grandfather taught him a card trick when he was seven, and at 12, he was the youngest person ever admitted to the Society of American Magicians. He performed magic at his bar mitzvah when he was 13, and at 16, he taught magic at New York University. Soon afterward, he started performing professionally.

"Early on, my folks were hoping for 'my son the doctor,' but realized magic could provide a steady income after my first network TV special on ABC," he said.

Since those early days, Copperfield has performed in so many television specials and live events that *The Magic of David Copperfield* TV specials have been nominated for more than 30 Emmy Awards. According to *Guinness World Records*, he's sold more seats than any other solo entertainer.

His most famous illusions include making the Statue of Liberty disappear, levitating over



David Copperfield

the Grand Canyon, flying, and walking through the Great Wall of China.

Along with performing on stages worldwide, in 1982, Copperfield created Project Magic, a rehabilitation program that helps disabled people regain lost or damaged dex-

terity skills by using sleight-of-hand magic as a method of physical therapy.

"Many years ago, I had correspondence with an individual that showed a great amount of self-esteem in his letters," Copperfield recalled.

"Finally, after many months, I met him at a show, and to my surprise, he was handicapped and in a wheelchair. I was a bit taken aback only because he had never mentioned it.

"Then I realized he didn't think of himself as being physically challenged. And that his use of magic at home gave him a great amount of self-esteem. From there, I started Project Magic that is now in thousands of hospitals in over 30 countries around the world," he said.

The program involves magicians who teach magic tricks to therapists. Then, together, they show the participants how to perform the illusions. Copperfield, as often as he can, works with Project Magic participants.

"Magic seems to give patients, from stroke victims to those with physical impairments, a great amount of self-esteem, and it improves manual dexterity. It is a program I am most proud of," he said.

The illusion of which Copperfield is most proud is Flying. "It's a very special illusion of mine. It took me seven years to create, and although not in the current tour, some talk about how it would take them back to their youth, when dreams of flight are most prevalent."

Copperfield said magic is always reaching new people around the world. "It is, after all, the oldest of all the performing arts. It's [been] practised in an unbroken succession from ancient time through the present. Science and technology have often been used by the magician before they came into the marketplace on a mass basis."

He added that before the era of motion pictures, magicians were using images in motion as illusions in their shows. At that time, moving images were so new that audiences perceived them as "magic." Also, before holo-

grams became commonplace, magicians would use them to baffle and intrigue audiences.

Copperfield's latest tour includes the illusions Reunion, Squeezebox, The Lottery and Thirteen.

"In Reunion, a member of the audience takes the trip of his or her life for reconciliation with a loved one," Copperfield said.

"While standing on a crane arm with me, suspended over the heads of the audience, the person vanishes, only to reappear moments later in the freely selected location of their dreams."

With Squeezebox, the audience gets to see Copperfield squeezed into a size that could fit into a shoebox.

"In a mesmerizing illusion I call The Lottery, inspired by my grandfather's unfilled dream, I share a secret technique for predicting the winning numbers of The Lottery," he said.

"Also, in an 'unplugged' moment of pure sleight-of-hand, I do some close-up magic with a lethal black African scorpion.

"One of the most interactive moments of the show is Thirteen, where 13 audience members chosen entirely at random vanish, leaving friends and family wondering whether to applaud or put their loved ones' faces on milk cartons," he added.

Judaism has played and continues to play a special part in his life. "I spent my entire childhood going to Hebrew school after regular school every day. I was force-fed by faith," he recalled.

"In retrospect, I'm very glad that my parents had me do it. I'm profoundly appreciative to know where I came from and what my ancestors went through. I learned life lessons that have served me well."

Copperfield's current tour includes Canadian performances of *David Copperfield: An Intimate Evening of Grand Illusion*, in Toronto from March 28 to 30 at the Sony Centre for the Performing Arts (www.sonycentre.ca).

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Arts & Travel

Beth Tzedec is alive with the Sound of Purim!

By BILL GLADSTONE
Special to The CJN

As in past years, roughly 100 people between the ages of five and 80 are involved, either in front of the footlights or behind the scenes, in an upcoming Purim musical extravaganza at Beth Tzedec Congregation whipped together by the cantor, Simon Spiro and his wife Aliza, both former music professionals with experience in the top echelons of the pop music business.

This year's show, *The Sound of Purim!*, is described as "an utterly ridiculous musical romp through the Megillah, with Haman, Mordechai and some Austrian nuns." It is based on the famous musical *The Sound of Music*, with all-new orchestrations written by Simon and fresh comic lyrics by Aliza. The story mingles the familiar story from the Megillah of Esther with Rodgers & Hammerstein's exhilarating tale of the Austrian Alps popularized on movie and stage.

The Beth Tzedec production features a top-notch Broadway-quality orchestra as well as elaborate costumes and sets that would look handsome on any professional stage in the city. "Everything about this show is state-of-the-art professional all the way - except the actors on stage," Aliza said.

However, through rigorous rehearsals and some wonderful sort of osmosis by which they soak in the professionalism and enthusiasm around them, the 60 cast members will likely turn in the performances of their lives, she said.



The Sound of Purim, "an utterly ridiculous musical romp with Haman, Mordechai and some Austrian nuns."

"How do we get them to do it? I don't know. Even at rehearsals, it's a little bit shaky. But they click into gear when it really happens. They hear the orchestra and they see that it's not just an amateur production, that it's a real extravaganza, the real thing, and they just rise to the occasion. The energy level is very high."

The Spiros began planning this year's production soon after the curtain came down on last year's show, *Once Upon A Purim: A Megillah Fairy Tale*, which sold out both of its performances. They started writing the new show in the summer, advertised for a cast and crew at Rosh Hashanah, and held auditions in December.

One former congregational president who was in last year's show, told Aliza that he began counting the days to this year's show as soon as he stepped off the stage. "All summer long, people have been telling me 'I just can't wait' and asking what the theme was going to be." One costumer, who was hit by a car, is now sewing costumes in a hospital room and "just keeps talking about the Purim show," Aliza said.

Doctors, lawyers and other important professionals, even the shul's rabbis and rebbetzins, are among the eager throng rehearsing their parts. "You have these guys who are great strong litigators in the courtroom, and they get up there on stage and they're like deer in the headlights," Aliza said, laughing. "It's so funny because they're out of their comfort zones. But they rise to the occasion."

It's been as busy as a beehive around the synagogue in recent weeks as the sizeable army of volunteers pitch in on an assortment of jobs. "The painter lets the little kids paint the sets. There's a lot of overlap. Nobody is just doing one thing. Everybody sort of volunteers and does many different things."



The cast contains seven married couples and three entire families, as well as the so-called "Shut Your Von-Trapp" singers, a troupe of professional voices brought in "to help round out the sound." The Spiros' professionalism would demand no less. Simon Spiro is a former backup singer and composer who worked with

Elton John, Phil Collins and other pop celebrities in England, and Aliza had her own brush with celebrity when one of her songs climbed high onto the pop charts in the United States.

The Sound of Purim! is slated to run for three performances - on Thursday March 20 after the Megillah reading, Saturday March 22 at 9 p.m., and Sunday March 23 at 3 p.m. Tickets at the door are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children 13 and under. Beth Tzedec is at 1700 Bathurst Street at Avenal, several blocks below Eglinton. The ticket phone line is 416-781-3514. As a press release advises, "If you think this is just another synagogue event, you're reading the wrong Megillah!"



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Arts & Travel



Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

LEONARD COHEN TO OPEN WORLD TOUR HERE IN JUNE

Shortly after his induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame last week, Montreal-based troubador-poet **Leonard Cohen** announced he will soon embark on a world tour and his first live performances in 15 years, beginning with concerts in Toronto's Sony Centre on June 6 and 7. He is then scheduled to play Europe for the remainder of June, July, August and early September.

Cohen is "one of the most important and influential songwriters of our time, a figure whose body of work achieves greater mystery and depth as time goes on," said pop star **Lou Reed** at the induction ceremony in New York, where Cohen was honoured along with **Madonna**, **John Mellencamp**, **The Dave Clark Five** and **The Ventures**.

The extraordinarily talented singer-songwriter has released many bestselling albums, beginning with *Songs Of Leonard Cohen* in 1967, and his songs have been recorded by many artists, from **Judy**

Collins to k.d. lang.

Several years ago, he emerged from a Buddhist retreat to discover that an entrusted financial manager had allegedly defrauded him of his retirement nest-egg of \$5 million. Consequently, he has been forced back to work: hence this world tour, which, to judge by his immense popularity, will no doubt be sold out. Tickets went on sale March 15.

Benefit for Women in Domestic Crisis: Koleinu ("our voice" in Hebrew) is a show put together by women for women, in order to raise funds and bring awareness of the problem of domestic abuse in the Jewish community. It features a variety of dance, song and script by professional Jewish women performers, as well as a raffle with prizes, vendor booths with women artisans, and kosher specialty foods for sale at intermission.

"The whole idea behind this show is to be a voice for those who are in need, to reach out to the women in our community and let them know there are people who care and want to make a difference in their lives, even if they don't know them person-

ally," said Rivka Lomiansky, one of the organizers.

All money raised goes towards Jewish Family and Child programs for abused women.

Tickets start at \$25; platinum seating and tax-deductible prices available. Leah Posluns Theatre, 4588 Bathurst St. Monday, March 31, 7:30 p.m. 416-636-5984, ext. 231. <http://koleinu.eventbrite.com>

Life in a Jar: From humble and unlikely beginnings, a play chronicling the deeds of Polish Holocaust heroine **Irena Sendler** has become a sensation, taking her from obscurity to international renown. Sendler rescued 2,500 Polish Jewish children during the Holocaust, writing their identities on scraps of paper buried in glass jars, with the hope of reuniting them with their parents after the war, or at least preserving their true identities.

She risked her life and underwent torture by the Gestapo for her brave work. Her story was unknown until 1999, when four teenaged girls in Kansas stumbled across it in their search for a high school history project. The play *Life in a Jar* is scheduled for performance at the Al Green Theatre, Miles Nadal JCC, Thursday, March 27, 7:30 p.m. It is a joint presentation of the Miles Nadal JCC and the Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation of Canada. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$10 for students. 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

Names in the News: Toronto-based pianist **Anton Kuerti** was a last-minute substitute for an ailing pianist last week in Boston, where his son, **Julian Kuerti**, is assistant conductor of the **Boston Symphony Orchestra**.

Julian called his father about 6 p.m. to ask him to replace the scheduled pianist, who had taken ill. Anton, who was already in Boston to attend the concerts, stepped in at the last minute to play *Dvorak's Symphony No. 7* and *Beethoven's Emperor Concerto*, which he had last played in Toronto several months ago.

The duo had time only to talk through how they would perform the piece, and the father spent about an hour practising backstage at Symphony Hall. He received a prolonged standing ovation for his performance. The next day, he learned he had won the Governor General's Lifetime Artistic Achievement Award. He is to receive the prize, worth \$25,000, in a Rideau Hall ceremony on May 2.

Kuerti performs an all-Beethoven program in the last of this season's Mooredale Concerts at Willowdale United Church, 349 Kenneth Ave., April 12, 8 p.m., and

again at Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Bldg., 80 Queen's Park Cres., April 13, 3 p.m. \$25-\$20. 416-587-9411. www.mooredaleconcerts.com

More Names in the News

• Hamilton-born actor **Eugene Levy**, famed for his involvement with the comedy show *SCTV*, has also won a \$25,000 Governor General's Lifetime Achievement Award. "I firmly believe my best work is still ahead of me so I'm not sure what this means," the 62-year-old comedian told the Canadian Press upon hearing the news, but quickly added that it was "quite an honour."

• Toronto author-illustrator **Richard Ungar** recently won the 2007 National Jewish Book Award for Illustrated Children's Books for his book *Even Higher*. A lawyer who paints and writes in his leisure time, Ungar attended the ceremony two weeks ago at the Center for Jewish History in New York City. *Even Higher*, his beautifully illustrated fourth picture book, retells a classic Jewish folktale by I.L. Peretz.

• Canadian artists **Evan Tapper**, **Melissa Shiff** and **DJ Socalled** have been invited to participate in a two-week art residency and show at the Jewish Museum in New York City. The open studio project features 11 artists in fashion, music, performance art and video, and runs March 16 to 27.

At the Galleries

• The latest Museum Adventure offered by 55+ Forward For Seniors is a guided tour of a new exhibit at the Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art, Wednesday, April 2, 1:45 p.m. Cost \$9. RSVP by March 31 to Phyllis Fien, phyllisf@mnjcc.org or 416-924 6211, ext. 155.

• More than a dozen leading Israeli visual artists were in Toronto earlier this month to exhibit their latest paintings, prints, sculptures and mixed-media works. The gala opening of the show last week was attended by **Amir Gissin**, the consul general of Israel, and raised funds for Hebrew University. The art remains on view at Gallery 133, 1260 Castlefield Ave., until March 26. 416-504-6099.



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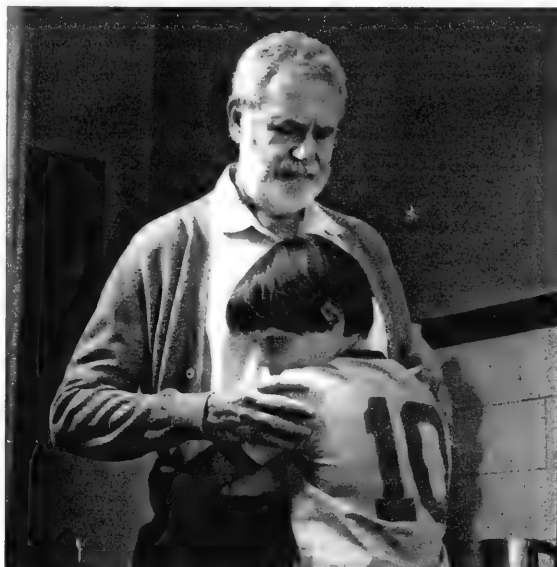
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Leonard Cohen

Boy comes of age amidst upheaval and soccer glory



Germano Haiut as Shlomo, left, and Michel Joelsas as Mauro in *The Year My Parents Went on Vacation*.

By JOSEPH SERGE
Arts Editor

Brazil in 1970 was a tense place. The population was on edge as the country's soccer team prepared to capture the World Cup for an unprecedented third time. And politically, the military junta was striking hard against left-wing dissidents.

Against this backdrop, 12-year-old Mauro, the son of atheist parents – a Jewish father and Christian mother – is taken by them to stay with his grandfather in a Jewish

suburb of Sao Paulo, while they go off on "vacation."

We are never told exactly where they are going, but by their anxious looks, we get the impression they are going into hiding somewhere. Mauro's father promises him they'll be back in time for the World Cup.

And so begins *The Year My Parents Went on Vacation*, a coming-of-age film by Brazilian director Cao Hamburger.

Mauro is dropped off outside his grandfather's apartment building, unaware that his grandfather has just unexpectedly died. The boy is instead taken in by the Yiddish-speaking neighbour, Shlomo, who is told by his rabbi that if "God left the boy at your door, He knows what He is doing."

The relationship between the two gets off to a poor start, especially when Shlomo catches Mauro playing soccer wearing Shlomo's prayer shawl. Mauro is out of his element in this strange Jewish environment.

Throughout the movie, there's mystery surrounding the whereabouts of Mauro's parents. People around him talk in whispers in the background and we never get the full picture. It's only the appearance of a radical campus friend of Mauro's father that gives us an inkling of his parents' situation.

We are never told where his parents are, what they are doing or what's become of them.

But this, you realize, is intentional. We are seeing this movie through the eyes of Mauro, and as far as he is concerned, his parents are just on vacation. All he's interested in is following Brazil's progress in the World Cup.

There's a sense of anxiety when the World Cup begins. As Brazil wins its opening game, Mauro anxiously stares out the window searching for his parents' blue Volkswagen.

The anxiety intensifies as Brazil's classic lineup, fea-

turing Pele's last international appearances, progresses through to the final against Italy, and still Mauro's parents haven't returned.

There are some sentimental moments in this film like when Mauro spots a blue Volkswagen and chases it up the street in the hope that it's his parents. Michel Joelsas' performance as the 12-year-old is good, and the movie is worth watching, if only to see a group of bearded, religious men cheer loudly when Pele scores a goal.

The Year My Parents Went on Vacation opened the 2007 Toronto Jewish Film Festival. It is opening in Toronto at select theatres on March 28.

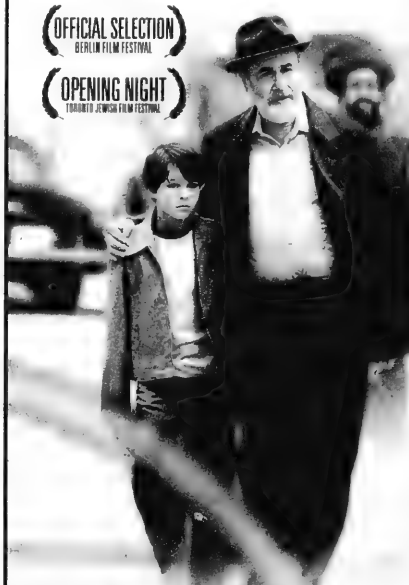
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Asper empire raises questions about concentration of media ownership

By SHELTON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Israel Harold (Izzy) Asper, the founder of the CanWest Global Communications Corporation, was a Canadian media titan until his untimely death in 2003.

From his headquarters in Winnipeg, Asper – a former tax lawyer and leader of Manitoba's Liberal party – presided over an empire of television stations and daily newspapers, including the *National Post*.

When he acquired the Southam chain from Conrad Black, the now disgraced and imprisoned newspaper magnate, Asper transformed himself into the owner of Canada's largest news media company.

A person of such calibre is worthy of a top-notch biography, and one will doubtless be written sooner than later. But for now, readers will have to be content with Marc Edge's *Asper Nation: Canada's Most Dangerous Media Company* (New Star Books).

Edge, a reporter and editor who has worked for the *Vancouver Province* and the *Calgary Herald* and currently teaches communications at Sam Houston University in Texas, has produced "a critical corporate media history" rather than a conventional biography.

Based almost entirely on secondary sources, with little original research, as he himself points out in a disclaimer in the preface, *Asper Nation* is a polemic, and should be read in that spirit.

Writing as a "disillusioned former journalist" fed up with the concentration of media ownership in this country, Edge observes, "This book is less an indictment of Izzy Asper and his heirs than of a system that allowed them to gain control over so much of Canada's news media and use it to promote an ide-

ological agenda."

And what might this agenda be?

Asper, who promoted a laissez-faire economy and advocated the elimination of the welfare state, believed that market forces rather than government intervention should determine economic policy. And as a dyed-in-the-wool Zionist, he was ardently pro-Israel.

It's unclear where Edge stands on these issues, but what is crystal clear is that he objects to a situation whereby an individual, be it an Asper or a Black, can "dominate the debate on these or any other issues of importance."

It is not a trivial observation. When the publisher of the Asper-owned *Montreal Gazette*, Michael Goldbloom, resigned in the summer of 2001, he told the *New York Times*: "There is no question in my mind that the Aspers feel they own the newspapers and the newspapers should

reflect their views."

Asper, a secular Jew, went to great lengths to assure that his newspapers would be fair to Israel. But sometimes, he went too far, Edge claims.

Quoting a story in the *Globe and Mail*, he says that senior editors at the *Gazette* were told to run a strongly worded pro-Israel editorial in the wake of a suicide bombing in Jerusalem that killed 15 civilians. The editorial urged the Canadian government to support Israel "without the usual hand-wringing criticism about 'excessive force' if Israel chose to respond to the terrorist attack."

Citing another example of the Aspers' tendency to impose

their opinions on their domain, Edge mentions the Doug Cuthand affair.

In a controversial piece, Cuthand, a native columnist for the *Regina Leader-Post* and the *Saskatoon StarPhoenix*, compared the plight of Canada's first nations with that of the Palestinians. "I see them as the Indians of the Middle East," Cuthand wrote. Dissatisfied with the analogy, the Aspers spiked his column.

According to Edge, the Aspers' intolerance of dissenting views cuts across the board.

Peter Worthington, the former editor of the *Toronto Sun* and a CanWest columnist, also ran afoul of the Aspers when he wrote, "The Aspers just don't seem to get it. Rather than having all Southam papers straitjacketed into one unanimous, identical view on national affairs, wouldn't it be more effective if the papers could espouse a similar view differently?"

Edge, in this vein, cites further examples of how the Aspers have attempted to shape coverage.

This critique notwithstanding, he is not personally antagonistic to Asper, describing him as "a fountain of energy" who could be "ruthless in business and relentless in court, yet charming socially and generous to a fault in his devotion to philanthropy."

Without delving into Asper's life too deeply, Edge offers tantalizing biographical tidbits that a future biographer will certainly flesh out.

Born in 1932 in Minnedosa, Man., a town of 2,000 200 kilometres west of Winnipeg, he was the son of a Ukrainian Jewish violinist, Leon Ausereper, who fled Odessa in the early 1920s. To earn a livelihood, he turned to business, becoming the proprietor of a movie house chain.

At the University of Manitoba, Asper was a star debater and a columnist on the student newspaper. In 1957, having graduated with a master's degree in law, he began writing a column on taxes for the *Winnipeg Free Press*.

Delving into his short-lived stint as a Liberal politician on the provincial scene, Edge says he staked out fiscal positions well to the right of most Liberals and even many Conservatives.

In the only election he ever contested, in 1973, Asper fared poorly. Though he won a seat in the legislature, he resigned two years later and declared himself a "free agent."

Edge claims that the connections he made while leader helped him wield influence in the national Liberal party and to forge close relations with such figures as Jean Chretien and Paul Martin.

Edge spends far more time on his career as a successful businessman. As he observes, business enabled Asper to combine his legal and tax expertise with his knowledge of government.

He and a partner, Paul Morton, established an independent TV station in Winnipeg in the mid-1970s and then acquired a Toronto property, Global Television Network.

They expanded westward before moving eastward to Ontario and the Maritimes and abroad to New Zealand, Australia and Chile.

A Revisionist Zionist who admired Vladimir Jabotinsky and whose views coincided with the Likud party, Asper claimed that Israel was treated unfairly by the media, particularly by the Canadian Broadcast Corporation.

He called for the formation of "honest reporting response groups," and made sure that his newspapers did not reflect an anti-Israel bias.

Edge notes that his children, David, Leonard and Gail, all trained lawyers, support his causes and are pro-Israel. When it comes to Israel, Leonard Asper, his successor as CanWest's chief executive officer, is a chip off the old block.

In only one respect have the Aspers veered away from the old man's mantra.

Instead of backing the Liberals, they openly supported the rejuvenated Conservatives under the leadership of Stephen Harper.



Leonard Asper



Israel Harold (Izzy) Asper

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SCIENCE IN THE AIR: Ohr Menachem Academy students, from left, Arlet Aronov, Rachel Karantayer and Evgenia Vishnyakova helped Karah Kushnir, right, with her science project, which used a helium-filled balloon to record air temperatures at different altitudes. Karah recorded the data remotely. Her project was part of the school's annual science fair. The judging was still going on at the CJN's deadline, but the school said all the entries were worthy of awards.

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Young athlete believes she was born to be a gymnast

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Sabrina Barsky is totally devoted to her sport, gymnastics, and as she tells her story, it's almost as if the feeling is mutual, if not zen-like.

"I just love gymnastics," she said prior to one of her workouts at Vaughan Gymnastics. "I was probably born to do it."

"Every time I do some gymnastics, I feel I connect with the equipment and I feel I accomplish a lot."

Accomplish a lot she has, as the 12-year-old recently returned from Le Gymnix Classique, an invitational competition in Montreal, where she won four gold medals and one silver. Crowned the overall champion in the provincial 3 division in her age group, Barsky was first in vault, balance beam and floor exercise, and the silver medalist on the uneven bars. The three golds and one silver earned her yet another gold as overall champion.

Just a couple of weeks earlier, she emerged as top athlete



Sabrina Barsky

in her category at the Women's Artistic Provincial Qualifier in Guelph. She finished first on the vault, balance beam, and floor exercise, giving her the overall gold.

In Ontario, she competes in the Level 7 category for 12 and 13-year-olds; in Quebec it's Level 3.

Ontario and Quebec use different numeric systems for the same level of competition. In Ontario, the provincial competition structure consists of levels 5 through 9, with level 9 reserved for the best athletes. Beyond level 9 are the elite, nationally ranked gymnasts.

Her burning desire to succeed already has her eyeing a move up to level 8 later this year, something her coach, Karren Lee, believes is likely to occur.

"She has the skills," Lee said last week. "She's

flexible. She has fantastic poise and grace. Her overall body strength is fantastic, and [she possesses] the psychological component. She's driven and dedicated."

Put it all together and you have a very good gymnast. Had Barsky started her sport a little earlier, she'd be even more advanced, Lee believes.

Barsky came to the sport late, at age 10. Most girls begin competing at around age seven and the good ones are participating in provincial events by age nine, Lee explained.

Still, Barsky has made tremendous progress in a short time, and Lee sees Barsky beginning to master the skills necessary to move up to the next level.



That would require her to add multiple twists in her floor routine and a more complex dismount from the vault. In addition, Barsky must add more complicated swings on the uneven parallel bars.

Lee has seen a lot of young athletes come and go, but in Barsky she sees something only a few possess.

"You need the physical attributes," Lee explained.

But what's even more important is the athlete's desire to excel. "I see a lot of girls who have the physical attributes, but are not driven. Sabrina never balks at challenges. She loves them."

Getting to her level of achievement has required some sacrifice. Four times a week, she heads to the gym after school for a four-hour workout. Then it's home to work on school assignments, which given the course load at Leo Baeck Day School, usually takes her 2½ to three hours a night to complete. That keeps her up to about 10:30, when it's off to bed.

Barsky acknowledges she has given up a lot to focus on gymnastics. "Sometimes I have to sacrifice parties, bar and bat mitzvahs," she said. "It comes down to what matters the most."

Right now, the Elite Ontario provincials in late April are on the immediate radar, and longer term, Barsky is expecting to make the Canadian team for the 2009 Maccabiah Games in Israel.

After that, her ultimate goal is the Olympics.

Heady stuff for any young athlete, but as Barsky said, "I believe in myself. I have confidence."

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Silent but for the memories

The boxes are unpacked and the mirror is finally hanging on the wall. The closet is organized according to season, and the library is alphabetized according to genre.

Two months after moving into my new place, everything is once again just so.

So why has the relative calm been driving me so crazy?

When there's nothing left to do, all that's left is this deafening silence.

I try to drown it out with loud music, with laughing friends or with mind-numbing episodes of *Gilgricious* (who am I kidding – I love that show!), but even above all the noise, the silence is still there, a constant ringing in my ears.

For the first time, I am truly alone. There's no girlfriend living in the upstairs apartment to giggle with, and no boyfriend waiting to cuddle with me on the couch.

It's me, myself and I, and I've never been more aware of it.

Sometimes, I turn off and tune out all the distractions and sit and listen to the silence, and I am amazed by it. It brings me such peace and such angst – at the same time, in the same moment.

I find peace in knowing that each moment is my own. I find peace in being far away from everyone I know. This isn't Thornhill, where I'm sure to run into someone familiar wherever I go. There's a certain peace about being anonymous and blending into a downtown crowd, where everyone else is anonymous, too.

In those moments, I am in love with the silence.

But silence can also be a nagging bitch sometimes.

It's a constant reminder of everything that has changed in the past year. At this time last year, I was a typical twentysomething – madly in love, working like mad, and mad at life for not having more hours

in the day.

My boyfriend and I were living downtown together, going to work together, enjoying silent moments together. Now, these experiences are only my own, and the silence makes me sad about it.

I'm sure that for a lot of people who have gone through a major change, whether it be the death of a loved one, a breakup, a different job or a new city – anything that has forced a new life out of an old

one – it's not the loneliness that makes them dread the silence. It's the memories.

Memories allow you to keep living out the past, but silence forces you to deal with the future.

Listening to the silence and not filling it up with distractions has been the first step for me in dealing with this new future of mine. It's been hard and sad, but there are moments, like I said earlier, when I have found the peace that I've been looking for.

I often wonder whether it wouldn't be easier just to keep filling that silence with distractions until the silence became meaningless once again. I'm sure it would be, but I'm much more interested in making peace with it, rather than spending the next few years of my life fighting it.

I have found nothing more peaceful this winter than walking around in snowstorms. It's Mother Nature's way of telling me that life can kick our butt, but somehow we always manage to get through it.

I have also found peace by just sitting outside on a sunny day and watching people walk by.

Being anonymous in a bustling city reminds me that life keeps moving and we are part of that, whether we feel like we are or not.

Because no matter how loud the silence is at home, the quiet noise of life is always louder once you step outside, into it.

Sandie Benitah

20 Something



PURIM PATTIES

Yield: about 3 dozen

- 1 package Chinese noodles
- 2 cups (dry roasted) unsalted peanuts
- 1 package semi-sweet chocolate chips

Mix the noodles and peanuts in a large bowl and set aside.

Melt the chocolate chips very carefully in a microwave until almost melted. Take out of microwave and stir until melted. Mix well with the noodle peanut mix until all ingredients are coated with the chocolate. Drop by teaspoonsful onto a waxpaper-covered cookie sheet until set.

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About Life

we have the added bonus of the first seder being after Shabbat. It doesn't get any harder than this.

I'm panicked and wondering how I'm going to get through it. Any suggestions that will help me keep my sanity would be appreciated.

Creative Cooking

Dear Creative Cooking

I too have heard lots of stirring about the first seder coming after Shabbat this year. It will be a challenge for many, but you have started thinking about it well in advance, and with good organization and a lot of advanced preparation, you will get through this one, too.

Now, as for the interesting menu you have to plan, the first thing you need to do is get in touch with these people and find out if they have any suggestions. They are used to cooking for themselves, and they may have some helpful hints to get you through this. I don't know if you

are comfortable with anyone bringing food into your home on Passover, but if you are, you can ask for them to contribute a dish or two.

Use a cookbook that gives nutritional information with each recipe. There is one called *Enlightened Kosher Cooking*, by Nechama Cohen, that includes 140 Passover recipes. The author is an observant diabetic. As for the nut allergy, this is the most serious restriction. We have all read how dangerous a nut allergy can be, so I really think you need to get the mother of the allergic child involved in the child's menu. The vegetarian problem requires only a bit of creativity. Even meat eaters enjoy vegetarian dishes.

There's no question that you have a lot on your plate this year, but don't be shy about getting others involved. With planning and organization, you will have a wonderful seder that you will be proud of and all will enjoy.



Dear Ella,

Passover is just around the corner, and it's my turn to make the seder. The problem is that this year, I have some new challenges to deal with.

It's hard enough to come up with Passover recipes that everyone likes, but this year I'm cooking with limitations: my mother has developed diabetes, my brother is dating a woman who has a child with a nut allergy, and my niece has become a vegetarian. Passover has always been a challenge for me, and this year

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN, email: ejb@cjnews.com. But Ella is not a professional counsellor. She brings to the questions posed by readers her unique brand of earthly wisdom. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional.

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

Yeshiva bochrim – those who attended a Jewish institute for Torah and Talmud study – have a certain affinity for one another.

Regardless of whether we continue to subscribe to the ways, laws and culture of the yeshiva world, a brotherhood exists among those who, with great verve, spent countless hours together studying Torah within the walls of a yeshiva.

It's for this reason that yeshiva bochrim around the world are no doubt deeply and uniquely affected by the recent terrorist attack on Mercat HaRav and the murder of Doron Mehereta, Ro'i Rote, Yonadav Haim Hirschfeld, Yochai Lipshitz, Yonatan Yitzchak Eldar, Neriah Cohen, Pnuel Avichayil and Avraham David Moses – may they rest in peace.

It has been in vogue for many years for yeshiva bochrim from all over the world to attend a yeshiva in Israel for a one-year period or longer. In 1978, I studied at Yeshivat Beth

The brotherhood of yeshiva bochrim

HaTalmud in Jerusalem with a number of friends from my high school days at Ner Israel Yeshiva in Toronto. I recall that there were some bochrim from Toronto who chose to learn at Mercat HaRav.

Studying in a yeshiva is unique. One wakes up early in the morning, often at 6 a.m., to learn alone or with a chevratutah (a friend in learning) prior to Shacharit services. Throughout the day, and well into the wee hours of the night, the beit hamidrash (main area for learning) is busy with students learning, debating or celebrating (a holiday or Shabbat), as the bochrim in Mercat HaRav were doing when the terrorist chose to attack them.

One learns at a very young age – as Pnuel Avichayil, 15, must have – to mix it up with the authors of the Mishnah and Talmud on such issues as damages and the laws of Shabbat.

The day is long and intense.

If I were to ask any guy who attended yeshiva about his most vivid memories of their time there, he might say he remembers the beit hamidrash and the male camaraderie that's unique to the yeshiva world, in which males of all ages study, socialize and share celebrations and grief.

The person might then lower his eyes and with sadness in his voice say, "We who were once, or still are, yeshiva bochrim, ache inside at the thought of a chevratutah falling to the floor, spattered with blood, while clinging to a sefer [a holy book of learning]. We find it difficult, if not impossible, to imagine the funeral where our young friends in Torah study were laid to rest, sleeping forever, next to a Torah scroll."

For those of us who lived and breathed Torah study within the walls of a yeshiva, the deaths of eight bochrim, and the injuries to countless others, affect us a little bit differently than it does others.

It does because we know what it's like to stay up all night shmoozing with a friend in the dormitory, or getting drunk for the first time on Purim in the yeshiva dining room, or leaning over our shender (the wooden book stand used for resting our holy books on) and busting our intellectual chops while grappling with our rebbe on a difficult talmudic point – just like the bochrim who were murdered at Mercat HaRav.

On behalf of yeshiva bochrim everywhere, I extend my sympathy to the families of Doron, Ro'i, Yonadav, Yochai, Yonatan, Neriah, Pnuel, and Avraham. We know, our fellow yeshiva bochrim, who you were and where you fell while you sang and danced in celebration of one of the Hebrew calendar's happiest months, Adar II.

We thought the yeshiva world was a safe place, one where we were protected by the mishnaic verses and by our brotherhood. This has changed, as our images of that world are now dotted with the red stains of eight yeshiva bochrim's blood on the floor of our memories.

Avrum@veahavia.org; avrumrosensweigideas@blogspot.com; sderot@Sudan.org



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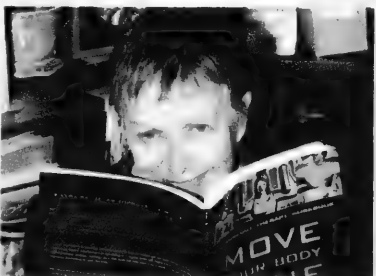
COMMUNITY JEWISH SCHOOLS bring together students from different backgrounds.

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THE BENEFITS OF HOMEWORK increase in higher grades.

Page B6



KEEPING THE BRAIN ACTIVE is good for seniors.

Page B12



SMART BOARDS bring the future into the classroom.

Page B24

LIVE LEARN



A young student, above, is focused on the intricacies of her new printing skills as she completes a homework assignment.
[Frances Kraft photo]

Live & Learn

Dealing with diversity — and technology

How much appeal does an article about Jewish day schools have for readers with no personal connection with the day school system?

"What makes a Jewish school a community school?" is the longest article in this supplement, although that wasn't necessarily the intention. While the subject is specific to Jewish day schools, the broader issues facing individual schools have universal applications.

In a city like Toronto — which has separate Jewish day schools with Reform, Conservative and several Orthodox approaches, not to mention a Sephardi school and an array of others — how does a "community" school balance the needs of an increasingly diverse student population?

The questions, and some of the answers, may well resonate with anyone who wonders about the ins and outs of life in

any diverse community, be it a school, a city, a workplace or a family.

Another theme that comes up in this supplement is the influence of technology: from the cellphone, and its place in the classroom, to the SMART Board, a high-tech "whiteboard" that has started to make its way into schools, opening doors to new ways of learning.

We also look at the pros and cons of homework, education for seniors, and a new book about the yeshiva year in Israel, which addresses fears among some parents that their children will become religiously radicalized.

Our centre spread features winning submissions from our annual Purim art contest, and interspersed among the photos are a few that were taken as a lead-up to this week's holiday. Chag Samayach!

— F.K.

Editorial



Judy Libman • ambitions educational consulting

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PREPARING FOR PURIM

Zareinu Educational Centre teacher Tammy Sharon, second from right, is seen with students from Zareinu and Or Haemet Sephardic School at a pre-Purim carnival hosted by Zareinu.

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Live & Learn

Reading, writing and text-messaging

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF

Staff Reporter

Whatever happened to children passing covert, handwritten notes to each other in class? You know, the ones the teacher would always manage to intercept, causing embarrassment for the offending kid?

It would appear those days are gone, lost to the thrust of technologies such as the cellphone and the Blackberry.

As a result, many schools claim that classroom disruptions are on the rise, as children and teens use the ubiquitous

technology to communicate with each other and to from the classroom or exam hall, often driving teachers, invigilators and their classmates to distraction.

Reacting to the phenomenon last year, the Toronto District School Board, Canada's largest school board, ruled that students with personal communications devices must turn them off and place them out of sight while in the classroom or inside school grounds unless granted special dispensation by a principal.

The TDSB passed the rule citing, among

others, privacy concerns after videos were posted to the Internet taken by schoolchildren and used for cyber-bullying purposes.

Other Greater Toronto Area school boards have since adopted similar policies in an attempt to deal with the issue.

In the city's Jewish school system, the matter is also being taken seriously.

The Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto's student handbook outlines the need to keep cellphone usage to a minimum.

"Cellphones, pagers and beepers must be turned off during lessons and school events. Cellphones and beepers that go off during class will be confiscated," it reads.

But it's not just teens who have cellphones and Blackberries fused to their bodies these days.

Primary school children are becoming increasingly hooked on the technology as more and more parents feel the need to supply their kids with a means of staying in touch at all times in case of emergency.

According to a March 2007 *New York Times* article, "cellphones are quickly emerging as the must-have technology among elementary-school society."

The article reveals statistics for the U.S. cellphone market that indicate the tween demographic — eight to 12-year-olds — is one of the fastest-growing market segments for the cellphone industry.

According to Industry Canada's Office of Consumer Affairs website, a 2005 survey showed that Canadian children are also embracing cellphones, with six per cent of Grade 4 children indicating they owned a cellphone. That number jumps to 46 per cent by Grade 11.

At the Paul Penna Jewish Downtown Day School in Toronto, principal Janet Nish-Lapidus insists there's no real problem with cellphones among her students. Regardless, the school has seen fit to create a policy on the subject.

A recent school newsletter went out with a reminder to parents stating that if students bring cellphones to school "for emergency purposes" they're obliged to keep them in their backpacks during school hours.

"Younger children [senior kindergarten to Grade 6] don't have them, and our middle school students... understand that they do not come into the classroom and are used only for out-of-school emergencies," Nish-Lapidus told *The CJN*.

Out west, the Alberta Teachers' Association attempts to give parents some direction about when to allow their children to have cellphones.

"Because children mature at different rates, there isn't one 'right' age at which a child can be said to be ready to use a cellphone safely," it states on the association's website. "A possible guideline might be that children who are old enough to stay home alone or to baby-sit are likely mature enough to accept the responsibilities associated with owning a cellphone. Such milestones imply that the child has assumed an increased level of responsibility and, as a result, has a greater need to stay in touch."



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Live & Learn

What makes a Jewish school a community school?

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

The word "community" has no special prominence in the name of Toronto's Jewish community high school – the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto – but it is highly significant in the school's philosophy of "welcoming, recognizing and validating every stream within the mainstream Jewish community. "We are not affiliated to any stream," said the school's director of education, Paul Shaviv, in a recent interview. The school – which has more than 1,400 students on two cam-

puses and is, constitutionally, a community school – "encourages kids to be more Jewish. Period."

But Shaviv has plenty to say about the intricacies of balancing the needs of different sectors of the community and about the perception, among some people, that the school leans toward an Orthodox outlook because of the preponderance of Orthodox teachers in its Jewish studies department.

"Generally, the school does not push any particular stream or view of Judaism," Shaviv said. "We encourage students to explore and deepen for themselves."

"However," he added, "our teachers are encouraged to give their own view on any topic, as long as they identify the view as their own, leave appropriate and respectful space for student views, and present as part of their teaching a range of views from within the Jewish spectrum."

How well does it work in practice?

"We do our best," said Shaviv. "I'm not claiming that every lesson reflects the school ideal. I would like to think so."

"I hope that no child is ever told that their Judaism is either unacceptable or not real. We try and build on the positive. Our job is to make kids more Jewish." Whether that means they become "more Reform Jewish," more Conservative or more Orthodox, Shaviv said that is fine with him.

"Although I'm the first to admit that it's a delicate balancing act, I think the school does pretty well in making this a comfortable environment for children from every Jewish background."

Lamenting the "increasingly polarized world" of the Jewish community in general, Shaviv said, "The reality is that the other denominations, whether to the right of you or the left, are your partners, not your enemies. They're partners in the common task of deepening Jewish knowledge and of helping students make sense of the co-ordinates of their Jewishness in a spiritual way, in a historical way and even in a political sense."



Arielle Lewis, left, and Caroline Just became friends at Tanenbaum-CHAT. The school brings together students from diverse Jewish backgrounds. [Frances Kraft photo]

Continued on page B5



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Live & Learn

Different denominations 'can agree to disagree'

Continued from page B4

"We can agree to disagree in a civilized, respectful manner."

The Jewish studies staff at the school consists mostly of Orthodox teachers, although there are a few who are non-Orthodox and there have been some non-Orthodox shlichim from Israel. "It's very difficult to find non-Orthodox shlichim, although every year we try," said Shaviv.

From a "practical" standpoint, he added, there are "very few" qualified high school teachers who can teach the CHAT curriculum in Hebrew, especially Tanach and Rabbis, and who are not from the Orthodox world.

"We have interviewed non-Orthodox ordained rabbis for teaching posts, but it's been very difficult for us to compete with pulpit salaries," he said.

To address the needs of observant students and maintain a standard of school practice, all school activities are kashrut and Shabbat-observant.

But school Shabbatonim, which were instituted seven years ago, provide a non-traditional alternative in addition to Orthodox prayer services. In fact, said Shaviv, "the school would very much like to see a non-traditional daily minyan," but there hasn't been enough interest to get it off the ground.

Shaviv has observed that denominational differences seem to be "of less and less importance to many of our families," but they constitute enough of an issue in the community that he commented that the remark was going to get him "into great trouble."

"You can go through the school in a year and not hear the words Orthodox, Conservative or Reform except in an academic context. We are a united community in the school."

Grade 12 student Arielle Lewis – whose long skirt and sleeves covering her elbows indicate her level of Jewish observance – said in a phone interview that her friends run the gamut from Orthodox to Reform. She doesn't believe denominational affiliation is "a factor in terms of forming friendships."

Lewis' friend, Caroline Just, whom she met after transferring from the Orthodox girls' high school Upanat Orot after Grade 10, sees herself as a combination of Conservative and Reform. She said that while conformity is "a strong factor," for young people, "as people get older they kind of realize

they can be friends with someone even if they're not the same... It's not really unusual that we're friends."

But there are differences other than denominational affiliation that Jewish schools are increasingly having to address, such as homosexuality and interfaith marriages.

The former issue came to the fore in New York's Jewish community in December when a former student at Yeshiva of Flatbush, a modern Orthodox day school in Brooklyn, was advised by the school that his same-sex partner would not be welcome at a school reunion.

And Jewish attitudes toward interfaith marriage became a cause célèbre last summer when Noah Feldman, a Harvard

University law professor, wrote in a *New York Times* column that he and his Korean-American girlfriend, now his wife, were left out of a class reunion photo, ostensibly because she was not Jewish. He also noted that information he sent about his marriage and the birth of his son did not make it into the school's newsletter. The school Feldman attended, Maimonides School in Brookline, Mass., is also a modern Orthodox day school.

As a community school, CHAT is "in a completely different situation" from an Orthodox school with an Orthodox constituency, Shaviv noted.

TanenbaumCHAT's editorial board – which includes Shaviv and publishes the school's newsletter called the *Chatter* – has "quietly and without fuss recognized on two occasions gay marriages of alumni," said Shaviv, referring to announcements in the CHAT Alumni Association's "Naches Notes," in the *Chatter*. The first one was in 2004.

But that point was not reached without dissent.

"There was a range of views," Shaviv said, referring not just to the editorial board. "The school on a professional and lay level made a policy decision to include those announcements, not without strong discussion and opposition from different quarters."

The final decision was not unanimous, he said. However, because there are rabbis in the Reform movement who officiate at same-sex marriages, and because the movement is a mainstream movement served by the school, "we felt that [recognizing the marriages] was part of our community mandate."

Also, Shaviv added, consideration was given to the fact

that "gay unions" are legal in Ontario.

"We have had several reunions, and we are delighted to welcome our graduates and the partners they bring."

To the best of his knowledge, there have been no requests to publish an announcement of an interfaith marriage.

"I just don't know," he said. "If asked, we would try and make sure the announcements we make celebrate the positive Jewish family values of the school."

Continued on page B22



Paul Shaviv

[Frances Kraft photo]



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Live & Learn

Skills improve with right amount of homework

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Though he was only four and a half years old, Matthew's printing was poor and showed little control. He drew outside the lines in his colouring book, and most worrying for his parents – particularly his mother – he did not pay attention to what his teacher was saying in school.

With the teacher's advice, they implemented a daily homework routine that saw the junior kindergarten student printing in age-appropriate workbooks, practising his colouring and following up their son's efforts with compliments.

After a few months, Matthew showed tremendous improvement. When he wrote his name, the letters no longer wandered over two or three lines and each letter was more or less the same size as the one before. His teacher noticed the differences as well. Not only was he showing technical improvement, his behaviour in school had changed – he had become a better listener and followed instructions when given the first time.

Matthew's parents, this writer being one of them, were gratified at the progress their highly active junior kindergarten student made, especially due to his new-found willingness to do the work rather than play with his cars, guitars and drums.

Yet current research into the pros and cons of homework lend support to only one part of this parent's observations: for kindergarten children, it is effective at creating good



Doing homework has helped Matthew Lungen improve his printing.

[Florence Lopez photo]

study habits, discipline, independence and feelings of accomplishment; the actual learning of the material is not necessarily supported by the data.

Harris Cooper, a psychologist now at Duke University, found that most studies into the effectiveness of homework indicated the scholastic/learning benefits increased as the students advanced through the education system. The correlation between homework and academic results shows up most clearly in the later grades of high school, less so in junior high and hardly at all in elementary school. For kindergarten kids, there was practically no benefit from doing homework, he found.

Silly us. But as Harris stated in his study, *Homework: Yet Another Lesson in the Importance of Moderation*, "if homework for young children bears no relation to achievement, why assign it at all?"

Answering his own question, he stated: "Homework can have beneficial effects in primary grades on things beyond knowledge acquisition. It can help young students develop good study habits so they are ready to grow as their cognitive capacities mature. It can help children recognize that learning can occur at home as well as at school. Homework can foster independent learning and responsible character traits. Homework can give parents an opportunity to see what's going on in school and express positive attitudes toward achievement. Homework assignments in elementary grades should be short, should employ materials commonly found in the home environment and should lead to success experiences."

Harris came to his conclusions after reviewing nearly 120 studies of homework's effects. He acknowledged that not all studies painted a rosy picture of the benefits of home assignments. In fact, several negative effects had been noted by researchers, including "satiation effects" (diminishing returns when doing too much homework), denial of leisure time and community activities (which provide their own benefits), parental involvement that turns into parental interference and cheating to complete assignments.

It can also accentuate social inequities, he added. Poorer children might fall behind their middle-class cohorts, who have the benefits of a better home work environment: "Homework, it is argued, is not the great equalizer."

Continued on page B7

Live & Learn

Parents' involvement is key to success: TDSB

Continued from page B6

Which means, I guess, that as Matthew progresses we'll have to cut back his homework and make sure he doesn't outshine those with lesser resources.

Cooper notes that homework controversies recur regularly. They follow a 30-year cycle during which public demands for more homework are followed by periods when less is demanded.

Last month, two Canadian educators at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), Linda Cameron and Lee Bartel, released a report on homework in which they canvassed the opinions of parents on the subject. The researchers analyzed 1,094 responses to an Internet questionnaire. The researchers point out theirs was not a random sample but was skewed to parents with ties to OISE. They found "a significant number of children now receive homework in kindergarten, 28 per cent in Grade 1 and over 50 per cent in Grade 2 report more than 20 minutes of homework a day... About 75 per cent of parents believe that their children now have 'somewhat' to 'much more' homework than they did as a child."

Parents were asked to add their own comments and Cameron and Bartel found the major complaint was that the amount of work assigned children was too high. Parental assistance was required, reducing family time and adversely affecting family relationships. "The amount of homework puts stress on an already taxed system resulting in feelings of resentment, little life balance, and arguments and power struggles," they wrote.

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB), the province's largest, has initiated a review of its longstanding homework policy. A report is expected this spring.

The TDSB's current policy statement, adopted in 1999, states "students achieve academic success more consistently when parents are involved in their child's education. The influence of the home on a student's success at school is profound and exerts a very strong impact on his or her long-term academic success. Homework is one vehicle for involving parents directly and strengthening the partnership between home and school. Positive attitudes about school and about learning routines are enhanced through the application of effective homework practices."

The TDSB document goes on to say, "the single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success is reading aloud to children."

A report referenced on the TDSB website, the 2007 *Survey of Canadian Attitudes Toward Learning: Results for Elementary and Secondary School Learning*, found that "most Canadians agree or strongly agree that homework enhances learning and helps students develop good work habits. However, more than 60 per cent of Canadians also

agree or strongly agree that, in their experience, homework has often been a source of household stress.

"Nearly half of Canadians believe that both elementary and high school students are assigned just enough homework. One-quarter of Canadians believe elementary students are assigned too much homework and 19 per cent believe the same is true for high school students," said the report, conducted by the Canadian Council on Learning, a non-profit corporation funded by the federal government, in conjunction with Statistics Canada.

Sarah Burakowski, a special education resource teacher at Thornhill Public School, said "for some families it is a major stress factor. The curriculum is so jam packed that some teachers feel that in order to get through all the expectations in the Ontario curriculum they need to give homework. I think children need to read and be read to daily for 20 to 30 minutes and that parents should discuss the content with the child.

"I think a certain amount of homework is important, but teachers should only assign homework where the skills have

been taught in class and the child can complete it independently. Parents should oversee what the child is doing and ensure that it is done properly, but basically the child should be able to complete the homework on their own."

Ashley Waltman, principal at United Synagogue Day School Bathurst, said he had not received complaints from parents about the level of homework assigned their children. Teachers regularly give homework based on a widely accepted ratio of 10 times the grade. Grade 3 students would be given homework for both general and Hebrew studies that should take 30 minutes to complete, Grade 4s, 40 minutes, and so on. If children are having trouble finishing the work, they could go beyond the times expected.

More important than the quantity of homework is its quality, he said. It "reinforces what they've done in class" but should not be "busy work" – tasks designed merely to keep students occupied. Home tasks should bring out a child's creativity and allow them to work independently, he said.

Continued on page B17

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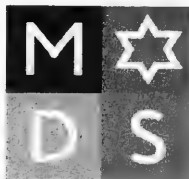
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Five-year-old Aliza focuses on leaving a space between words in a homework notebook. [Frances Kraft photo]

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Live & Learn

Website aimed at youth promotes sexual abstinence

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

National Conference of Synagogue Youth (NCSY), the youth arm of the Orthodox Union (OU), has set up a website promoting sexual abstinence.

The site, www.negiah.org, talks about the risks involved in premarital sex, categorizing them into physical dangers such as sexually transmitted diseases and pregnancy, and mental and emotional hazards such as stress, guilt, loss of self-respect, a sense of betrayal, anger, depression, and regret.

The site also discusses how teens can express commitment without sexual experimentation, the correlation between sexual activity and suicide rates, biblical role models and family purity.

Rabbi Glenn Black, NCSY regional director, said he applauds the organization for producing the website because teens need a place to turn to in order to learn about their choices.

"Young people are very influenced by society, and they hear a lot about sex and love in the media. That is totally inappropriate."

He said that both boys and girls feel an incredible pressure to keep up with the times. "Popular girls dress [immodestly] and popular boys are surrounded by the most girls. There are huge challenges growing up like that."

NCSY does not merely teach abstinence, Rabbi Black said, it also teaches self-respect. "We want teens to think of themselves, and be proud of their own accomplishments."

"They should not try to raise themselves socially by following societal pressures. Kids are getting the wrong

perception of what life is all about."

Unfortunately, he said, many teens see Hollywood celebrities as role models, "and these celebrities are sometimes in rehab or prison. It is very scary the way some teens follow Britney Spears or Paris Hilton."

"We tell them that their role models should be people who are comfortable with themselves and who give back to society."

It is critical to look beyond the moment, he said.

"Every decision we make has short-term benefits and long-term costs. When we have to make a choice, we should look down the road and see the impact of that choice. A premarital relationship can be destructive later on. [Once they go down that road] they can't go back."

Young people need to appreciate the spiritual dimension of a relationship, Rabbi Black said. "The spiritual bonding is what 'bashert' is all about."

At NCSY, he said, an important topic is the Jewish approach to love and marriage. "We have about 1,500 members in Toronto alone, so we see a lot of kids. Many of these important conversations take place one-on-one over a cup of coffee."

Parents, he said, need to know that they can have control. "They should not be their kid's best friends. They have to be on top of them constantly because the world comes at [their children] too fast and hard [for the children] to decide what is right and wrong."

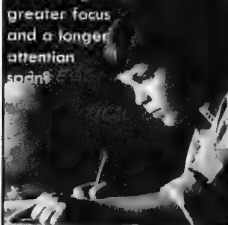
"Parents must know where their kids are after school and get to know their friends. They also have to teach their kids responsibility and how to show respect for the opposite sex."

"It is a mitzvah for them to talk to kids. They shouldn't leave it up to strangers," Rabbi Black said.



Rabbi Glenn Black

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Live & Learn

Hillel organizes forum to address recent campus assaults

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

For university students, the stress of living up to high academic expectations, making new friends and adapting to a new environment is enough to deal with, but students also need to be wary of how to guard themselves against sexual and physical attacks on Canadian campuses.

Prompted by a string of sexual assaults at York University, Hillel @ York organized a public forum to provide students with an opportunity to air their concerns about campus safety.

In November 2006, on two separate occasions, two women were attacked and sexually assaulted near the Murray Ross Parkway and Sentinel Road area of York.

Last April, another woman was sexually assaulted at the northeast doors to Stong College on the York campus.

And just months ago, last September, two 25-year-old men, Justin Connort and Daniel Katsnelson, turned themselves in to police after two 19-year-old women were allegedly raped in their dorm rooms.

Connort and Katsnelson, who are both under house arrest after being released into the custody of their parents on \$200,000 bail, face 11 charges, including break and enter, gang sex assault and forcible confinement.

Hillel @ York responded to these recent incidents by holding a student forum, moderated by Penny Krowitz, executive director of Jewish Women International of Canada (JWIC), to allow for students to address campus safety issues.

Devora Schwartz Waxman, Hillel of Greater Toronto's director of zedeck and engagement, recalled the mood on campus after the most recent attacks.

"When we came back to campus after it had

happened, on the front page of the *Excalibur*, the campus paper, there was this huge headline that said, 'Are we safe?' I think people were definitely feeling intimidated and afraid, and there was just a lot of discussion about it," she said.

"We wanted to help our students feel that it was safe on campus and to give them a forum to express their concerns and to show the campus community that we were doing something about it."

Schwartz decided to contact Krowitz, with whom she had worked for the past two years, because her organization deals with the abuse against women.

"[JWIC] actually put together a conference that was held in Montreal in November addressing the issue of sexual assault on Canadian campuses. Penny seemed like the most natural fit to invite," Schwartz said.

During the forum, Krowitz showed a short video about sexual abuse among university students and facilitated a discussion.

"It was a really good jumping off point," Schwartz said.

The York Federation of Students (YFS) was also involved in the forum, and they discussed wanting to launch a new campaign to raise awareness about sexual assaults.

"They had their 'No means no' campaign and they were trying to think about new ways of reframing that and making it fresher, and there was discussion about why this is happening on campus," she said.

"What people came away with was that it's not just about how to stay safe on campus, but it's really a matter of thinking about the way people relate to each other and how men treat women and vice versa."

Schwartz added that after the forum, Hillel sent out an open e-mail to its entire student list.

"We told students that if they had any concerns and wanted any advice or just wanted someone to talk to, we pointed to a staff person they could call."

Although York has been in the media spotlight in the recent past when it comes to assaults on campus, schools across the country are coping with this.

"I don't think this campus is any different than any other Canadian campus and interestingly, the specifics that [Krowitz] was talking about demonstrates that this is an issue across the country and it is not specific to York," Schwartz said.

Last September, a woman was sexually assaulted during the daytime at Memorial University in St. John's, Nfld.

At the University of Toronto earlier this year, Toronto police were seeking a man near St. George and Bloor streets after there were several reports of a man peeping into windows.

Security at Ryerson University also have their hands full with sexual and physical attacks.

In January, a female waiter at the campus pub, Ram & The Rye, was cornered by a patron who demanded her phone number and "touched her in a sexual manner."

The following month, two people were verbally harassed and physically assaulted on the Ryerson campus. During the assault, and while the subjects were running away, they made homophobic statements.

There are a number of preventive safety measures offered by campus security across the country, including escort and foot patrol services, a network of emergency telephones that provide a direct line to campus security and closed-circuit television cameras located in parking lots and walkways that are monitored.

Tips on how to stay safe, provided by the Toronto Police Service website, include walking assertively and walking in well-lit areas.

When it comes to elevators, once inside, stand by the door near the controls and keep your back to the side wall.

If you're taking the bus at night, sit near the driver and be aware if people are watching or following you.

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Live & Learn

Research yeshivas before sending your kids, author says

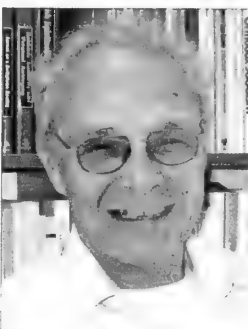
By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Rabbi Shalom Berger, co-author of *Flipping Out? Myth or Fact: The Impact of the "Year in Israel."* was not partial to the proposed title of the book when his publisher, Rabbi Gil Student, first suggested it.

"I wasn't so excited about it," Rabbi Berger told *The CJN* in a phone interview from his home in Alon Shvut, near Jerusalem. "I thought it would imply something I didn't think was fully accurate." The question mark was inserted at his request, and the subtitle was one of several considered.

Indeed, the title and cover photo are somewhat provocative, alluding to fears among some parents of children becoming so religiously radicalized that they lose touch with the values they were raised with.

The 218-page volume, published in December by Yashar Books, has a handsomely photographed cover featuring a black fedora and suit jacket neatly placed on a suitcase in front of the Western Wall, considered Judaism's holiest site. The gar-



Chaim Waxman

ments are symbolic of stricter Jewish ritual observance and are not typical attire for modern Orthodox students entering Israeli yeshivot.

The book's title, taken from Jewish rock band Blue Fringe's song "Flippin' Out," is a flip take (pun notwithstanding) on the yeshiva year in Israel.

Its lyrics address some of the same changes referred to in the book — restrictions on relationships with the opposite sex, more

visibly Orthodox attire, stricter observance of religious ritual, and avoidance of secular culture including movies — and the tension such changes can cause between parents and children.

The book's approach, with three academics as respective writers of its three sections, is considerably more serious, but makes for an interesting read both for its lack of pedantry and its subject matter. There is little if any other current material exclusively devoted to the yeshiva year in Israel.

Rabbi Berger, an educator, and Rabbi Daniel Jacobson, a psychologist, base their sections on their respective doctoral studies, the former looking at changes in students' attitudes and practices, and the latter examining the underlying psychology. Sociologist Chaim Waxman, who studied at an Israeli yeshiva himself in the late 1950s, wraps things up by examining American Orthodox, Zionism and Israel. All three authors are Americans who have made aliyah.

For his doctorate in education, Rabbi Berger, who works for the Lookstein Center for Jewish Education in the Diaspora at Bar-Ilan University, interviewed some 400 students at the beginning and end of their year in Israel. He sought them out a year later as well and was able to locate most of them, he

said.

His subjects, virtually all of whom are graduates of American Jewish day schools, were drawn from four yeshivot heder that combine study with army service for Israeli students and three American programs.

The term "flipping out" isn't used in the book, and the authors do not put an explicit value judgment on the phenomenon. "It's something that's out there that parents express," said Waxman. "Some modern Orthodox parents do see it as negative."

In a comment that could be construed as reassuring — or not, if one wonders why the issue is raised in the first place — Rabbi Berger writes in the book that yeshiva students "do not appear to be swept up by a cult-like phenomenon."

However, noted co-author Waxman in a phone interview, there is a process of "socialization" at yeshivot. Also, he noted, the yeshiva is a "total" environment.

"Its aim is to mould a certain type of person, and in some cases if the students internalize things to an extreme, it might have effects similar to those of people who join cults. I don't think it's the intention, or what the yeshiva does, but it's how the student absorbs it."

Rabbi Berger said that it's not just the yeshiva experience that causes changes, but the age and developmental stage of the students, most of whom are just out of high school. "They're beginning to distinguish themselves from their parents. They're developing their own identity and rebelling at some level."

Continued on page B11

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Live & Learn

'Overwhelming majority' do not flip out

Continued from page B10

"The question is: What setting are they going to be in when they have these experiences? We all think about the '60s when kids went off to college and came back different from their parents – an experience in which students are exposed to ideas that they find compelling and very often they [are inculcated]. This is what you expect from 18- and 19-year-olds.

"In most cases that I'm familiar with, assuming the kids grew up in settings that are healthy and supportive, and where there is open communication, at some point they... come to appreciate their parents' values and move back on some level in that direction."

Rabbi Berger expected to find changes not only in religious attitudes and practice but also in attitudes toward Israel, and "for the most

part" he did.

One finding that surprised him, however, was that students did not change in the area of ethical behaviour over the course of the year.

Although his first reaction was to think that "this is something of an indictment of a program that put such an emphasis on ritual matters that interpersonal matters fell by the wayside," he soon changed his mind.

"It turned out there really wasn't a lot of room for change... The students scored themselves so high at the beginning of the year on interpersonal things that there was no room to change."

He believes the finding is explained by the consistent support in the general community for ethical behaviour and a concomitant minimum of support for religious practice.

The "overwhelming majority" of yeshiva students do not flip out, said Waxman. "Most come back and go to university, but they are affected – from my point of view very positively," he said.

Some do stay for a second year instead of returning home, he noted. Of those, he added, some have their parents' blessings, and others stay on against their parents' wishes.

The book cited a Jewish studies principal at one student's high school who disapproved of his former student's decision not to attend the Ivy League university at which he had deferred acceptance.

The principal was concerned that future students would not be allowed to defer acceptance if others did not "uphold their commitments."

But Paul Shaviv, director of education at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, which currently has about 20 alumni in Israeli yeshivot, disagrees with that premise. "A school's principal's duty is to do what is best for the student, not [worry] about their school image," he told *The C.J.N.*

Rabbi Berger noted that, among his research subjects who stayed for a second year, "not that many" originally planned to do so. "Clearly they were influenced, or they themselves said, 'This is what I want to be doing.'"

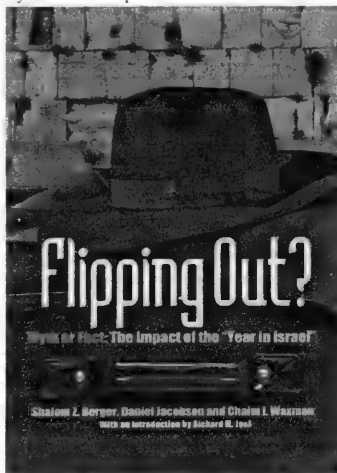
For parents considering Israeli yeshiva education for their children, Waxman recommends putting "at least as much time into researching the institution as you would into finding out about a new car."

He said parents need to know the perspective of the yeshiva – haredi, "transplanted American" or religious Zionist, for example.

Also, he added, they need to know their own child. "There are certain youngsters who should not be sent away from home, who need their parents there. Parents have children who are struggling and they think that sending them to Israel will resolve their struggles, but frequently it exacerbates them."

Reflecting on the findings in the book, Waxman said he thinks "it just scratches the surface."

"It's such a rich area that needs to be mined. There are so many things we don't know."



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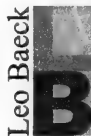
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A Great School

Live & Learn

Lifelong learning at Baycrest, Bernard Betel, universities

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

When people hear the word "education," they often think about things children do at school – math, physics or studying Shakespeare's sonnets.

But education can be a lifelong pastime. Older people may not want to (or have to) take exams and write essays, but they can still savour new information and learn new skills and new ways of doing things.

Current research suggests that keeping the brain active can help maintain physical, mental and emotional health, even to some extent warding off dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

As we age, we tend to get more concerned

about how to maintain our health through the years. That subject may be just the starting point.

Lois Kamenitz, a librarian by training, is a volunteer at the Anne and Louis Pritzker Wellness Library at Baycrest. Since 2005, she has been running monthly programs about all aspects of health care. She taps into the expertise of Baycrest staff, as well as those in the community.

Subjects of her programs have included Alzheimer's disease, diabetes and heart disease – as one might expect – as well as Parkinson's disease, hearing loss, depression, chronic pain and arthritis.

Kamenitz has also asked participants what they would like to learn about and, based on

their input, programs have evolved. They include "When someone you know has cancer," naturopathy, sleep, stress, movement and music therapy, and home safety.

A popular program involved making memory books, a kind of scrapbooking. "This is a way of preserving memories when only the memories are left," Kamenitz said, noting that this type of program is especially relevant for Holocaust survivors.

She also prepares handouts and a bibliography, and gives information on what materials are available from the Pritzker library.

Kamenitz noted that participants have told her that the educational aspect is not the only reason they enjoy the programs: to them it is a social outing as well. "Some see it as a chance to get out, meet other people, and feel less isolated," Kamenitz said.

The young often think that those over 50 are mired in the dark ages, especially with regard to modern technology. Surprise them by becoming computer literate at the Bernard Betel Centre for Creative Living, which offers a computer learning and resource centre. Its small classes, run by volunteers, can help make those who view computers with some suspicion comfortable with the technology and computer literate.

The Betel Centre's Lifelong Learning Institute offers various programs, including a book club; creative writing workshops; discussion groups on such subjects as the Bible; current events and Jewish culture; Russian for beginners; lecture series; and music appreciation.

Another avenue for learning opportunities are the universities, which have many opportunities for older adults. These programs don't focus on seniors, but they don't require previ-

ous university experience and there are no exams.

Ryerson University's G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education has many programs for those over 50. Seven times a year there are special seminars to help deal with issues of aging and retirement.

Its LIFE Institute (Learning Is For Ever) offers peer-led study groups and lectures in the arts, humanities, sciences and contemporary issues, as well as computer training, a "philosophy café" and social programs.

For something different, look into the Chang School's ACT II Studio, a theatre school and creative drama centre for older adults, where students can learn about acting, voice, improvisation, camera work, playwriting and direction.

The University of Toronto School of Continuing Studies doesn't have programs specifically for seniors, but its adult education programs are wide-ranging, from art appreciation to forensics, not to mention religion and business studies.

Public libraries offer lectures, book clubs and drop-in programs. The Toronto Reference Library Learning Centre has many computer classes.

Other options for seniors education include Jewish community centres, local school boards and synagogues.

To quote Dr. James Birren, a pioneer in the field of gerontology, a professor at several universities, including UCLA, and the author of numerous books and articles on aging, "Mental activity for older people is more important than even income or housing."

While he may be overstating matters, there is no question that it makes life more vital.



Lois Kamenitz

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Cyber-bullying occurs among four-and five-year-olds

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

After sponsoring what was supposed to be a one-time forum on cyber-bullying in 2004, Jewish Family & Child got such a positive response that organizers decided they needed an ongoing program.

Shawna Sidney, co-ordinator of the agency's family life education program, responded by developing a PowerPoint presentation aimed at parents, and said she will go out to schools – she has spoken at Temple Sinai and the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto (CHAT) – to address the issues.

Cyber-bullying, the use of electronic communication tools such as the computer or cell-phone to antagonize and intimidate others, "is a worldwide problem, and takes place in every school by children as young as four or five," said Sidney.

The bully may send e-mails, post messages on a website or blog, or send hurtful text messages, photos or videos.

Sidney told the story of two girls who set up a "We Hate Sondra Jones" website after they were not invited to her slumber party. "They told everyone invited to the party not to go, and asked the girls to add reasons why they hate Sondra, and to spread ugly rumours about her."

"When Sondra heard about it, she got a

sick feeling in her stomach, and checked the site often. She felt hurt and powerless to defend herself. She was too embarrassed to go to school, so she told her parents that she was sick."

Sidney said that 25 per cent of Canadian children claim they have been e-mailed with hateful content about someone, 44 per cent of children have e-mail accounts their parents do not know about, and although 70 per cent of parents say they know a great deal about the websites their children visit, 55 per cent of these children disagree.

Cyber-bullying perceives their actions to be anonymous, said Sidney, because they cannot see their victims. "It is a faceless form of bullying, and they cannot see the reaction of their targets."

There are, however, definite legal impli-



Shawna Sidney

cations, she said. It is a crime to publish a defamatory libel, or cause someone fear for their own safety or the safety of others. Acts of cyber-bullying may violate the Canadian Human Rights Act if a person spreads hate or discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or disability.

"There are technological crime units within the various police forces in the GTA whose job it is to investigate any allegations of cyber-bullying," said Sidney.

Computers can be scary and dangerous, she said. "It is amazing what young kids can get into; they know more about computers than we ever will."

Sidney tells parents that using computers should be a privilege, not a right. "The computer should be in a common room in the

house, and parents need to be aware of what their kids are doing on them. Children must know the potential dangers and understand why they need to be cautious. There needs to be rules set up for computer use and instant messaging, and these rules need to be explained and enforced."

Sidney said that parents should be aware if their children spend long hours on the computer, close programs on the computer when they come near, are secretive about Internet activity or are always doing homework on the computer but are getting behind with school-work.

"Talk to your children and know when they are talking to someone online, and [to whom] they are talking. Teach them to stop immediately if they see or read anything that upsets them, and not reply to the messages."

Let your children know, she said, that if something upsets them they should talk to an adult who can inform the service provider. "They should set up a new e-mail address and password, and if the bullying persists they can call the police with an adult."

If parents suspect that it is their child who is the bully, let them know that anonymity is only a perception, she said. "Discuss your concerns with our child's principal and/or school social worker, and consider the benefits of professional counselling."

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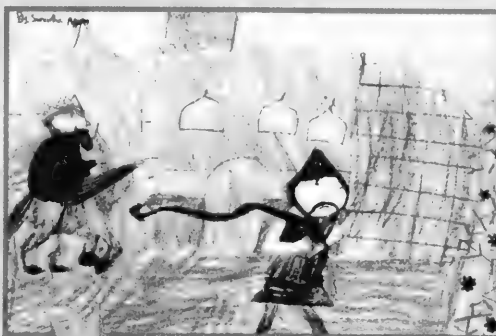
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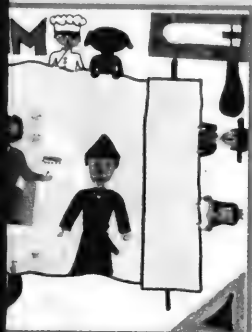
BY LIA LOEBENBERG, GRADE 2



BY HANNAH GOODMAN, GRADE 4



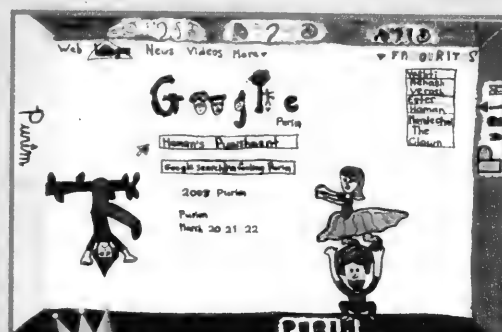
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BY DANI SCHWARTZ, GRADE 2

Live & Learn

STUDENTS IN ACTION: Clockwise from top right, Netivot HaTorah Day School teacher Rochelle Diamond, centre, with B'not Sherut volunteers at Netivot HaTorah Day School, from left, Sara Amar, Oshri Daube, Chein Heniog and Tal Ziv under the direction of Diamond, transformed the school's second floor into the city of Shushan for Purim; Montessori Day School student Elena Puntillo, 6, works with Hebrew sandpaper letters; Grade 3 students at Bialik Hebrew Day School show their work, inspired by a Yiddish poem; Grade 8 students at Associated Hebrew School's Danilack Middle School conduct a science experiment with teacher Josh Abikzir; and nursery school students at AHS' Posluns Education Centre dressed up as part of their study of Purim. From left are Jake Goodman, Jonah Erez and Gabriel Greenwald.



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Live & Learn

Homework teaches time management

Continued from page B7

The wrong kind of homework can create resentment if the child has mastered the material and finds repetitive drills a waste of time. "We don't want them to have a negative experience," Waltman said, noting that parents, too, can get frustrated if their child is having difficulty completing assignments.

Still, educators have to tread a fine line when making sure children acquire the skills they need to progress, versus assigning too much work and creating resentment, he added.

Shana Harris, director of education at Bialik Hebrew Day School, said "we believe it is important to give homework, but not homework for homework's sake."

In grades 1 and 2 "it's mostly reading related," and in Hebrew studies it focuses on "practising letters and reading skills."

Bialik's policy is to limit homework in grades 1, 2 and 3 to no more than half an hour a day in total. In grades 4 and 5, one hour is expected, split equally between general and Jewish studies. In grades 6, 7 and 8, up to one and a half hours a day is expected, with 15 minutes devoted to each subject.

Harris said "we're not giving excessive homework." The benefits of home assignments are many. "It consolidates their learning," it instills good work habits and teaches children to budget their time, she said.

Parents are encouraged to help children with homework, particularly in the younger grades, and to report back to the teachers if children are taking too long to complete assignments. "We have to find out what's behind that."

Paul Shaviv, director of education at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto (CHAT), said "homework is an important part of academic review and training" and permits students to apply the skills and knowledge acquired in the classroom.

It teaches them to work and study independently and to budget time correctly. Youngsters enrolling in CHAT come from more than a dozen day schools and each comes with strengths and weaknesses. Most are able to work independently, but CHAT's Grade 9 students "quickly absorb high school study habits and routines," he said.

Those who require help are taught how to organize their work, take notes, do research and express themselves clearly and logically, Shaviv said.

Homework is assigned so that it "is evenly spread and does not cause the kids to go into a crisis."

Despite the double program of general and Jewish studies, homework is limited so that the kids "have time to be children, teenagers and enjoy themselves."



MENTORING

As part of a mentoring program at the Dr. Abraham Shore She'arim Hebrew Day School, students in Grade 8 develop special relationships with younger students in the school. From left, Kfir Gal and his mentor Matan Boker.

SCIENCE IN THE CLASSROOM

United Synagogue Day School Grade 3 students Sean Sepiashvili and Nicole Klaiman work on a science experiment.



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Live & Learn

London Hebrew day school gets a new home

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Hebrew day school students in London, Ont., have something to look forward to next school year.

In September, the London Community Hebrew Day School (LCHDS) will move from a 70-year-old building in Old North London on Epworth Avenue to a brand-new facility connected to the London Jewish Community Centre on Huron Street in northeast London.

"The current school is... not air-conditioned, it doesn't have a lot of new smart boards and computers and advanced ways of teaching. The hope is that this school, since it is brand new, will offer the latest in technology, and be able to educate students in the 21st century," said school board member William Frydman, a Toronto native who works as an oral surgeon in London.

Frydman, who is actively involved in fundraising initiatives for the school, added that the 65 students who are enrolled will have access to the JCC's gymnasium, library and Holocaust museum.

"The idea is... that the students at the school can benefit from the existing structures at the Jewish Community Centre."

The school, which was founded in 1966, serves the London Jewish community of about 3,000, one of the small Jewish communities in North America to support a fully operational Jewish day school, Frydman said.

"What we're hoping is that this will make Jews in Canada aware that the London Jewish community actually has a Hebrew day school and cares a lot about Yiddishkeit and we want our kids to grow up Jewish," he said.

He said the community is dedicated to the school because it provides a foundation for children to feel connected to their



A new building, seen above in a rendering, will replace the London Community Hebrew Day School's 70-year-old building.

heritage, traditions and culture "that transcends geographic boundaries" because even if they move from London, "all the benefits of a Jewish education will go with them."

The cost of relocating to the building is about \$2 million, and the community has raised about \$1.8 million, Frydman said.

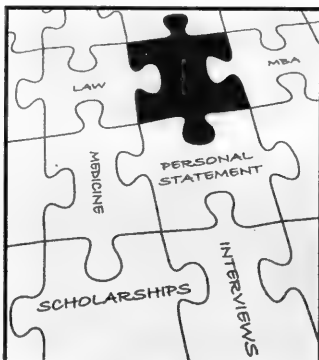
"The fact that we've raised \$1.8 million is in part due to the sale of the old school, which was bought by the University of Western Ontario Kings College, because it is very close to their campus and they've always wanted that build-

ing. That worked out great for us. Plus, we've raised on top of that another million dollars or so, but we're still not there yet."

He said that they hope to raise enough money to be able to create an escrow account, to draw on the interest to help pay the overhead of the school.

Frydman hopes that the new facility will help attract parents who want to provide their kids with private education, but are indifferent about Jewish education.

Continued on page B19



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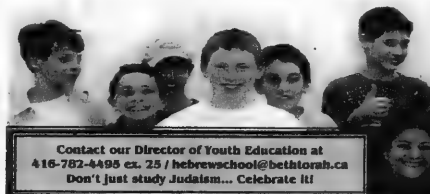
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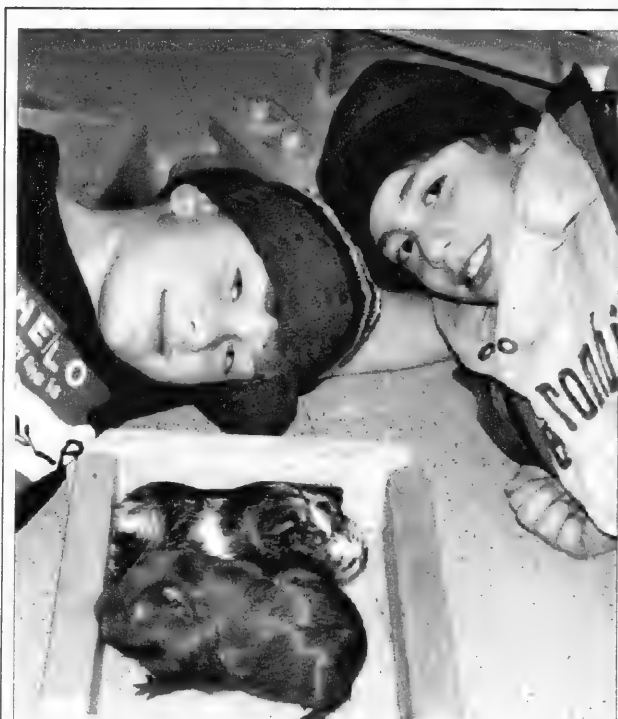
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Live & Learn



TIKKUN OLAM IN ACTION: Noah Nightingale, left, and Jordan Ravuna, Grade 5 students at Associated Hebrew Schools' Kamin Education Centre – seen with guinea pigs Fiddles, foreground, and Cutie – learn about animal care in the school's animal centre.

Facility will be more comfortable and modern

Continued from page B18

"If someone decides they want to give their kids a private school education and they're not totally sold on Jewish education, they could send them to French immersion, they could send them to at least four other private schools in London alone," he said.

"People have options. When you have a school in a 70-year-old building that looks like it's 70 years old, and requires a ton of maintenance all the time, it's not exactly attractive."

But he hopes the new location will give LCHDS an edge because it will offer the same curriculum that will prepare students to be leaders in the Jewish community, in a more comfortable, modern facility.

Frydman, who moved to London after completing his post-doctoral studies in Chicago, also hopes that the growing Jewish day school will encourage young Jewish families to move to London.

"[When I moved to London] I wasn't married at the time, nor was I engaged or even dating at that time, but one of the things I looked into was whether it had a Hebrew day

school, because when I did raise a family, I wanted my kids to go to Hebrew day school. If they didn't have one, I never would have moved here," he said, adding that his two children are enrolled in LCHDS and his wife, Rochelle Frydman, is a teacher there.

William Frydman suggested that it might even be easier financially to send your kids to Jewish day school in London because – although the tuition is nearly at the same level of Hebrew school tuition in Toronto, at \$9,000 a year – the cost of living in London is much lower.

He said that if it wasn't for the children who attend LCHDS, Jewish community events in London would be nearly non-existent.

"Any event, any celebration, any yom tov we're celebrating here in the city, whether it is Purim or whether it is Chanukah... it's always totally supported by the children who attend the London Community Hebrew Day School. It is literally the vital Yiddish support to this city. If that didn't exist and we didn't have that school, there would be a small fraction of participation at any event," he said.

"The kids are everything. The kids are the life of the community."

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Live & Learn

Multilingualism may keep your child sharper longer

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Jewish day school students often feel like theirs is a heavy burden to bear.

That's because they tend to wade through weightier course loads than their public school peers.

On top of math, English, social science and athletics programs, among others, Jewish day schoolers study under curricula padded with Judaic studies and with extra language courses such as Hebrew, French and even Yiddish in some cases.

At Toronto's Leo Baeck Day School, for example, children are being taught French via a pilot program called the Accelerated Integration Method (AIM). It's a "gesture-based program, like sign language" says school director David Prashker.

"There's no English-speaking in the classrooms [learning with AIM]," Prashker said. "It's very high-energy teaching [and] the French in the classroom is palpable afterward."

Other Jewish day schools rely on more standard modes of delivering language skills.

For example, at Associated Hebrew School and Bialik Hebrew Day School, among others, students learn French from textbooks, some of which are designed by the school's former French department head, Ruby Kaplan.

Kaplan, who now runs her own company, RK Publishing –

which provides French textbooks to numerous Jewish and public schools across Canada – is an obvious proponent of learning French as a second or third language.

She said she's currently developing new "high-interest" French workbooks, which aim to increase students' interest in the subject.

"We're trying to help students get strategies to better understand... to support independent learning through models and scaffolding, a step-by-step approach on language tasks," Kaplan said. "No longer should the teacher be re-inventing the wheel."

All the [tasks] in the workbooks have reinforcements and are broken down for easy learning."

All of which, in theory, will help make more students increasingly multilingual.

While that may be a source of pride for parents and students alike, what other advantages does a kid with knowledge French and Hebrew have other than the ability to get by in Québec or Israel when trying to order poutine or falafel?

Quite a lot, actually.

Ellen Bialystock, a York University professor and a world-renowned research psychologist, has focused much of her career on the effect of bilingualism on children's language and cognitive development.

According to her findings, the ability to speak a second language can literally help stave off the ravaging effects of aging on the mind, she says.

"Children who speak two languages develop a set of cognitive skills concerned with attention and control earlier and more

efficiently than monolinguals," Bialystock wrote in to *The CJN* last week from Geneva. "These skills are part of what's called the executive function and are the most crucial component of higher thought," she says.

"The reason is that managing two language systems requires this executive system to control attention to the two systems so the right language comes out, and this constant use in ordinary language production provides a boost to the development (and later the maintenance) of those processes."

She adds that some of her research indicates that children as young as four years old have shown cognitive benefits from learning another language.

Bialystock cautions, however, that simply studying a language is not enough for the significant beneficial effects to kick in.

In order for that developmental "boost" to really be effective, she says a child has to actively speak the language and continue to use it with some fluency.

"In theory, there's no limit to how many languages children [or adults] can learn, but there is a practical limit. The benefits come from really using a second [or third] language," Bialystock explained.

"And a curriculum packed with languages is not going to give children the opportunity to use each of them to some [uncertain] level that would be sufficient incorporation or internalization that they really become bilingual. A threshold point is needed for it to become a functional language and for all this good stuff to happen."

*'No longer
should the teacher
be re-inventing
the wheel'*

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to actively speak
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Clockwise, from bottom, Toronto Heschel School senior kindergarten students with teacher Jordana Mednick celebrate the month of Adar; Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School Grade 5 students – clockwise, from left, Margaret Rose, Hershel Nashman, John Lee Cooper and Emma Miloff – play chess as part of a school-wide program aimed at teaching learning strategies; and parents and alumni of TanenbaumCHAT perform in *Grease* at the Leah Posluns Theatre as a fundraiser.

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Live & Learn

Administrator opposes 'shutting people out'

Continued from page B5

"It's one part of the tensions of running a community school."

In the Reform movement, rabbis in the GTA have agreed not to officiate at interfaith marriages, although some of their colleagues in other communities do.

When it comes to current students, Shaviv says, "This school is about the students. It is not about judging their backgrounds, beliefs or family situations. It is about all of us working together to produce good, fine, educated human beings and Jews."

"This is maybe one of the very few schools that both teach Talmud and have fashion shows, and where the same kid can be a star of both without anyone objecting."

While no other day schools in Toronto are defined by the Centre for Enhancement of Jewish Education (the Mercatz) as "community schools," some of them — such as the Montessori Jewish Day school, the Toronto Heschel School and the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School — consider themselves community schools.

"We're egalitarian, pluralistic and not affiliated with any particular line of Judaism," said Regina Lulka, principal of the Montessori Jewish Day School. We teach students to be comfortable in different means of prayer.

"Freedom of choice is inherent to our Montessori principles. We extend that to our Judaic studies."

Kashrut is observed at the eight-year-old school as "a matter of respect for our more observant families," and parents are "vehemently" requested not to hold parties on Shabbat so that all students can participate, Lulka said. "We celebrate and respect everybody."

Associated Hebrew Schools, which celebrates its 100th anniversary this year, is often perceived as a community school, both for its history — in the early 1940s it was the only Jewish day school in Toronto — and because its student body reflects the spectrum of the Jewish community.

Religiously, however, it hews to a line that Mark Smiley — director of education and an alumnus of the school — says is "comfortable for modern Orthodox families as well as any traditional Conservative



Mark Smiley

respect the integrity of other Jewish movements," Smiley said.

Range of schools is 'not typical'

TanenbaumCHAT is Toronto's only community Jewish day school, said Seymour Epstein, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's senior vice-president for the Centre for Enhancement of Jewish Education (the Mercatz).

However, he noted, the term "community school" means different things to different people. He believes the term is, to a certain extent, "self-defining."

From a Mercatz standpoint, it means a school that serves the broadest scope possible of the ideological spectrum both in its curriculum and through an "open, tolerant and pluralistic" faculty. As well, Epstein said, a community school is open to all students, regardless of their families' ability to pay tuition.

In the United States, however, community schools often refer to schools that serve the non-Orthodox community and in fact were created as an alternative to existing Orthodox schools, said Epstein.

Toronto, with its wide variety of Jewish day schools, is "not typical," he noted.

— F.K.

families."

He believes Associated is a community school in that it serves children from Orthodox, Conservative, Reform and Jewishly unaffiliated backgrounds.

Also, he added, "I believe a school can call itself a community school if it has an open enrolment that accepts children of all socio-economic strata."

The Associated curriculum offers "minimal opportunities" to talk about non-Orthodox denominations per se, Smiley said.

However, he added, "implicitly, the children are exposed [to other denominations] through their relationships to families that celebrate bar and bat mitzvahs from all walks of the Jewish community, and this is celebrated at Associated."

It would be "inappropriate" for any teacher at the school to "not

Smiley, who received smichah last year from the Conservative movement's Jewish Theological Seminary, said the fact that he is not known as Rabbi Smiley at the school has to do with two things, neither of them relating to the denomination that ordained him.

Ever since he was hired in 2003, he has been called "Dr. Smiley," in recognition of his PhD. Also, he noted, the school has a rabbi-in-residence on staff. "I believe my role is to be the educational leader," said Smiley.

He said it is a misconception that the school "only respects the religious and political institutions of traditional... Orthodoxy."

The school is "one of the few places where kids with tzitzit and kids from secular homes are together in a meaningful way."

Although Associated has no policy or precedent on recognizing interfaith or same-sex marriages of alumni, and no statistics on how many instances there are, Smiley said he "would hope that the Toronto community encourages figuring out how to bring people into the community rather than shutting them out."

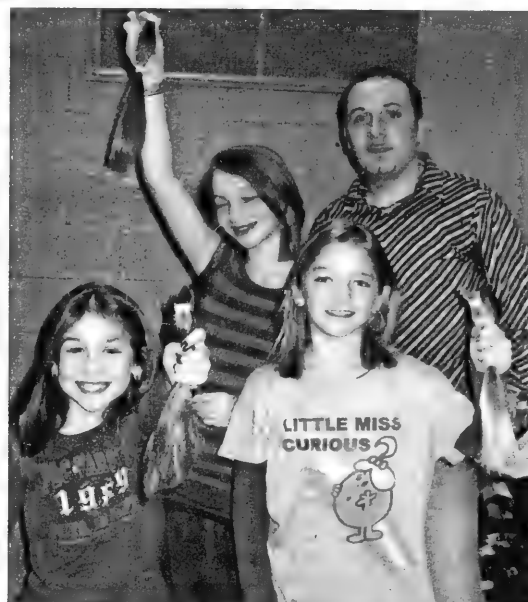
He said that all are welcome at reunions.

In addition to "the need to uphold the sanctity of Jewish peoplehood, [there's a] need not to publicly embarrass anybody, which is also an important Torah value."

Live & Learn



YOUNG SCIENTISTS: From left, Adam Friedmann, Evan Reinblatt, Laura Pellow, Steven Walt and Michael Teryohin, students at the TanenbaumCHAT Kimel Family Education Centre, won the local tournament leading up to the Shalveheth Freier Physics Tournament at the Weizmann Institute of Science. They will compete in Israel against schools from around the world. [Jeremy Reinblatt photo]



LOCKS OF LOVE: As part of the Leo Baeck Parents' Association South Campus Mitzvah Program, three students donated 10 inches of hair each to Locks of Love, a non-profit organization that creates wigs for children who have experienced medical hair loss. From left are Meaghan Kenley, Charlotte Axelrod, Sidney Bly and Dani Tayfour of Dani's Hair Studio, who donated his time. [Emma Kenley photo]

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Live & Learn

SMART Boards energize Toronto day schools

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to The CJN

The future of education is here – in Toronto's Jewish day schools. The three Rs are coming alive with interactive whiteboard technology that's already in many schools and classrooms. Learning grammar is easy when kids can slide around nouns and verbs to make complete sentences, and at the tap of a finger, Google and YouTube can instantly illustrate lessons, making any subject fascinating.

"It's not fair – I wish we had that when I was in school," parents raised with traditional blackboards have been saying to Frieda Woznica, principal of the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto's Kimel Family Education Centre in Vaughan. "We started last year with just two," says Woznica. Now, there are 12 SMART Boards, with plans to incorporate many more – across both TanenbaumCHAT campuses – over the next

few years.

"A lot of people just think it's... a blackboard substitute," says Marsha Cohen, director of general studies at United Synagogue Day School (USDS), which is rolling out 20 SMART Boards in its two locations by September 2008.

It's really so much more, says Jesse Gold, IT Administrator for Bialik Hebrew Day School, which currently uses four SMART Boards and recently hosted an information session for parents on the new technology. "This lets you interact [with classroom lessons] more organically." While notes drawn on a blackboard or flip chart are static and quickly forgotten, lessons using the SMART Board can grow in an almost infinite range of directions.

*Lessons
using the
SMART Board
can grow in an almost
infinite range
of directions*

The SMART Board works as a display – like a monitor – and a mouse all in one friendly unit. On the simplest level, a teacher could use it just like a whiteboard, "writing" on the board surface, with students taking notes. It gets exciting when

teachers call up extended SMART Board software, dragging pictures, maps, clocks, grids or graphs onto the screen with a single gesture. Handwriting can easily be moved around on-screen; with a couple of finger taps, it's converted to print for use in any other program. Even numbers can be read directly

into programs such as Microsoft Excel for instant math and graphing operations.

And because it's all hooked up to a computer, any session can be saved, retrieved later and even made available to students for review or for those who were absent, as TanenbaumCHAT does with its EdLine intranet that parents and students can access from home.

Bringing in SMART Boards, says USDS's Marsha Cohen, "has been so exciting, so motivating for our children." But

perhaps even more, it's been energizing for the teachers.

Noa Schwartz, who teaches Grade 4 and drama at USDS Bayview, calls SMART Boards "a tool... that speaks to all learners." She started out using hers mainly for social science and math, but now uses it in almost every area.

"Imagine having a map of Canada you can interact with, divided into provinces – students are physically moving the shapes... from a puzzle into a fully-formed country. It takes it off the paper, makes it multi-dimensional, tangible for everyone."

The impact has been immediate and gratifying. "There's 100 per cent participation," Schwartz says. "You know through immediate feedback you're being successful."

Even though the system doesn't yet recognize and integrate Hebrew text the way it can with English handwriting, SMART Boards are illuminating ancient paths in Jewish studies at all three schools.

Teachers at TanenbaumCHAT can now easily call up historical maps of Europe and use the SMART Board to draw arrows and superimpose diagrams to illustrate the progress of armies and other often all-too-dry topics.

Continued on page B25

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Orly Mandel, a junior kindergarten student at Bialik, uses the SMART Board to practice her letters.

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Live & Learn

Even technophobes are up to speed

Continued from page B24

Schwartz uses a SMART Board to incorporate Jewish lessons even within secular subjects, displaying e-mailed pictures of modern-day Israel and having students respond

in writing to the images. Another USDS teacher had students "light" Chanukah candles on-screen. "You just click to make every moment teachable," says Schwartz.

"It's permeating our whole curriculum in a really lovely way," says Bialik's principal of general studies, Benji Cohen. "Even teachers who are more reticent about technology are excited," he adds, a sentiment echoed by administrators at all three schools, where even the most concerted technophobes have quickly gotten up to speed. SMART Boards even lighten the load for teachers, letting them share curricula or individual lessons with others across the province and around the world.

"It's a lot of fun — they're very flashy," says Woznica. "When we had our first lunchtime [staff training] session, kids were pressing their... noses up against the glass window."

Still, the nuts and bolts of education remain central. "I don't want you to think they walk in at 9 a.m. and they're

"SMART Boarded" all day long," says USDS's Marsha Cohen. "It doesn't substitute for a book." Instead, she says, teachers "take the best of traditional teaching and marry it to technology... you need a variety of ways to learn to make your day interesting."



United Synagogue Day School Grade 4 teacher Noa Schwartz uses the SMART Board to teach Micaela Lewis about the map of Canada.

Gold believes there's simply no reason to "expect kids who live their lives with television and computers to be excited by technologies that are inferior" to what they can access at home. And if schools meet today's kids' high-tech expectations, the kids can succeed on an amazingly high level.

There is a price tag on those expectations. Outfitting a classroom with a SMART Board system costs between \$700 and \$3,400; the lower end doesn't include a projector and neither price includes a computer to run the system (it can work with either a PC or Macintosh).

Finding the money can be tough for Jewish schools, which are constantly, as Benji Cohen says, "trying to fund dual curricula with single budgets." For Bialik, he says it was a matter of getting all stakeholders on board: "Fitting expensive technology in

isn't easy... [but] everyone recognizes SMART Boards as a priority."

USDS's Marsha Cohen agrees that buy-in on every level has been essential. "Parents in the extended USDS family have helped us in a significant way in fundraising... our ultimate goal is to have a SMART Board in every classroom from early years to middle school."

By investing in the technology a few SMART Boards at a time, schools avoid the cost of a full-scale roll-out and stagger the whiteboards' eventual obsolescence. Plus, as TanenbaumCHAT's Woznica points out, each year's models will likely be more powerful and capable. "The potential for this as a learning tool is just tremendous," she says. "We've just begun to scratch the surface in terms of what it can do."



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Contact: Names Rabbi Benjamin Hecht
Title: Founding Director
Tel: 416-630-0588 Fax: 905-882-5867
Website: www.nishma.org
Email: mail@nishma.org
NISHMA is a Torah research, resource and educational endeavour distinguished by its commitment to the Halachic spectrum, its fastening of individual inquiry and its critical investigation of contemporary issues - all to the goal of furthering the development of "a wise and understanding people."

THE LODZER CENTRE CONGREGATION

12 Heaton Street,
Toronto, Ontario M3H 4Y6
Contact Name: Sarah Senior
Title: Office Manager
Tel: 416-636-6665 Fax: 416-636-8861
Email: lodzercentre@rogers.com
The Lodzer Centre Congregation, 12 Heaton St., is a modern-Conservative synagogue offering interesting and topical educational programs for adults as well as a vibrant Bar and Bat Mitzvah program for families. The Adult topics are always interesting and always stimulating. Call the office today to find out what's happening. 416-636-6665

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180 Steeles Ave. W.,
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E-mail: batnerbookstore@yahoo.com
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COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

JEWS FOR JUDAISM

Mail to: 2795 Bathurst St., P.O. Box #41032
Toronto, Ont. M6B 4J6
Outreach Centre: Main Exchange Plaza,
800 Steeles Ave. W. (at Bathurst)
Executive Director: Julius Glas
Education Director: Rabbi Michael Skobac
Tel: 905-761-0040 Fax: 905-761-0070
E-mail: toronto@jewsforjudaism.org
Website: www.jewsforjudaism.org
Jews for Judaism is an international organization dedicated to accelerating the multi-million dollar efforts of numerous missionary and cult groups that target Jews for conversion. We are also dedicated to connecting Jewish people to the spiritual depth and profound wisdom of Judaism. Jews for Judaism accomplishes these goals through an extensive variety of free educational programs, materials and counseling services.

NA'AMAT CANADA

272 Cordell Ave.,
Toronto, Ont. M3H 3X2
Tel: 416-636-5425 Fax: 416-636-5248
E-mail: na'am@bellnet.ca
Website: www.naamat.com

A dynamic fighter for women's rights in Israel and Canada. Na'amat Israel, with 350,000 members, has dramatically affected the lives of women by providing child care, high schools, shelters and counselling centres for family abuse and legal advocacy clinics. In Canada, Na'amat sponsors Bialik Hebrew Day School, Camp Gesher, Habonim-Dror Zionist Youth Movement, a Gender Aid Advisory Clinic and provides school supplies for children living in shelters.

CONSULTANTS/COUNSELLORS

AMBITIONS EDUCATIONAL CONSULTING

Judy Libman,
44 Strathmore Rd.,
Toronto, Ont. M6C 1R6
Tel: 416-780-0288 Fax: 416-781-3549
E-mail: jlibman@ambitions.ca
Website: www.ambitions.ca
Personal academic counselling for K-12, and post-secondary students. Find the right university or college program in Canada; specialist in US college admissions. Advising for academic problems. Career, graduate and professional school counselling, extensive experience in medical school admissions. Judy Libman is a long-time educator, a consultant to Toronto private schools, and the recipient of York University's highest teaching award.

ASTROFF CONSULTANTS INC.

President: Robert Astroff
250 Heath Street West, Suite 1502
Toronto, Ont. M5P 3J4
Tel: 416-929-6110 Fax: 416-546-1174
Email: info@astroffconsultants.com
Website: www.astroffconsultants.com
Astroff Consultants offers strategic advice throughout the university application process. We assist students gain admission to undergraduate, graduate and professional schools, including medicine, law, business and dentistry in Canada, the U.S. and overseas. Our services also include scholarship assistance, résumé review, and interview simulations designed to secure professional employment.

SCHOOL IS COOL

Bathurst and Wilson area
Contact Name: Glenda Carman-Gray
Title: Social Worker (MSW, RSW) and Educational Consultant
Tel: 416-889-8709
Email: gcarman@rogers.com
"Choosing a child's school is a challenging and sometimes stressful decision. As a social worker with experience in education, I will collaborate with you and help find the right school for your child. I also provide support/counselling to families coping with their children's academic, social, or emotional issues."

DAY SCHOOLS

ASSOCIATED HEBREW SCHOOLS OF TORONTO

Director of Education: Dr. Mark Smiley
Executive Director: Arthur Lande
Administration Office, 252 Finch Ave. W.,
Toronto, Ont. M2R 1M9
Tel: 416-944-7666
Website: www.ogreatschool.com

Beit Hayeled (Nursery, JK, SK)

Vice-Principals: Eynat & Ora Shulman
Tel: 905-889-3998, x2

Kamin Education Centre (Nursery-Gr. 5)
300 Atkinson Ave., Thornhill, Ont. L4J 8A2
Principals:
Kathy Friedman, Sandy Rabinowitz
Tel: 905-889-3998

Posluns Education Centre (Nursery-Gr. 5)
18 Neptune Dr., Toronto, Ont. M6A 1X1
Principal: Eric Golombek
Tel: 416-787-1872

Danilack Middle School (Gr. 6-8)
Hurwich Education Centre, 252 Finch Ave. W.,
Toronto, Ont. M2R 1M9

Principals: Sheldon Diamond, Ruth Portnoy
Tel: 416-944-7666
Associated is a traditional Jewish school offering its students an excellent educational program rich in scholarship and imbued with Jewish values. Associated has a proud history of making Jewish Education accessible, opening its doors to children from across the community and meeting the individual needs of a broad spectrum of learners. For 100 years, Associated gradu-

ates have become leaders in their respective fields and role models to the community.

BIALIK HEBREW DAY SCHOOL

2760 Bathurst St.,
Toronto, Ont. M6B 3A1
Director: Sabina Berczynski
Tel: 416-783-3339
Website: www.bialik.ca
Bialik is open to students from JK to grade 8. In our challenging, multi-language curriculum, students learn Hebrew, English, Yiddish and French, integrating Jewish and general studies. Our scholastic standards are high and ours is a tradition of academic excellence. We offer financial assistance for both preschool and grade school.

ETZ CHAIM SCHOOLS

Dean: Rabbi I. Piner
Menahel Givri's School:
Rabbi M. Givrit
Menahel Maharat Track:
Rabbi Y. Rennert
Directors, Early Childhood:
Mrs. M. Cohen, Mrs. Rivki Goldstein
Executive Director: Mr. Elias Levy

Viewmount Campus

1 Viewmount Ave.,
Tel: 416-789-4366
E-mail: view@etzchaim.com

Patricia Campus Business Office

475 Patricia Ave.,
Tel: 416-225-1187
E-mail: patricia@etzchaim.com

Spring Farm Campus

80 York Hill Blvd.,
Tel: 416-764-6633
E-mail: spring@etzchaim.com

Yeshiva Etz Chaim is dedicated to instilling in its students the foundations for living a Torah observant life and to provide the skills to understand and succeed in today's world in accordance with Torah values and ideals. Etz Chaim strives for excellence in education in all areas of its curriculum. Rooted in tradition with over 90 years of history, Etz Chaim continues to provide its students with the finest Torah and general education in an environment filled with the love of Yiddishkeit and the Jewish people.

FIELSTONE DAY SCHOOL

2999 Dufferin Street,
Toronto, Ont. M6B 3T4
Contact Name: Jonathan Harris
Title: Principal
Tel: 416-487-7381 Fax: 416-487-8190
Website: www.fielstonejewishdayschool.org
E-mail: jharris@fielstonejewishdayschool.org
Fielstone is a unique educational, non-denominational, secular school for students from Junior Kindergarten to Grade Twelve. In our dynamic and nurturing environment, Fielstone builds self-esteem through academic, co-curricular and social success. Our caring and patient approach ensures that each student is given the opportunity to become happy, productive and successful.

KEHILA JEWISH COMMUNITY DAY SCHOOL

215 Cline Ave. North,
Hamilton, Ont. L8S 4A1
Contact Name: Leila Ger-Rogers
Title: Principal
Tel: 905-529-7725 Fax: 905-529-9694
Website: www.kehilajschool.com
Kehila Jewish Community Day School was founded in 1999 and offers the Hamilton area community a progressive Jewish educational environment. We integrate secular studies, the Arts Global Education, and Sports with our Hebrew, Mitzvah and Judaica curriculum to offer our students an enriched and intellectually stimulating program. Kehila is a board-run community Day School and is located in the beautiful Westdale area of Hamilton. We are currently offering programs for grades Kindergarten to Grade 6, adding one grade each year until 2010-2011 for grade 8.

MONTESSORI JEWISH DAY SCHOOL

55 Yeomans Rd.,
Toronto, Ont. M3H 3J7
Principal: Regina Lukja
Tel: 416-784-5071 Fax: 416-784-2049
3 reason to attend MJDS
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3. Self-paced, orderly and serene non-competitive environment facilitated by one-on-one guidance from teachers.

NETIVOT HATORAH DAY SCHOOL

The Jack & Anne Weinbaum
Education Centre
Head of School: Dr. Ruven Stern
North Campus: (Nursery-Gr. 8)
18 Atkinson Avenue,
Thornhill, Ont. L4J 8C8
Tel: 905-771-1234 Fax: 905-771-1807
www.netivot.com

South Gan Campus: (Nursery, JK, SK)

Located at Shaarei Shomayim
Congregation
470 Glenview Avenue,
Toronto, Ont. M5N 1V8
Tel: 905-771-1234 Fax: 905-771-1807
Netivot Hatorah offers a challenging and exciting curriculum to Grade 8 and General Studies from Nursery to Gr.8. Netivot Hatorah is committed to addressing the social and intellectual needs of each child in an atmosphere imbued with Torah, Israel and Derech Eretz.

OR HAEMET SEPHARDIC DAY SCHOOL

7026 Bathurst St.,
Thornhill, Ont. L4J 8K3
Principal: Sarah Wasserman
Tel: 905-669-7653 Fax: 905-669-5138
Provides a Torah education in accordance with Sephardic Jewish practice, and a quality Hebrew, French and General studies curriculum. Full day preschool to Jr. High (1/2 day JK only). Our impressive new campus featuring a Beth Midrash, pool, gym, high-tech computer and modern science labs, contributes to enhancing the students' overall school experience.

PAUL PERHA DOWNTOWN JEWISH DAY SCHOOL

750 Spadina Ave., Miles Nadal JCC,
Toronto, Ont. M5S 2J2
Principal: Janet Nish-Lapidus
President: Aviva Rojisky
Tel: 416-928-3537 Fax: 416-533-7471
E-mail: paulperha@rogers.com
Website: www.djds.ca

The Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School is Toronto's only Jewish Day School located in the heart of downtown at the Miles Nadal JCC. We are committed to academic excellence, creative and artistic expression, and the development of critical thinking skills. Our enriched and integrated curriculum weaves together Jewish and general facets to develop a meaningful Jewish identity. Registering now for SK to Grade 8: Our Grade 7 & 8 Middle School welcomes students with or without prior Jewish education. Subsidies and personalized loans available.

THE LEO BAECK DAY SCHOOL

Director: David Prashker
Tel: 905-709-3636 Fax: 905-709-1999
North Campus, 366 Atkinson Ave.,
Thornhill, Ont. L4J 8C9
Principal: Jan Lapedus
South Campus, 1950 Bathurst St.,
Toronto, Ont. M5P 3K9
Principal: Eric Petersel
A Reform Jewish day school; sensitive to the educational needs of all students; providing for individual learning styles; music, art, drama and computers enrich a curriculum integrating Hebrew/Judaic and general studies. Students are prepared to be knowledgeable, practicing Liberal Jews and contributing Canadian citizens. Leo Baeck is a candidate IB World School.

THE TORONTO HESCHEL SCHOOL

819 Sheppard Ave. W.,
Toronto, Ont. M3H 2T3
Principal: Ms. Gail Baker
Tel: 416-583-1876 Fax: 416-635-1800
E-mail: info@torontoheschel.org
Website: www.torontoheschel.org
The Toronto Heschel School, an Ontario EcoSchool, offers a challenging, innovative and integrated curriculum. Children are taught to think creatively and consider global, environmental and Jewish issues through a Jewish lens. Small classes and low student/teacher ratios ensure high academic achievement within a positive and nurturing learning environment. Inspiring Jewish Students to Make a Difference.

UNITED SYNAGOGUE DAY SCHOOL

Administration House: 3072 Bayview Ave.
Admissions Coordinator: Rosemary Tite
Bathurst Campus, 1700 Bathurst St.
Bayview Campus, 3080 Bayview Ave.
Tel: 416-224-8737 ext. 137
Fax: 416-225-9101
E-mail: rosemary.tite@usds.ca
Website: www.usds.ca
USDS offers a program of academic excellence from nursery to grade 8. Integrated general and Jewish studies programs emphasize advanced technology, creative arts, music, and

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EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

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3788 Woodbine Ave.,
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E-mail: info@budocanokarate.com
Website: www.budocanokarate.com
BudoCan Karate is a traditionally rooted martial arts school dedicated to help students achieve their personal best. Training involves the integration of Mind, Body and Spirit with practical and fun self discipline and self defence training for kids aged 6-60 years old.

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57 Langley Place,
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Contact Name: Lea Young
Title: Feldenkrais Practitioner
Tel: 905-881-1445

105-125 Shelborne Ave., Toronto, Ont. M6B 2M8

Contact Name: Kari Isaacson
Title: Feldenkrais Practitioner
Tel: 647-223-6627
The Feldenkrais® Method of Somatic Education uses gentle innovative movement techniques to stimulate new neural connections. Students enhance their ability to learn, not only to be taught. Feldenkrais focuses on what's possible, rather than what's difficult for the student. Students can improve their focus and learning capacity.

THE RENAISSANCE YOUTH SINGERS

At the Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue, 55 Yeomans Rd.,
Toronto, Ont. M3H 3J7
Artistic Director: Susan Michaels
Tel: 416-449-2296
E-mail: susan.michaels@rogers.com
Website: www.renaissancechoirs.com
Considered to be "The Musical Voice of Jewish Youth," the auditioned choristers of this multi-award winning, pluricultural choir earn community service hours when they enhance community programming throughout the GTA and on tour. During weekly rehearsals, students develop vocalization and musicianship skills, along with self-confidence and the essential of community service.

HIGH SCHOOLS

TANENBAUMCHAT

(The Anne & Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto)
Director of Education:
Paul J. Shevitz, M.A. Phil

South Campus, 200 Wilmetton Ave.,
Toronto, Ont. M3A 5J8
Tel: 416-636-5984 Fax: 416-636-7717
E-mail: info@tanenbaumchat.org

Kimel Centre: 9600 Bathurst Street

Vaughan Ont. L6A 3Z8
Tel: 905-787-8772 Fax: 416-787-8773
Email: info@tanenbaumchat.org
Toronto's Community High School (1,500 students, Grades 9-12) providing courses leading to university entrance. We operate two parallel campuses. A comprehensive Jewish Studies program is an integral part of our school including a community service requirement. Our reputation is based on individual care for every student. We offer an extensive program of sports and extra-curricular activities. Please visit our website www.tanenbaumchat.org - be sure to click on The CHAT Experience.

CANADIAN INSTITUTE FOR SUMMER EXPERIENCES

7000 Bathurst St.,
Thornhill, Ont. L4J 7L1
Contact Name: Dana
Tel: 905-761-6279 x 35
Fax: 905-761-9115
A summer of fun, touring and learning. Classes in traditional classroom settings while touring 8 courses, inspected by Ontario Ministry of Education. "U" and "M" level credits can be used on Ontario University/College applications and applied towards community service hours. Experience South Africa, Israel, Gibraltar, Ukraine, Germany, Switzerland, Spain, Italy, Poland.

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37 Southbourne Avenue,
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Contact Name: Wendy Steinberg-Himmel
Title: Pre-School Program Director
Tel: 416-633-3255 Fax: 416-635-1629
Website: www.adathisrael.com

Adath Israel Nursery School provides a nurturing learning environment that supports the growth of the whole child: socially, emotionally, physically, cognitively, spiritually and creatively, with a focus on Jewish values, traditions and holidays. Nursery for 3 yr. olds - 5 mornings. Pre-nursery for 2 yr. olds - 2, 3 or 5 mornings. Registration open for September 2008.

BETH SHOLOM SYNAGOGUE
1445 Eglinton Ave. W.,
Toronto, Ont. M6C 2E6
Contact: Barbara Lev
Tel: 416-783-0833
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MEMORAH NURSERY
4300 Bathurst St.,
Downsview, Ont. M3H 3B4
Administrator: Helen Dodick
Tel: 416-638-6910
Fax: 416-631-8383
Menorah Nursery is a place where each child has an opportunity to learn through play with other children, with appropriate toys and materials, and where their mental, emotional, and physical growth is fostered. Choosing Menorah Nursery, assures you that we will provide a warm, stimulating and secure place for your child.

MILES MADAL JC NURSERY SCHOOL
730 Spadina Ave.,
Toronto, Ont. M5S 2J2
Nursery School Director: Cindy Indig
Tel: 416-924-6311 Ext. 119
Fax: 416-924-6447
For Children 2.5 - 5 years. Learn Through Play/Child Directed Philosophy. Art, outdoor play, science, gym, swim, creative movement, cooking. Cognitive enrichment. Nursing staff. Full Day and Extended Day (until 5:30pm) programs available.

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Principal: Bibi Goldberg
Tel: 416-487-3281 Fax: 416-487-5499
Actively participate in your child's education! Help out monthly in your child's classroom and witness their growth and development in our enriched curriculum, including reading and math readiness. Get to know their teachers and friends while experiencing Shabbat, Jewish Holiday Celebrations, Mad Science Programs, Torah, play, science and special Events.

TORAH TOTS PRE-SCHOOL
83 Green Lane,
Thornhill, Ont. L3T 6K6
Contact Name: Goldie Ploukitt
Title: Pre-School Director
Tel: 905-886-0420 Fax: 905-886-0421
E-mail: rebettez@chabadmarkham.org
Website: www.chabadmarkham.org
Torah Tots Pre-School creates a dynamic learning environment for children ages 2.5 years old. Literacy, play, science and yoga are some of our major focuses at Torah Tots. Eternal morals, values and ethics are the core of everything. It's the love of Judaism and not just the knowledge that our students internalize. Torah Tots has been hailed as the best Pre-School in the G.T.A. Come for a tour-you'll find out why!

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

ACADEMY FOR GIFTED CHILDREN - P.A.C.E.
12 Bond Cres.,
Richmond Hill, Ont. L4E 3K2
Director: Barbara Rosenberg
Tel: 905-773-0997 Fax: 905-773-4722
The Academy for Gifted Children - P.A.C.E. provides high-powered learning experiences to challenge bright minds and ensure intellectual growth and achievement, while simultaneously addressing the wide-ranging needs of the child. P.A.C.E. offers a differentiated education, built on greater depth and breadth of instruction, and a more complete approach to learning.

DON VALLEY ACADEMY
4576 Yonge St., Ste. 408,
Toronto, Ont. M2N 6N4
Contact Name: Alex Evans
Title: Principal
Tel: 416-223-7561 Fax: 416-223-0065
Are you concerned with your child's current high school? Are there external factors preventing your child from excelling? Don Valley Academy is committed to building and refining research, time management, and general study skills, while providing a friendly and supportive learning environment. The school has a mission to provide the resources necessary to challenge its students to reach their full potential, and to achieve their academic goals. For further information, please call (416) 223-7561.

FREEMONT ACADEMY
160 Eglinton Ave. East, Ste. 600,
Toronto, Ont. M4P 3B5
Contact Name: Sean Meggeson
Title: Principal
Tel: 416-385-2888
E-mail: info@freemontacademy.com
Website: www.freemontacademy.com
With a total enrolment of 50 students, there is no lack of low overhead. In small classes, we create a positive and motivating environment in which students can work, grow and take risks and they do. In fact, they thrive. School life is informal at Freemont, but it is at the same time structured, stressing academic achievement and co-operation. Student confidence rises in our system along with motivation. Our results speak for themselves: 97% of Freemont students have gone on to the best universities in the country, many earning scholarships. Freemont is making a difference everyday-one student at a time.

THE LINDEN SCHOOL
10 Rosedale Ave.,
Toronto, Ont. M4T 1G5
Head of Admission: Lisa Izsakeley
Tel: 416-966-4406 Fax: 416-966-9736
Our dynamic gift-centred curriculum provides a superior academic program within a closely-knit and nurturing community. Small classes, taught by specialists, combine rigorous academic standards with inquiry-based instruction and experiential learning. Linden offers an array of co-curricular activities including athletics, social justice, drama, music, and arts programs.

THE STERLING HILL SCHOOL
92 Cartwright Ave.,
Toronto, Ont. M6A 1V4
Admissions: Claire Reed
Tel: 416-785-5410, x238 Fax: 416-785-6616
E-mail: admissions@sterlinghill.com
The Sterling Hill School offers a secure environment for the education of boys in mind, body and spirit. Our supportive community and small classes nurture and challenge the students to become independent, self-directed learners and successful contributors. SIS is an independent school for boys from JK-G. 8.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

REENA
Toby & Henry Bette Developmental Centre
9227 Clark Ave. W.,
Richmond Hill, Ont. L4B 9G6
President & CEO: Sandy Kashen
Tel: 905-889-6484 Fax: 905-889-3827
Reena is a non-profit social service agency supporting individuals with a developmental disability and their families through residential and social work programs. Community day, evening, respite and Sunday programs focus on recreation, education, life skill/vocational training, support and leisure. Charitable donations can be made through the Reena Foundation at 905-889-3254, ext. 3033, or toll free 877-324-4141, ext. 3034.

YORK PAEDIATRIC THERAPY SERVICES
10520 Yonge St., Ste. 21,
Richmond Hill, Ont. L4C 1P7
Owner/Director: Rhonda Feldt-Stein
Tel: 905-377-9680 Fax: 905-377-2445
E-mail: yorkpaediatric@rogers.com

Is your child experiencing difficulties with hand-writing, gross and fine motor skills, development, muscle tone, coordination, sensory integration or learning? We specialize in maximizing your child's potential by providing comprehensive assessments and proactive treatment using Handwriting groups/camps, Sensory Integration, Neurodevelopmental Therapy, Meekle and perceptual-motor training. Staff are registered Occupational, Physical and Speech/Language Therapists.

SUPPLEMENTARY SCHOOLS

ADATH ISRAEL CONGREGATIONAL SCHOOL
37 Southbourne Avenue,
Toronto, Ont. M3H 1A4
Contact Name: Linda Schwartz
Title: School Administrator
School Newly Revised Program
Tel: 416-635-5354 Fax: 416-635-1629
Due to popular demand, we have revised our weekly class schedule for the coming school year. Adath Israel will continue to provide quality Jewish education, while addressing the need for greater flexibility in your child's busy week. To quote one of our parents: "The perfect mix of Jewish learning and fun. Our kids liked it so much that we joined the Shul." - Jodie & Neil Moss.

AHAVAT YISRAEL HEBREW SCHOOL
54 Glen Park Ave.,
Toronto, Ont. M6B 2C2
Director: Mrs. Leslie Shapiro
Tel: 416-781-8088 Fax: 416-781-4458
Website: www.avahatysraelhebrewschool.com

Ventura Park Middle School
121 North Blvd., Thornhill
Principal: Mrs. Leslie Shapiro

Newell Thornhill Woods
Stephens Leslie Middle School
3555 Autumn Hill Blvd., Thornhill
York Mills Collegiate Institute
490 York Mills Rd., Toronto
Principal: Mrs. Suri Nulman
Beth Yaakov Elementary School
15 Saranac Blvd., Toronto
Principal: Mrs. Esther Cohen
Provides a creative, enjoyable learning experience for those interested in a once or optional twice a week program. The school, in its 17th year, offers an enriching curriculum of reading, writing, language, prayers, lore and holidays taught from a Traditional perspective. Remedial and enrichment reading programs. Special events include challah baking, Purim Carnival and Passover seder. Affiliated with MERCAZ, the Centre for the Enhancement of Jewish Learning.

BEIT RAYIM SYNAGOGUE AND HEBREW SCHOOL
1118 Centre St., Ste. 209,
Thornhill, Ont. L4J 7B9
Tel: 905-770-7639 Fax: 905-770-5635
E-mail: school@beitrayim.org
Website: www.beitrayim.org
Beit Rayim Hebrew School, located in York Region, builds confidence in young Jews, ready to become active and involved members of the community. Through a dynamic partnership of dedicated teachers, committed parents and motivated youth Beit Rayim students learn by experiencing a curriculum that reflects the values of Conservative Judaism.

BETH SHOLOM HEBREW SCHOOL
1445 Eglinton Ave. W.,
Toronto, Ont. M6C 2E6
Principal: David J. Gendis, RJE
Tel: 416-683-6103, 8225
E-mail: karen@bethsholom.net
Beth Sholom Hebrew School offers small classes, Hebrew language and prayer skills; Judaism, music and outstanding Jewish programming. Enrichment for former day school students; full time special education class for students with special needs and a dedicated professional staff.

BETH TZEDEK CONGREGATIONAL SCHOOL
1700 Bathurst Street,
Toronto, Ont. M5P 3K3
Principal: Elly Bauman
Tel: 416-781-3514 x230
Fax: 416-781-0180
E-mail: congshole@beth-tzedek.org
Beth Tzedek Congregational School is a supplementary school offering an exciting educational experience that encourages family involvement and inspires joy and pride in being Jewish. Classes focus on Hebrew reading, prayer, Bible, holidays and customs, history, and Israel, enabling students to become active, contributing members of the Jewish community.

CONGREGATION DARCHI NOAM
864 Sheppard Avenue West,
Toronto, Ont. M3H 2T5

Director of Youth Education & Programming: Elliott Michaelson
Tel: 416-638-4783
E-mail: elliott@bellnet.ca
Website: www.darchinoam.on.ca
Experience the joy of education at Darchi Noam! Our Reconstructionist community is traditional, egalitarian and inclusive. Our Sunday program starts in Kindergarten and features Torah Values, Prayer and Hebrew, Holidays, Social Action and Israel. For children who want more, our innovative Kesharim Wednesday program introduces Modern Hebrew and Journeys throughout our Past.

DOWNTOWN JEWISH COMMUNITY SCHOOL (c/o Miles Madal JCC)
730 Spadina Ave.,
Toronto, Ont. M5S 2J2
Principal: Joan Schoenfeld
Tel: 416-924-6211 Fax: 416-924-0442
E-mail: joan@djcs.org
Website: www.djcs.org
Community school, 200+ students, providing sense of appreciation, enjoyment in Judaism; weekly classes and programs for Grades 1-10 that emphasize the integration of Jewish tradition in our daily lives. "Adventure Judaism: Education for Jewish Kids Who Want to Stay That Way!" teaches a living Judaism for the 21st Century.

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The University of Ottawa's Vered Jewish Canadian Studies Program is offering the following courses in 2008-2009: Introduction to Jewish Canadian Studies, History of the Jews in Canada, Jewish Canadian Writers (with the Department of English), Canadian Responses to the Holocaust, the Montreal Jewish Community, and Introduction to Yiddish Language and Culture, and the Environment of Modern Languages and Literatures.

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UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, in conjunction with the Foundation for Jewish Camping, will award a \$1,250 incentive grant to any Toronto camper:

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This Week

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Youth groups get together for 'Tikkun Toronto.'

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Teacher puts positive spin on disabilities.

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Passover Food Ideas



Shift into Passover mode with our delicious recipes.

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Arts & Travel

Toronto singer keeps her passion alive.

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Israel branding project targets Toronto

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The government of Israel is partnering with Jewish community organizations in Toronto to improve Israel's image and to get Canadians thinking of the country outside "the narrow prism of the Arab-Israeli conflict."

A two-day "brainstorming" meeting was held last week in Toronto to discuss ways of implementing the Israeli Foreign Ministry's "Brand Israel" program, which will focus on a "more creative, eclectic and yet more accurate picture of Israel," said

Ido Aharoni, founder of the ministry's Brand Israel concept.

Toronto is one of eight markets, including Tokyo and London, selected for the pilot program, he said.

Aharoni was in Toronto last week for the meetings with representatives of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, Canadian Jewish Congress, the Canadian-Israeli Committee, Hillel and Hadasah-WIZO, as well as marketing and public relations specialists with ties

to the Jewish community.

Aharoni said the ministry has conducted market research over the past few years that showed "Israel is viewed solely through the narrow prism of the Arab-Israeli

conflict... Israel's personality is 90 per cent dominated by conflict-related images and some religious connotations," he said. "Those of us who know the brand intimately are disturbed by the divergence of brand

and the perception."

That is compounded by Israelis' own focus on security matters — a concern they express when they travel abroad, reinforcing others' perception of the country.

While security considerations are important to Israel, that does not reflect the totality of the country, Aharoni said.

Other aspects of Israel are worthy of promotion, including its culture and arts; its accomplishments on environmental matters such as water desalination, solar energy and

Continued on page 6

UJA Federation part of long-term initiative



PRESIDENTIAL HOPEFUL AT THE WALL
U.S. Republican party presidential candidate Senator John McCain, right, reaches out to touch the Western Wall during a visit to Israel last week with U.S. Senator Joseph Lieberman, left.

[Israel Sun photo]

Former Montrealer heading into space

BY DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

A former Montrealer is set to blast off in the Discovery space shuttle in May, headed for a six-month stay among the stars at the International Space Station.

In a telephone interview, Gregory Chamitoff made it clear that he could barely wait to finally get into space.

"It is very exciting," he said.

Chamitoff was born in Montreal and lived in suburban Laval until age 10, when he and his family — mother Shari, brother Ken, and late father Ashley — moved to California.

Although he no longer holds Canadian citizenship, Chamitoff, 45, has maintained ties with extended family in the Montreal area and pays occasional visits to the city, the most recent being this winter to attend a

bar mitzvah.

At that event, Chamitoff reconnected with a Montreal first cousin, Stuart Feldman, who had a career as a magician.

"We used to hang around together," Feldman recalled. "I think it's just amazing what Gregory has done."



Gregory Chamitoff

Chamitoff's extensive background in science and at NASA has made him an ideal candidate to don astronaut garb.

The NASA biographical sheet notes that, among other accomplishments, he was around 30 when he earned his PhD in aeronautics and astronautics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Picked by NASA for the "Astronaut Class of 1998," Chamitoff qualified in 2000 for flight assignment as a mission specialist and has since worked in the space station robotics

Continued on page 6

**Shemini-Parah
Candlelighting: 7:22
Havdalah: 8:28**



Canada, Israel sign security declaration — please see page 35

The News in Brief

CANADA

Card Issue Dropped

OTTAWA — The federal privacy commissioner has ended her investigation into Rosh Hashanah greetings sent by Prime Minister Stephen Harper to people with Jewish-sounding last names. Jennifer Stoddard said she dropped the matter because political parties aren't covered by federal privacy laws, Canadian Press reported. Some Jews complained last fall that they re-

ceived the cards at home and wondered how Harper got their names and knew they're Jewish. Others got cards despite being gentiles. Stoddard said she'll probe how parties handle personal data and advise Ottawa on changes to the Privacy Act.

CJC In Swastika Flap

KIRKLAND LAKE, Ont. — Canadian Jewish Congress says it was only seeking information when it wrote recently to Kirkland Lake, Ont.'s town council about the

name of the town's Swastika Avenue. CJC director of community relations, Wendy Lampert, said she wrote council after a "community member" raised the issue with CJC, the *Kirkland Lake Northern News* reported. She asked why council reportedly chose in 1998 to name the street after the infamous Nazi symbol. The town said the name was actually chosen in 1911, years before World War II, and that Swastika, a village that's now part of Kirkland Lake, is 100 years old this year. Lampert said she considers the matter closed.

Cash To Hospital

TORONTO — Walter Arbib, CEO and co-founder of Toronto's Skylark Aviation, gave \$300,000 to a West Bank hospital for needy mothers and their babies, in order to "further the possibility of peace," he told the *Globe and Mail* last week. The Tunis-born Israeli-Canadian gave the money to Bethlehem's Holy Family Hospital, which provides low-cost obstetrical care. It's Arbib's second donation in the West Bank.

Rabbi To Get Degree

TORONTO — Rabbi Elyse Goldstein, the rabbinic director of Kolel: The Adult Centre for Liberal Jewish learning

Israeli Emissary's Apartment Firebombed

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — Three Jewish groups, working in co-operation with police in Providence, R.I., are offering a \$10,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for the firebombing of an apartment belonging to a Jewish Agency emissary.

The Jewish Federation of Rhode Island, the Anti-Defamation League and the Hillel House that serves both Brown University and the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) announced the reward March 17.

Josef Knafo, 24, was sitting in the kitchen of his second-floor apartment at about 1:15 a.m. on March 15 when he heard a bang, police said. He looked outside and saw a Molotov cocktail had hit his three-storey wooden apartment building and caught fire. He then discovered a second, unignited Molotov cocktail that had come in through an open window in his bedroom.

Knafo, an emissary for the Jewish Agency for Israel, works for Hillel serving Brown and RISD. The motive for the attack was unknown.

New York I Love You, which features 12 short love stories. A rabbi raised objections and Karpen quit, saying his community was most important to him.

Israeli Film Honoured

LOS ANGELES — The U.S. gay media watchdog GLAAD, the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, last week awarded its annual prize for outstanding film in limited release to *The Bubble*, an Israeli drama set in Tel Aviv that features a homosexual love affair between an Israeli soldier and a Palestinian. GLAAD was set up during the AIDS crisis to monitor the media for bias against gays.

WORLD

'Husband' Quits Film

NEW YORK — A chassidic actor cast as Natalie Portman's husband quit a movie after his community objected. Abe Karpen, 25, a cabinet salesman and married father of three from Brooklyn, N.Y., filmed a scene March 12 with Portman for



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Head Office: 1500 Don Mills Rd., Ste. 205, North York, Ont. M3B 3K4 Tel: 416-391-1836

Advertising Fax: 416-391-0949
Advertising E-mail: ads@cjnews.com

Editorial Fax: 416-391-0829
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Jewish youths come together for Tikkun Toronto

By **SHERI SHEFA**
Staff Reporter

For the fourth time in as many years, Toronto Jewish youth groups have come together to organize a day dedicated to giving back to the community.

On April 13, an event called "Tikkun Toronto: Jewish Youth Repairing the World One Day at a Time," to be held at Beth Rathom Congregation, will engage more than 150 Jewish young people in community service initiatives throughout the Greater Toronto Area.

"The goal for the event is to get teens involved in the community and instill in them a desire to continue to give back by showing them all of the different ways that one can give back," said Missy Korn, Bnai Brith Youth Organization's (BBYO) program director.

"There is a shadow over community services sometimes. Kids don't think that it's fun, or they don't see the benefits of it, and between myself and the others on the planning committee, we want to show kids, to show Jewish teens, the benefits."

This initiative – funded by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and organized by BBYO, Canadian Young Judea, United Synagogue Youth (USY), Bnei Akiva and Darchei Noam Teens – provides 14 options for the teenage participants to choose from.



Teens take part in last year's Tikkun Toronto program.

For instance, students in grades 8 to 12 can choose to visit the Cummer Lodge Nursing Home to help set up for their Passover celebration. For three hours, the volunteers will help set up the party room with decorations, food and drinks and help bring the residents, who require assistance, down to the party room.

Other options include participating in the Global Day for Darfur Rally, serving ice cream and painting ceramics with the seniors at Extencicare during their ice cream social, and helping to create banners and volunteer packages for the annual Walk for Israel.

Children in grades 5 to 7 can volunteer in an event called "Sustainability Cookie Sweetness, With Some Tie-Dye on the Side."

During their three-hour volunteer session, the students will learn ways to improve the environment, and they'll tie-dye pillow cases that will be donated to those in need.

Parents are also encouraged to participate as supervisors. Teens and parents can register online at www.tikkuntoronto.org.

"The kids go to the website and pick their first, second and third choice, and then they come to Beth Rathom, where it is being held, for an orientation seminar and some ice-breakers," Korn said.

"They'll be divided into different projects, get on buses and go volunteer for three hours. Then they come back to the shul for pizza and a wrap-up."

She said that she hopes this event will offer a range of volunteer opportunities that will benefit everyone involved.

"It fulfils a need in that kids in high school have to do community service hours, but my personal goal for the event is to show teens the wide variety of ways they can fulfil these community service hours," Korn said.

"Hopefully, it'll give them a desire to continue giving back to the community, even if they don't require community service hours... My personal goal for this day is to instill in the teens a desire to give back and to participate in the tikkun olam in general across the world."



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Sometimes the path to treasure begins at the end and leads the seeker backward to the beginning through a golden adventure of discovery and reward.

Such is the case with the last novel written by the Nobel Prize-winning Israeli writer S.Y. Agnon, *Ad Hena*, which The Toby Press has just released in English translation. The book was first published in 1952. Thanks to The Toby Press, it is now accessible to non-Hebrew readers as *To This Day*, translated by the celebrated translator, writer, critic and commentator, Hillel Halkin.

Agnon died nearly four decades ago, in 1970. Because a great deal of the literary terrain of his novels covers the long-gone world of eastern European Jewry, his work is not well known by the younger generation. For readers unfamiliar with the uniquely instructive and culturally artful corpus of Agnon's work, *To This Day* can be the serendipitous entry point.

As in all of Agnon's work, the narrative is far more than light that glistens on its surface. In a comprehensive and analytic introduction to the story, Halkin writes: "*To This Day* turns out to be composed of an intricately woven spider web of inter-connections, every strand of which crosses every other at numerous points."

Told in the dry, droll voice of a relatively young narrator who reminded this reader somewhat of the homespun but sage Depression-era American raconteur Will Rogers, the story is that of a young Jew stranded in Berlin during World War I.

The narrator finds himself in the city as a result of the hostilities. He must wait until the war is over until he can return to his homeland, Palestine. He therefore wanders from one boarding house to another in the war-deprived city looking for lodgings and accommodations.

Agnon was a true master of humour and pathos who fearlessly yet also humbly delved into moral and theological issues. One small example from *To This Day* is

illustrative.

"Once upon a time, there were some Jews from Galicia who came to earn a living in Leipzig because they couldn't make ends meet at home. Their fellow Galicians offered them hospitality and advice, helped set them up in business and welcomed them in their synagogue. The newcomers were happy to have a Galician-style synagogue in Leipzig that relieved them of the need to pray with German Jews who looked down on them as foreigners.

Although the God of Israel is One, the synagogues built in His honour are many. In short, since this isn't the time or place for a lecture on Jewish customs, the Jews

from Galicia prayed in the Galician synagogue in Leipzig and felt at home there. And while this isn't the time for a lecture on Jewish prayer either, the God of Israel may be One and His people may be one, but the same can't be said of their prayer."

Agnon's winking observation about intra-Jewish relations is as biting today as it was more than half a century ago when he wrote it.

Similarly penetrating observations appear on virtually every page. His stories amount to remarkably thoughtful and insightful excursions into Jewish history, folkways, customs, frailties, vanities, sensitivities and fate.

When he received the Nobel Prize for literature in 1966, Agnon described to King Gustav Adolf of Sweden and the many other people assembled at the palace in Stockholm the literary influ-

Meet S.Y. Agnon

ences that affected his writing.

"In my writing, I have been influenced first and foremost by the Bible, Mishnah, Talmud, Midrash and Rashi's commentary on the Bible. The next influences were the medieval halachic commentators, Hebrew poets and philosophers led by Maimonides. I also used to read every book in German that came to hand."

And then, as if explaining to the Swedish king the basis of the universal appeal of his stories and of his writings, he added: "I was influenced by every man and every woman and every child who happened my way, both Jews and non-Jews. The conversations of people, the stories they told, were engraved on my heart, and some of them came up into my pen."

American literary critic Edmund Wilson wrote of Agnon in 1964: "One is quite ready to accept him as a true representative of that great line of Jewish writers that begins with the authors of Genesis."

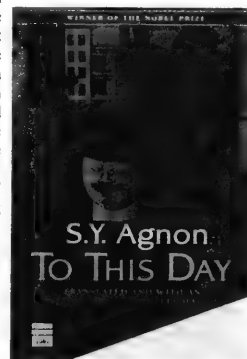
Wilson described Agnon then as "the foremost living Hebrew writer" and "a man of unquestionable genius." Though he lamented that he could not read Agnon in the original Hebrew, he noted that the two books that he had read translated by I.M.

Lask, *The Bridal Canopy* and *In The Heart of the Seas*, "certainly read very well, and even in the alien medium, it is evident that the texture of the writing is distinguished, poetic and strongly personal."

Readers wishing to "meet" S.Y. Agnon for the first time are advised to enter his world through *To This Day*. It is a world most will not wish soon to leave.

—MBD

From the
editor's
desk



See|N

MEXICANS WELCOMED:

Students from Associated Hebrew Schools' Danilack Middle School pose with students from the Atid Jewish Day School in Mexico City, who came to Associated for a 13-day visit. The students from Atid and Associated attended classes together, worked on special arts projects, and took part in an assembly that

included presentations by students of both schools on Canada and Mexico. Atid students also visited the Kortright Centre for Conservation, the Ontario Science Centre, downtown Toronto and Niagara Falls.

Please see perspectives on page 9



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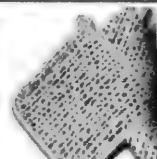
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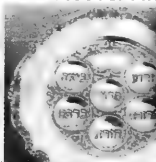
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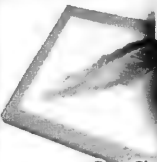
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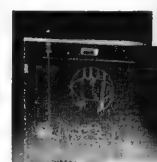
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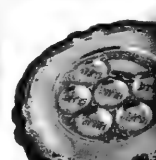
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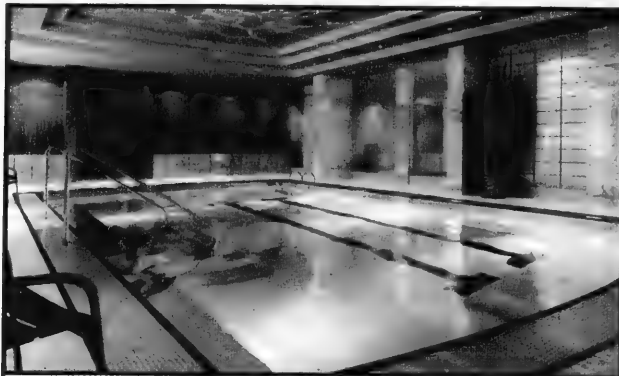


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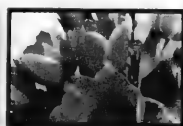
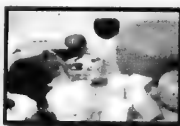
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Greater Toronto Area

'Israel is much more than conflict'

Continued from page 1

clean technology; its high-tech successes and achievements in higher education; and its involvement in international aid, he added.

Getting Canadians – both Jewish and non-Jewish – to see Israel in that light is part of the branding effort. Not only would that change Israel's image, it could lead to more tourism and investment, educational exchanges and other benefits, Aharoni said.

Federation spokesperson Howard Gissin said his organization and other federated communities across the country are committed to supporting the branding initiative and mobilizing the Jewish community behind the effort.

"It's a matter of letting the Jewish community know that Israel is much more than the conflict and the military-diplomatic debate," he said.

"We have the means of information dissemination to be able to turn the brand initiative into reality and turn theory into practice. "We consider this to be an historic enterprise."

Aharoni said the pilot program will likely be launched in the next year or so. He said the branding process is a long-term strategy – it could take decades to change Israel's "persona" – and will include several aspects. It could involve sponsoring a film festival, supporting cultural and sport exchanges, or junkets to Israel for Canadian opinion-makers.

Once a brand is built, it becomes entrenched in the public's mind.

He pointed to the United States, whose image, in large measure, was formed by its entertainment industry, not its foreign policy. Think of Brazil, he suggested, and whether it's soccer or carnival costumes, you're not likely to see the country as the world's crime capital, he said.

As for Canada, the country has "a very strong brand. Canada has a wonderful image in Israel as a multicultural, tolerant, open-minded supporter of Israel."

But unlike Israelis, "the average Canadian does not go to bed at night wondering if he will have a country the next day," he said.

Amir Gissin, Israel's consul general in Toronto, said the branding initiative is still in its early stages, and the slogans, logos and visual representations haven't been determined yet.

"More important are the qualities" that will be promoted.

"Israelis' ingenuity, their passion, fusion, all those qualities Israelis find pride in" could form the brand essence, he said.

At the end of the day, Gissin hopes all major Jewish organizations will support the branding initiative. "The effort we are taking to make Israel more relevant to Canadians does not ask you to compromise or change your political or religious beliefs."

It only asks people "to see what is good and attractive in Israel," he said.

Kinship with Jewish astronauts

Continued from page 1

branch, been the lead CAPCOM (capsule communicator) for the space station's Expedition 9 mission in 2004, and served as crew support astronaut for Expedition 6 in 2002-2003.

For the upcoming mission, officially known as STS-124 – its target take-off date is May 25 – Chaminoff will head up to the space station aboard Discovery as flight engineer and science officer.

Also on board will be the Kibo Pressurized Module (PM), part of a larger Japanese experiment module, the largest module to be placed at the international side of the space station. The module will comprise an entire wing. It is so large that it is being sent up in stages.

Is also this module, Chaminoff said, that will be the source of most of his work. He will spend the six months conducting a series of experiments and ensuring that the module is installed and activated properly.

Upon his arrival at the space station, Chaminoff noted, he will trade places, as

it happens, with another Jewish astronaut, Garrett Reisman, also a flight engineer.

"I think that will be the first time there are two Jewish astronauts in space at the same time," Chaminoff said with a laugh.

In fact, Chaminoff, who is slated to return to Earth on STS-126, admits to a certain kinship with other Jewish astronauts who have flown on shuttle missions before him, including Jeffrey Hoffman, who took a "space Torah" along on a shuttle mission, David Wolf, who spent four months at the Mir space station, and Scott Horowitz.

Earlier, Chaminoff worked and became friends with Israeli astronaut Ilan Ramon when he trained during the late 1990s at the Johnson Space Centre in Houston.

Ramon died a national hero in 2003 when the space shuttle Columbia was destroyed while re-entering the Earth's atmosphere.

"He was a wonderful guy," Chaminoff said.

Kolel lunch to focus on women's movement

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN

Staff Reporter

Although Canadian women are years ahead of their American counterparts when it comes to access to maternity leave and child care, Canadian Jewish feminists lag behind those in the United States, says Sarah Fulford, the new editor of *Toronto Life* magazine.

While Canadian women get year-long maternity leave and government-subsidized day care, Americans face the dilemma of having to leave their children after six weeks to return to work, or to quit working and face financial hardship, she said.

Fulford will be speaking on the challenges and changes in the women's movement, along with the Letty Cottin Pogrebin, author, journalist, social activist and founding editor of *Ms Magazine*, and Rabbi Elyse Goldstein, director of Kolel: The Adult Centre for Liberal Jewish Learning, at a fundraising luncheon for Kolel on May 12 at noon at the recently renovated Darche Noam Synagogue, 864 Sheppard Ave. W.

Fulford said in a conference call that "at a time when

doctors are encouraging new mothers to nurse their babies for at least six months, I am perplexed that American women have not stormed the streets."

Rabbi Goldstein said, however, that with regard to religious life, she is a "rabbi among rabbis after 25 years in Toronto, but there is still a lot of tokenism. Gender definitely plays a role. I often get calls from the media [to discuss various topics] when they realize that they have spoken to a number of religious leaders, but none were women."

Canadian synagogues tend to be established and set in their ways, she said, and not many have considered changing their liturgy to address feminist issues. "In the United States, feminist liturgy is a done deal."

Rabbi Goldstein said she represents a woman who broke through the glass ceiling, "and the challenge now is for [younger women] to change the face [of Jewish institutions]."

Pogrebin said the difficulty lies in the fact that people can't aspire to be what they have not seen. "Somebody has to break through the model."

She said Jewish women need to take pride in their accomplishments. Since the first and only International Jewish

Feminist Conference, held in Jerusalem in 1988, "it became clear that women needed to become included. When we went to the Wall to pray, every woman could feel comfortable."

Anyone who has attended a Passover seder, she said, has heard the story of liberation. "We can also liberate the oppressed."

Rabbi Goldstein noted that women who participated in Sukkah by the Water, a feminist celebration of Sukkot that ran annually in Toronto in the early 1990s, represented all denominations. "Everyone came together. We taught cross-denominational dialogue, because we didn't have much to lose."

She said anyone who attends the luncheon will have a chance to learn "so much from [these women's] inspirational journeys. They are [an] example of the kind of thought-provoking and stimulating experiences Kolel offers."

Pogrebin said Kolel is a marvelous example of how "sparks can fly" in a pluralistic environment.

Funds from the luncheon will go towards Kolel programs. For tickets, call Esther Schlesinger at Kolel, 416-636-1880, ext. 255.



Sarah Fulford



Letty Cottin Pogrebin



Rabbi Elyse Goldstein

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Hypocrite's complaint

US. Vice-President Dick Cheney visited with Israeli and Palestinian leaders last weekend to try to once again breathe some fresh air and forward motion into the limp sails of the peace negotiations between the two sides. Bilateral discussions had slowed down considerably after the Palestinians expanded their campaign of rocket terror into Ashkelon and surrounding areas. Cheney used the occasion to restate and re-emphasize America's commitment to Israel's security and to the creation of an independent Palestinian state.

True to past form, however, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas carped about Israeli behaviour. He criticized Israel's expansion of "settlements" in the suburbs of Jerusalem, the ongoing checkpoints in the West Bank and the military operations targeting Palestinian gunmen. And, of course, he utterly ignored Palestinian behaviour. He seemed little bothered by the constant terror raining down on Israeli civilians from Gaza, the attempted terror from the West Bank and the unceasing incitement against Israel and against Jews from official PA educational and media organs.

In their fourth report on Palestinian educational material, according to JTA, the American Jewish Committee and the Center for Monitoring Peace in the Middle East found little mention of the State of Israel in Grade 11 and 12 schoolbooks and described hatred of the West as a "prevalent theme."

"Many Palestinian children are exposed to a rigid, narrow worldview in which Israel does not exist and Jews are considered subhuman enemies," said AJC executive director David Harris. "A negotiated settlement cannot succeed until Palestinian children are taught to live in peace with their Israeli neighbours."

And worse. Palestinian Media Watch (PMW) reported last week on an "educational" exhibit that depicted Israel burning Palestinian children in a crematorium. Young children are seen standing beside dolls being placed into a model of a crematorium. The exhibit included an oven. Inside the oven, small children are being burned. Another part of the exhibit, PMW reported, was a black platform with the words, "Stop the Israel's Holocausts [sic]."

Such "education" of children is perfidious and a prescription for never-ending war.

But Cheney appeared not be moved by Abbas' finger-pointing. "The U.S. remains strongly committed to the establishment of a Palestinian state," he said. But he continued: "Achieving that [state] will require tremendous effort at the negotiating table and painful concessions on both sides. It will also require a determination to defeat those who are committed to violence and who refuse to accept the basic right of the other side to exist." Rockets and terrorism against Israelis, Cheney pointed out, "do not merely kill innocent civilians. They also kill the legitimate hopes and aspirations of the Palestinian people."

Thankfully, the U.S. government is not swayed by the complaints of a hypocrite.

25 years ago in The CJN

Israel announced that it had decided to share with the United States information it learned about Syria and the PLO during the Lebanon War. It had previously refused to do so for fear the information would find its way to other Arab states, and then to Soviet bloc countries. In return, the United States sold 200 air-to-air missiles to the Israel Air Force.

Editorials & Letters

Dry Bones
YOU'VE GOT TO BE
SMART TO LIVE...

UNDER THE OSLO
PEACE ACCORDS,
TEACHING ARAB KIDS
THAT JEWS ARE THE
EVIL SPAWN OF THE
DEVIL...

IS CALLED
"INCITEMENT"

... AND ACCORDING
TO THE "MODERATES"
IN THE PALESTINIAN
AUTHORITY?

IT'S CALLED
"EDUCATION."

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Don't Close She'arim!

Mourning took place at the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre recently after the closing of the Dr. Abraham Shore She'arim Hebrew Day School was announced to the parents of its students and staff ("She'arim to close its doors in June," CJN, March 20).

Jewish educators created She'arim - meaning "gates" in Hebrew - to accommodate children who are unable to master the skills needed for a dual-language day school program. The school accepts students from all streams.

These students, who failed in regular classrooms, often had behavioural problems that could not be managed by their schools. The program at She'arim enabled them to return to the Jewish day school system within a few years. The learning strategies they acquired gave them the skills and self-confidence to finish high school, to eventually attend colleges, universities and yeshivot, and to obtain professional degrees.

The school's success is in large part due to the fact that the children are removed from their regular schools, environments in which they could not compete.

To close down this unique remedial school will deprive Jewish students and their families of a tried and successful learning environment. This school is staffed by experienced, compassionate educators who would be difficult to replace.

Keep the gates open.

Sara Edell Schaffer Kelman
Toronto

Conservative gov't should be applauded

The United Nations Human Rights Council recently endorsed a resolution by the United Nations condemning Israel for a recent armed incursion into the Gaza Strip that claimed more than 120 lives, many of them civilians. While there were a number of abstentions, only Canada had the courage to vote against the resolution. Included with those countries censuring the Jewish state were China and Russia. Never has the council entertained the question of Russia's brutality against Chechens or China's onslaught against civilians in Myanmar and currently in Tibet. It is also worth noting that Canada withdrew from attending the next UN conference on racism even before Israel decided to withdraw. Today's Canada is a true ally and friend of Israel. The position taken by Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Conservative government should be applauded by the Jewish community.

Bert Raphael
Toronto

Conservative shuls' new siddur

Of course, Rabbi Philip Scheim and his Conservative rabbinical colleagues who have opted for *Siddur Hadash* (Conservative shuls adopt new siddur, CJN, March 6) are free to adopt their liturgical book of choice based their congregations' preferences, and I applaud them for selecting a siddur that includes transliteration. However, the reasons Rabbi Scheim lists for choosing not to use the *Siddur Sim Shalom*, the official siddur of the Conservative Movement, are flawed.

Rabbi Scheim is bothered by *Sim Shalom*'s optional inclusion of the matriarchs in the *Amidah*. This apparent obstacle can be solved by simply choosing to read the traditional liturgy, which is set as the standard text within the siddur. The text, which includes the matriarchs, is on a separate page, allowing congregants and clergy the easy option of turning to the next part of the service.

This, in fact, is part of the beauty of *Sim Shalom*. It allows Conservative congregations of various liturgical practices to remain unified through the same prayer book.

Rabbi Scheim also takes issue with some liturgical changes within the *Sim Shalom*. However, many of these adjustments are also found in the Silverman siddur, previously used by these congregations. Rabbi Scheim complains that the Silverman siddur's English translation is not contemporary and that the siddur does not properly deal with events such as the Holocaust and the establishment of the State of Israel. This is all certainly true, yet a siddur that offers a modern English translation and that speaks about the Holocaust and the State of Israel has been in existence within the Conservative movement for more than 20 years - the *Siddur Sim Shalom*!

Daniel Silverman
Toronto

Chiropractic treatments

I was taken aback by the title "Kids and chiropractic: proceed with caution" (To Your Health, CJN, Feb. 7). I understand the writer's well-intentioned effort to portray both sides of the issue. However, the end result was a distorted picture. There are many studies showing the safety and beneficial health effects of chiropractors adjusting children.

There is also ample scientific evidence showing the safety of chiropractic neck adjustments ("Dangers of chiropractic treatment," CJN letters, Feb. 28). The most recent study, in the journal *Spine*, showed no more increased risk of stroke, whether a person visited a chiropractor or a medical doctor, and that, in general,

the correlative cases of stroke were not causal (i.e., the chiropractor did not cause it).

Shariene Cantor-Bagola
Vaughan, Ont.

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Perspectives

Associated has come a long way

By STEPHEN SPEISMAN

Special to The CJN

In the first decade of 20th-century Toronto, eastern European Jews came to outnumber those from England whose religious life centred around Holy Blossom synagogue. A majority of the Lithuanian, Galician and Polish Jews resided in St. John's Ward, an area bounded by College Street, University Avenue, Yonge Street and Adelaide Street and consisting primarily of dilapidated frame cottages.

Most eked out a living in the garment factories located on Church and Wellington streets, or at Eaton's, adjacent to the Ward. Others peddled goods in the city or in the countryside, or collected discarded materials that they sold to waste processors. A few became bakers or opened second-hand furniture or clothing stores, or sold groceries and confectionery. Life was hard. Toronto was not a welcoming place.

North America had the reputation in Europe of offering economic opportunity, but adverse conditions for the survival of Judaism. Consequently, few qualified teachers immigrated. As a result, Jewish education in Toronto was dominated by *siddur melamdin*, teachers of the prayerbook, who had only an elementary knowledge of Jewish law and the Hebrew language and became teachers because they could not succeed in business. A qualified teacher charged an average of \$2 a month, while a *siddur melamed* could be had for 50 cents, a great attraction to the impoverished Jews of the Ward.

A few opened *chederim* (schoolrooms) in their own homes, but most qualified teachers and charlatans alike offered instruction in their students' kitchens. The synagogues of this period, with the exception of Holy Blossom, did not see education as part of their function. Indifferent parents easily found an excuse to provide their children with no Jewish education whatsoever. As the Jewish population grew, this sorry state became increasingly obvious.

The impetus for a communal Talmud Torah came from Rabbi Jacob Gordon, who had arrived in 1905 to be spiritual leader of Goel Tzedec and Beth Hamidrash Hagadol, the Lithuanian and Russian shuls respectively. He rallied the wealthier *balabatim* (mainstays) of those synagogues in a fundraising effort, and in 1907, he purchased an eight-room house on Simcoe Street immediately west of the Ward. Here they established the Toronto Hebrew Religion School, colloquially known as the Simcoe Street Talmud Torah, modeled on a similar one in Pittsburgh.

The history of the Associated Hebrew Schools had begun.

The plan was to keep tuition low by promoting "membership," regardless of whether a family had a student in the school. Rabbi Gordon combed the city for qualified teachers. Messrs. Madorsky, Steiner, and Greenberg comprised the staff, in addition to Ben-Zion Nathanson, a Lithuanian Hebraist from the United States, who served as principal. Rabbi Gordon also taught occasionally.

The Talmud Torah offered no secular subjects and met after the conclusion of the public school day. Although initially only boys were admitted, the school would later teach girls as well. The curriculum included Bible, Halachah and Talmud.

The philosophy at Simcoe Street reflected Rabbi Gordon's outlook and still characterizes Associated. The school taught traditional Judaism, as well as Zionism and loyalty to Canada, and encouraged secular education and athletics. Only qualified teachers would be engaged, and instruction and conversation in Hebrew were employed.

In Europe, a Talmud Torah was considered an institution only for the poor who could not afford private instruction. Simcoe Street, however, was able to overcome this stigma and attracted even the children of the prosperous simply because of the quality of the education offered. Tuition ranged from \$3 to \$25 a year, but those unable to afford the cost were admitted free. About 100 students attended in

School, popularly called the Brunswick Talmud Torah, continued the afternoon-school operation of Simcoe Street and was envisioned as attracting both Orthodox and liberal Jews, and providing education for adults as well as children. The term "free" school did not mean that

there was no tuition, but rather that no ideology other than traditional Judaism was emphasized. The athletic facilities would be shared by the YMHA, which then rented

quarters at the corner of College and Brunswick and in the next decade would build on the north side of the Talmud Torah.

At first, Brunswick Avenue was an unequalled success. By 1926, the school had expanded to include a junior high school, and a number of local teachers disbanded their own *chederim*

CELEBRATING 100TH ANNIVERSARY



An affiliated class of the Associated Hebrew Schools in 1942 at Shaarei Shomayim

the early years; their number increased as the Jewish population grew. It was intended that the school would serve the broad spectrum of the community rather than those from any particular European country.

By the end of World War I, the bulk of the Jewish community was moving westward out of the Ward, primarily to streets between McCaul and Bathurst streets.

Prosperous professionals and manufacturers located on Beverley Street and later on Palmerston Boulevard, storekeepers in the developing Kensington Market, and along College Street. Although the Talmud Torah now had almost 250 students, enrolment was declining because Simcoe Street was now remote from the majority of potential students. Even so, the school was uncomfortably overcrowded. In 1917, Rabbi Gordon, together with Louis Levinsky, who had been president since the institution's inception, embarked on a personal fundraising campaign that enabled the purchase of property on Brunswick Avenue north of College.

After much debate, and committee visits to New York and Philadelphia, Benjamin Brown, Toronto's first practising Jewish architect, was hired to design a state-of-the-art facility that could also serve as a Jewish community centre, although the school board initially declined to permit use of the building for this purpose.

Opened late in 1925, the building included 15 classrooms able to accommodate 800 students, a 1,300-seat auditorium-banquet hall, fireproof concrete flooring, a gymnasium, and other recreational facilities. The Toronto Hebrew Free

and joined the faculty. Nevertheless, Brunswick was never able to eliminate private instruction, congregational schools or the multitude of *chederim*. Furthermore, secularist parents objected to the religious bent of the school and enrolled their children in the various secular Jewish schools that had been established in the city. Simcoe Street remained open until 1928, when its classes merged with Brunswick.

The Depression of the 1930s took its toll on the Hebrew Free School. Enrolment, which stood at more than 400 in 1932, began to decline, and its deficit increased, despite an attempt to use profits from the supervision of kosher meat to subsidize the school. By 1935, the school was unable to cover the teachers' salaries. The Talmud Torah hung on for 12 weeks while the teachers continued to work without pay. Ultimately, it had to declare bankruptcy and close. Planning and fundraising efforts by prominent members of the community, which would result in the creation of the United Jewish Welfare Fund, permitted the school to reopen after nine weeks as the Jewish Centre of Educational and Communal Activities. Fortunately, the building was up to the challenge.

By the early 1940s, many in the Jewish community were confident enough in their position in Canadian society to no longer fear that a day school education would hamper students in their future careers. Consequently, an all-day kindergarten was opened at Brunswick Avenue, with Toby Taback as its first teacher. Another grade would be added each year to offer both the public school curriculum and Jewish studies. The first

Grade 1 class had 25 students. This department was named the Toronto Hebrew Day School. However, afternoon classes continued.

The 1940s saw the development of a system of affiliated afternoon branches in various parts of the city as the Jewish population began to spread out. Designated the Associated Hebrew Schools, it was the brainchild of Dr. Levi Jacober, principal at Brunswick, and Samuel A. Kurtz, its executive secretary. It included Bais Yehuda Synagogue (Dovercourt Road and Bloor Street), Euclid Avenue Talmud Torah, Shaarei Shomayim Congregation (then on St. Clair Avenue) and a Spadina Road branch at Hawarden Public School in Forest Hill. The goal was to provide uniform standards and shared staff. Average tuition was \$6 per month for the afternoon classes and \$84 a year for the day school.

By the early 1950s, it was evident that the Jewish population was moving northward, especially along Bathurst Street. Despite a huge deficit, sod was turned for a new school at Bathurst and Neptune Drive in the spring of 1955. With 60 classrooms, an auditorium/synagogue, science labs and a gymnasium, the school welcomed students from the three major strands of Judaism, reinforcing the philosophy of a seamless peoplehood and Zionism. Associated now represented one of the largest day-school systems in North America. It soon outgrew the Neptune building, necessitating its enlargement and the renting of facilities at area synagogues.

As the demographics of the Jewish community changed over the next 15 years, Associated struggled to keep up, with portables at Neptune, and a new school at Finch and Bathurst in 1972. A perceived shift of Jews to the city's northeast in the early 1980s led the school to purchase a 15-acre site on Leslie Street south of Steeles Avenue. The result was a splendid 150,000-square foot building planned to accommodate 1,200 students and offer cultural and athletic facilities to the Jewish community. Although the Jewish population continued to grow in the northeast, young families with school-aged children tended to locate close to the Bathurst Street corridor.

Thus, through the good offices of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, land was acquired on Atkinson Avenue in Thornhill and the Leslie Street building was eventually sold. The Neptune branch was demolished and a smaller building was erected on part of the site.

As Associated celebrates its centenary, the institution flourishes far beyond what could have been imagined by its founders. It has continued to remain true to its founding principles: the provision of excellence in both Jewish and secular education, adherence to tradition, and the promotion of a wide community outlook, as well as a love of Israel and the Hebrew language.

Over the past century, Associated Hebrew Schools has demonstrated a willingness to accommodate changing demographics and the needs of a growing, modern Jewish community. It is no surprise that many of its graduates have come to hold positions of leadership in various parts of our community.

Stephen Speisman is the author of *The Jews of Toronto: A History to 1937*. He was the founding director of the Ontario Jewish Archives and is a former executive director of Toronto Hebrew Memorial Park.

Opinions

Musings on marriage

March 27 is my anniversary. Forty-three years! That sounds like a lot in these divorce-happy times. People don't stick together for long — they're afraid of commitment or growing apart, or they're just plain unable to be faithful. Some say that marriage to one person was never meant to last so long. As we gain in the longevity battle, we seem to lose in the marital one.



Norma Baumei Joseph
in Montreal

In my crowd, that number — 43 — is not so unusual. Most of us have been married to the same partner for that many years or more. Our parents, too, were among the longtime married.

Yet we are aware of our surroundings — we know that we're statistical anomalies. I have no idea why we were able to make it last while others were not. I have no clue as to why we chose well, or even if we chose well, or if we just stubbornly made it work.

Perhaps it was a bit of both. I do know that most of us married young and worked hard to stay that way.

It was never easy. We didn't ride off into the clouds of wedded bliss. We fought and bickered and struggled. But we learned to trust and cleave and love.

To a certain extent, we grew up together. I know I did. I got married in my third year of university. I was, in large part, unformed. My husband and I jointly became adults.

We informed each other and learned to depend on each other. It wasn't easy, but in some ways, early seems good in this day and age.

I know the current wisdom is that later is better. Let them grow up, get a career, know their minds. But that leads to a maturity that is sometimes inflexible, apprehensive, distrustful and incapable of compromise. Perhaps the ability to share bedroom space is vitiated by living alone for too long.

Obviously, no equation works for everyone. And who are we to judge? In some communities, later is better. In others, early works. In some, a shadchan is mandated. In others, open-market meeting is the rule. In each case, we hope we meet the right person and that it lasts. We hope it works.

But if it doesn't, thank God there's such a thing as divorce. Marriage is great if it works. It's awful if it doesn't. There's no shame in admitting that it's failed. Just make sure you give it your best shot. When necessary, get out and look again.

That's the humanity in Judaism.

If some people pervert its basic sensitivity by holding women hostage to male divorce control, they pervert God's law and we're all to blame for being complicit. No one should sit idly by while this happens, for it demeans our religion, rabbis and community.

Happy anniversary!

My chance to mould young minds

Some months ago, I wrote a column about a social studies textbook being used in B.C. classrooms that contained a pernicious sidebar about the modern State of Israel.

Recently a class using that very textbook came to our synagogue to learn about Judaism and the Jewish community — 500 Grade 8 students whose contact with living Jews was minimal, if they had experienced any at all.

What could I say that would put what they might have read into some context?

The class was a study in the demographics of British Columbia's Lower Mainland, with students whose families came from Asia, from the Indian subcontinent, from eastern Europe — indeed from all over the world. Many, but not all, were Christians, but others were Sikh, Hindu and probably Muslim.

We were given a generous 40 minutes in which to discuss Judaism and the local Jewish community. This required condensing 3,800 years of the development of modern Judaism, plus giving a brief overview of how the local community functions.

Given the impossibility of such a task, what was a girl to do?

I hoped that those familiar with the Christian Bible would relate to the stories of Abraham, Jacob and Joseph, the saga of Moses (they had prepared by watching the

film *The Prince of Egypt*) and the Exodus, but after that, I expected that there would be a wilderness of ignorance. Maybe some had heard about the kings of Israel, but beyond that, nothing.

For those who didn't have one of the three western monotheistic religions as part of their backgrounds, we would have to start from scratch.

I started with the founders of the Israelite nation, Abraham and Sarah, and the beginning of monotheism. I described slavery in Egypt and the central importance of the Exodus story — that gave me a chance to talk about Passover and national liberation. I talked about the entry into the land of Israel and how the land of Israel, central to Judaism, at one time housed the Temple in the capital, Jerusalem, and how the present State of Israel has been reborn as a modern nation.

I was able to compare the idea of Judaism as a religion based on a code of laws to Islam, which also requires a commitment to a system of laws regulating private and communal life. I described the role of the rabbi as scholar, teacher and moral authority, noting that Judaism has no sacraments similar to Christian communion and no priesthood.

I talked about kashrut and the respect it engenders for animals. I described home-based holidays (e.g., Passover and Chanukah) and the solemn synagogue-based services on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. The students

had a chance to see the Torah scrolls in the ark and to look into the prayer book at the *Shema*, which I likened to our basic creed.

Then I waited for the questions.

They wanted to know why the boys had to wear kippot and what they signified, and whether girls and boys had the same responsibilities. I noted that had they themselves been Jewish, they would have celebrated a bar or bat mitzvah at the ages they are now (12 and 13).

Why did we practise animal sacrifice? The question offered me the chance to assure them that today's Judaism is not to be found in the biblical account alone, but in the rulings of the rabbis, and that following the destruction of the Temple 2,000 years ago, we no longer worshipped in the same fashion, but in the synagogue, having replaced sacrifice with prayer.

And then came the big one: do Jews believe that Jesus was the Messiah?

Finally, I had the chance then to talk about the Jewish idea of the messianic era, the time of peace and universal harmony.

Whatever they knew, or thought they knew, about Jews and Judaism (and I'm sure some of them harboured more than a little prejudice), this was a chance to really engage their ideas about justice — on which teens are very, very strong — and Judaism's commitment to a future just society.

Whatever else they came away with, I can only hope I gave them positive insight into a religion that they knew very little about. At least it was a start.



Jean M. Gerber
in Vancouver

In support of Canadian Jewish Congress

Articles strongly criticizing the work of the Canadian Jewish Congress, by Laura Rosen Cohen and Colby Cosh, recently appeared in the *National Post*.

Cohen would have Congress address issues of essentially minor parochial concern of little interest in serving the long-term interests of our community.

Cosh focused on Congress' long-time support of anti-discrimination laws and the human rights commissions that administer those laws, as well as Congress' support of the hate propaganda provisions in the Criminal Code. He described Congress as a member of the "anti-hate community." It is hard to understand why any right-thinking Canadian would not be proud to be a member of a so-called anti-hate community.

Although I work with Congress as a member of its newly elected board of directors, I am not an apologist for Congress. In fact, board members are often Congress' greatest critics. However, I am both assured and impressed that the CJC as a national Jewish organization is expending its energy in positive, progressive and forward-looking ways in order to serve the interests of Canadian Jewry and Canadian society at large.

Traditionally, the social action agenda of Congress has addressed important issues that affect society at large and those who are marginalized, including issues relating to the disabled, victims of poverty or injustice.

Congress has a long history of involvement in the development of ground-breaking fundamental legislation. CJC had a major role in the

development of legislation combating discrimination in employment, housing and public services, dating back to the origins of the Ontario Human Rights Code. In the 1960s, Congress' work with groups such as the Jewish Labour Committee and the Ontario Black Coalition led to the development of the code led the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

Congress also served as an advocate in the development of anti-hate propaganda legislation, which led to the amendments to the Criminal Code.

More recently, Congress has addressed a potpourri of legal issues of concern to the Jewish community. These include legal proceedings related to the deportation of war criminals, the prosecution of those who propagate hate, and measures to assist Jewish Canadians improperly prosecuted or imprisoned in foreign lands.

CJC has consistently viewed anti-hate propaganda legislation as providing a "fence of protection" for vulnerable minorities, given that history has demonstrated that hateful words can lead to hateful actions.

With the dark experience of the Holocaust etched into our very fabric, we, as a community, are particularly sensitive to the heart-rending hardships suffered by those in Darfur and elsewhere in the world. In furtherance of our Jewish values, we remain aware, vigilant and responsive to similar injustices and human suffering wherever they occur.

Congress supports the preservation and enhancement of Canada's many multicultural and multi-ethnic communities. It works closely with other segments of our society in

order to foster mutually beneficial relationships and to support the aspirations of other segments of the Canadian population. This has included meetings with members of Canada's Muslim community, First Nations communities and others.

Congress has also been concerned with cutting-edge issues that confront Canadian policymakers, such as immigration, the funding of religiously based private schools and a host of issues dominating the contemporary political agenda. The CJC has been involved with the reasonable accommodation debate in Quebec, which affects those who wish to observe particular minority religious practices. Another important debate relates to the applicability of religiously based law such as Halachah or sharia in family-law-related issues versus the desire that all persons be treated equally under the law. And, of course, Congress deals with the ever-looming threat of anti-Semitism.

Other Jewish organizations are also dedicated to the achievement of similar goals, but in representing the various organized Jewish communities across Canada, Congress plays a major, leading role in addressing these objectives.

The leadership of Congress rests in the hands of dedicated individuals who, like Congress itself, are committed to ensuring the well-being of Canadian Jewry. Congress is not immune from informed criticism or constructive suggestions. But this vital organization should be supported and lauded for its enlightened, effective and strategic advocacy in support of our community interests and in support of a better Canada for all.



Gerald L. Goll
in Edmonton

The Kirshner File

Israel as portrayed in Hollywood movies

How have Hollywood feature films portrayed Israel? Israel will soon mark 60 years of statehood, so now is as good a time as any to consider this question. To get a handle on the subject, I borrowed three "oldies" — *The Juggler*, *Exodus* and *Cast A Giant Shadow* — and one fairly new film, *Munich*, from Brahm Goldfarb at the Toronto Jewish Media Centre.

The Juggler, directed by Edward Dmytryk and produced by Stanley Kramer, was released in 1953 and stars the masculine Kirk Douglas as a German Jewish Holocaust survivor who's haunted by the murder of his family. Shot in black and white, the film opens in 1949 as a boatload of refugees, wearing hats and scarves, arrives in Haifa. They are then transported to a camp near the Mediterranean Sea. Hans Muller (Douglas), a juggler and ventriloquist, is among the new arrivals. He is torn by the recent past. He relishes the illustrious career he had as an entertainer in pre-Nazi Germany, but is wracked by guilt because he did not leave when it was still possible. Muller is warmly welcomed to Israel, yet a camp official makes it clear that his skills are irrelevant in a raw, somewhat underdeveloped country suffering from food shortages. Observing Muller's erratic behaviour, a doctor prescribes psychiatric treatment.

Feeling under-appreciated, Muller leaves the camp, passing himself off as an American as he heads to Haifa. There, he has an altercation with a police officer and meets Yehoshua (Joseph Walsh), a bright-eyed orphan whose parents were killed by the Nazis. They trade Hebrew words and phrases as they walk — yes walk — to Nazareth. Yehoshua is wounded when he stumbles into a minefield, and kibbutzniks tend to him. Muller, meanwhile, attracts the attention of Yael (Milly Vitale), a young woman smitten by his good looks. Eventually, Muller comes to realize that Israel is his home and that he

has nothing to fear.

A workmanlike movie with fine performances, *The Juggler* portrays Israelis as tough and practical idealists and Israel as an austere land besieged and threatened by Arabs.



Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Exodus, a pro-Zionist blockbuster directed and produced by Otto Preminger and adapted from the pulp novel by Leon Uris, hit theatres in 1960. The young Paul Newman depicts Ari Ben Canaan, a dashing but bitter Sabra of Russian origin sent to Cyprus by the Haganah in 1946. His task is to smuggle Jewish refugees to Palestine (which is still controlled by Britain). His British foes are a mixed lot. Sutherland (Ralph Richardson), a general based in Cyprus,

is somewhat sympathetic to the plight of these Jews. Major Caldwell (Peter Lawford), his snotty and casually anti-Semitic assistant, claims that Sutherland is descended from Jews. Kitty Freemont (Eva Marie Saint), a Presbyterian nurse from Indiana whose husband was killed in Palestine while on duty as a news photographer, is on a visit to Cyprus. At Sutherland's suggestion, she volunteers her services at a detention camp brimming with refugees. Yet she feels "strange" among Jews. In the camp, she meets Karen (Jill Haworth), a strikingly blonde Jewish orphan whom she hopes to adopt and take to the United States.



Kirk Douglas in *Cast A Giant Shadow*

Exodus' sub-themes are set in Palestine. Ari and Kitty fall in love against the backdrop of violence. Dov Landau (Sal Mineo), a pugnacious Auschwitz survivor, joins the Irgun and helps blow up a wing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem. After he is caught and imprisoned in Acre prison, Ben Canaan and his commandos try to free him and his fellow freedom fighters. Ideological tension erupts between Landau's Irgun mentor, Akiva (David Opatoshu), and Ari's father, Barak, (Lee J. Cobb), a mainstream Zionist. Taha (John Derek), a Palestinian

Arab who has known Jews all his life and lives next to a youth village to which has donated land, must decide where he stands as the United Nations partitions Palestine and Israel declares statehood.

Like *The Juggler*, *Exodus* portrays Palestinian Jews sympathetically, and quaintly enough, they are referred to simply as "Palestinians."

Exodus, whose musical score is mesmerizing, is a marathon, clocking in at 208 minutes. Although it is epic in scale, with performances to match, it clearly could have benefited from tighter editing. It ends on a sanguine note as Ari expresses the hope that Jews and Arabs can coexist.

Cast A Giant Shadow (1966), directed by Melville Shavelson, is based on Ted Berkman's biography of the Jewish war hero David Daniel (Mickey) Marcus, Israel's first general. A West Point graduate, a lawyer in civilian life and a desk soldier in World War II who nonetheless participated in the Normandy invasion and then played a role in the Nuremberg war crimes trials, Marcus was recruited by the nascent state of Israel as a military adviser to the Haganah. In tragic circumstances, he was fatally shot by an Israeli sentry.

The film, 138 minutes in length, starts in New York City in December 1947 as Marcus hurries to an appointment and is intercepted by a persistent Haganah emissary. Marcus (Kirk Douglas), an assimilated Jew, is reluctant to join the cause and, like his wife, believes that the Jews stand no chance of defeating the Arabs. But he finally relents, saying, "Someone has to help them fight back." Israel's chances of surviving the expected Arab onslaught are slight. A U.S. army officer Marcus consults spells out his views graphically. This "pipsqueak nation" is going to be "blown off the map," he predicts. Marcus, arriving in Palestine under the pseudonym of Michael Stone, gets a foretaste of things as his airport bus is raked by Arab machine gunfire. He also meets Magda (Senta Berger), a gutsy soldier with whom he will fall in love.

Cast A Giant Shadow, which artistically is a better film than *Exodus*, unfolds against the backdrop of the Normandy landing, Arab-Israeli battles and Marcus' contribution to Israel's organizational and fighting abilities. Marcus is given credit for folding Israel's quarrelsome militias into a unified force and outwitting the Arabs by building the Burma Road to Jerusalem.

Douglas acquires himself well, while John Wayne is all wind and bluster as an American general who comically mispronounces the blessing "L'chaim"

as he encourages Marcus to fight on. Yul Brynner and Frank Sinatra respectively play a Haganah commander and an American volunteer pilot. Douglas' son, Michael, appears fleetingly as an Israeli jeep driver. *Cast A Giant Shadow* is a tribute to Marcus, a courageous and resourceful strategist who discovered his Jewish identity in Israel. "He was the best man we had," Ben-Gurion observed in an epitaph.

Munich, an action-packed Steven Spielberg film nearly three hours long that won five Academy Awards, came out in 2005, when the prospect of a rapprochement between Israel and the Palestinians had faded under the impact of the second intifadah.

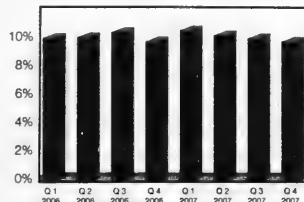
Adapted from George Jonas' high-voltage book, *Vengeance*, *Munich* is about Israel's covert response to the 1972 massacre of 11 Israeli athletes at the summer Olympic Games in Germany. Shocked but unbowed by this horrific incident, Israel's prime minister, Golda Meir, ordered the assassination of its Palestinian planners. The Mossad carried out the strikes in European capitals and the Middle East.

Starring Eric Banna as the Mossad's sensitive team leader, Gila Almagor as his discerning mother, Geoffrey Rush as his hard-boiled case officer and Daniel Craig (the new James Bond) as the team's macho driver, the film is both hair-raising and contemplative, raising legitimate questions about Israel's conflict with the Palestinians and underscoring the need for a Jewish homeland.

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Why is the Jewish calendar different each year?

By MICHAEL STAVSKY

Many of us wonder why some years, Pesach occurs in March, and other years, like this one, it comes toward the end of April. The same is said for all the other holidays. Why do we freeze in the sukkah some years and swelter at other times?

The Jewish calendar is based on the monthly lunar cycle. In the time of the Sanhedrin – the supreme judicial body from the time of the Temple until about 425 CE – a new month was not declared until two valid witnesses came forward and testified to the appearance of the new moon. The rabbis would declare that day as the first day of the new month and could then determine when its holidays would occur. They quickly realized that this method of determining new months didn't correspond to the solar calendar.

The lunar year is 354 days long, whereas the solar year is roughly 365 days. Over time, this discrepancy of 11 days would lead to the holidays falling at different times of the year. After 20 years, Pesach would fall in September and Rosh Hashanah in February!

This would not be a problem, had the Torah not stated in Devarim 16:1, "Keep the month

of spring and make Pesach." In Shemot 34:18, the Torah also states that we left Egypt during the month of spring. The rabbis understood this to mean that Pesach is Chag HaAviv – the holiday of spring.

In order to keep Pesach in the spring, when declaring the month of the Nisan, the Sanhedrin would determine whether Pesach would fall after Tekufat Nisan – the spring equinox – by observing weather conditions and the sun's angle in the sky. If it was still winter in their estimation, a second Adar would be declared. Pesach would then fall a month later – in spring – and would create a year of 13 months. Such a year is called a *shannah me'uberet*, literally a "pregnant year."

During the time of Hillel HaNasi (approximately the fourth century CE), with intense Roman persecution of Jews continuing unabated, the system of witnesses testifying before the Sanhedrin could no longer be relied upon. The rabbinical scholars of the time devised a fixed calendar based on a 19-year cycle, starting from the year of Creation. In this system, the holidays would always fall in the correct season.

Continued on page 16

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1. Monday, March 31st at 8:00 p.m.

"Israel at 60: Triumph and Trial"

There is no doubt that Israel's achievements in its 60 years of existence have been by any yardstick miraculous. At the same time, the relentless challenges hurled at the Jewish state by its enemies have burdened the Israeli Jewish population and Jews all over the world with a constant anxiety concerning security and well being for the future. How prepared are we ideologically, emotionally and strategically for what lies ahead?

2. Thursday, April 3rd at 8:00 p.m.

"A Purim for Shylock"

Supposing Mordecai and Esther had found themselves in Shylock's Venice of Shakespeare's "The Merchant of Venice." Or, put another way, supposing Shylock had been transplanted into the Shushan of Mordecai and Esther. Would Shakespeare's play and the biblical Megillat Esther have been written differently? The discussion relates to two strategies for Jewish survival in the diaspora.

The Community is invited to attend; doors open at 7:30 p.m.

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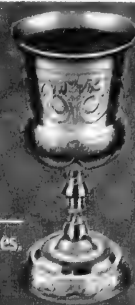
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"In the labelling, packaging and advertising of a food, the Food and Drug Regulations prohibits the use of the word kosher or any letter of the Hebrew alphabet, or any other word, expression, depiction, sign, symbol, mark, device or other representation that indicates or that is likely to create an impression that the food is kosher, if the food does not meet the requirements of the Kashruth applicable to it.

The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

Rationale: "Kosher style" is considered to create the impression that the food is kosher, and therefore the food must meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish style" food may not necessarily create this impression."

The CJN makes no representation as to the kashruth of food products in advertisements.

By RABBI
REUVEN TRADBURKS

The day this issue of *The CJN* appears is the day our son, Elie, reports to the Israel Defence Forces for his first day of active duty.

In all, 12 young men from Toronto are beginning their training this week in the IDF's volunteer program for non-Israelis.

We asked Elie if he was excited, nervous, and/or proud of what he was doing. "Not really," he answered, "I can't say I'm excited or proud - maybe a bit nervous. This is just what I have to do. Why should my friends who are Israeli serve and I don't do my part? I benefit from the security of Israel, so I need to do my part, too."

In one little expression, Elie summed up Judaism: "I need to do my part."

Whether I would do what he is doing is another matter - I think I would be more than a little nervous, and maybe my part is different than his. I satisfy myself that my contribution to the safety of the Jewish people is in the spiritual realm.

But nonetheless, doing our part is the key, and this theme is reflected in

this week's special Torah portion.

I've always been bothered by the "yoke-less cow." In the time of the Temple, when a person came in contact with the dead, they needed to become purified through the red heifer, which was sacrificed and its ashes mixed with water and sprinkled on the person.

But it was not just any red heifer. It had to be a "yoke-less" red heifer. It could never have borne a yoke. In other words, it was a lazy red heifer. A country-club red heifer. A couch-potato red heifer. A hanging-out, shooting-the-breeze, killing-time red heifer.

The requirement that the red heifer should never have borne a yoke is one of those flashing, hot-zone verses in the Torah. Every parshah has one - some detail of the story or mitzvah that kind of sticks out, drawing your attention, even demanding your attention.

Why would a person who has had contact with the dead need to become purified through a "yoke-less" red heifer?

I can't say definitively, but I can take a stab at an answer.

Death is inactivity, the cessation of vibrant life. It is startling in its finality, in its quiet and in its inaction. We

call a person who has died a "niftar," a person now exempt from mitzvot. In death, one can no longer bear a yoke, one can no longer do his or her part - that person's time has run out.

In contrast, life is about bearing that yoke, shouldering one's responsibility.

The red heifer may not have borne a yoke. It may have been a lazy, country-club, hanging-out, shooting-the-breeze heifer. But that's not what I'm going to be.

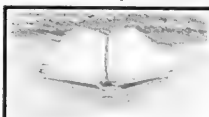
One of the greatest challenges of our time is bucking the indulgent culture of our society and viewing our lives as being full of responsibility.

What is my part, my unique ability, my contribution?

We all have myriad moments to do our part - whether in the unique Jewish activities of keeping Shabbat and keeping kosher, or in interpersonal moments of kindness, or sometimes, in very dramatic fashion, in shouldering heavy communal responsibility in the form of our obligations to the Jewish people. Life is about doing our part: figuring out our unique contribution and then living a life of responsibility.

May it be God's Will that all the young men who are doing their part for the safety of our people in our Land go in peace and return in peace.

Rabbi Tradburks is spiritual leader of Kehillat Shaarei Torah in Toronto.



Rabbinic Reflections

The fun of Pesach in Israel

My family and I will be in Israel for Pesach this year, and one of the reasons - if not the main reason - is Cafe Hillel.

The first time we went to Israel for Pesach, a few years ago, my son was excited beyond all measure because he could have the most delicious chocolate cake that he had ever tasted in a cafe on the street - during Pesach!

He wasn't used to being able to eat out on Pesach at all, but to have chocolate cake that tasted so good - so, in his words, "real" - outside our safe, kosher-for-Passover house? What a *goldene medinah* we had brought him to!

He talked about that cake for years afterward, and he still does. In fact, at every Seder, when we say, "Next year in Jerusalem" he adds, "At Cafe Hillel!" This year, we decided to go back. I hope Cafe Hillel still makes that chocolate cake.

I feel the reality of living in the Diaspora so much during Pesach. There's no Cafe Hillel, and no people

eating pesachdik chocolate cake under the sun at a sidewalk cafe.

Purim is OK in Toronto. We can see kids in costumes up and down Bathurst Street and not feel too weird delivering our mishloach manot down the street.

IDEAS ON IDENTITY



By Rabbi
Elyse
Goldstein

But Pesach? In Jerusalem, you go to a beautiful outdoor market, overflowing with colours and sounds, and the cheese seller looks at you quizzically when you ask which cheese is kosher! Pesach.

"Lady," he says with a laugh, "this is Israel! All my cheese is kosher for Passover!"

In Toronto, you drive up to Thornhill and hope that some kosher cheese is left the week before Pesach, because you haven't kashered your kitchen yet and you didn't buy it a month in advance.

In Jerusalem, Sephardi-style rice and chick peas are the norm, not the exception. The talk in shul is about the responsa suggesting that all Jews adopt these Sephardi Pesach lenien-

cies for the sake of Klal Yisrael.

In Toronto, the talk is all about new strictures - what we can't eat this year that we could last year, and what new matzah kugel we can invent with the same few outrageously expensive, chemically filled, canned, kosher-for-Passover ingredients.

In Jerusalem, you can hear the sounds of *Chad Gadya* in open windows on the night of the seder, and your office is closed the next day, even if you're the most secular Jew around. You take the day off and relish the freedom of not being a slave in the modern world.

In Toronto, your phone still rings in the middle of the seder with telemarketers who don't know its your holy day, and your kids have to take the day off school, hoping they haven't missed a test.

In Israel, the flowers are blooming and the air is warm for Pesach. You can swim during chol hamoad and break out your sandals.

In Toronto, it might still be snowing.

In Jerusalem... well, it almost makes you want to live there.

At least for the week of Pesach.

Jewish Life

With the United States and possibly the world economy teetering on the brink of recession, central bankers around the world have been feverishly trying to ensure that credit will remain readily available. Thus, there has been a continuing lowering of interest rates and the infusion of literally hundreds of billions of dollars into the marketplace in an effort to ward off a crisis that could wipe out millions of jobs and trillions of dollars.

While the scale might be smaller, our talmudic sages, well versed in the workings of the marketplace, were not averse to instituting new laws to deal with a potential lack of credit. Perhaps the most far reaching was the waiving of the requirement to cross-examine witnesses in loan transactions. Biblical law requires that in order to collect on a disputed loan, two witnesses, who would be subjected to harsh cross-examination, must testify as to the veracity of the monies owing. (If only one witness was produced, the defendant would be required to take an oath that no monies are owing in order to be exempt from payment.)

Yet enforcing such a requirement might ultimately cause lenders to stop lending, worrying that the collection process is too burdensome and expen-

Avoiding the credit crunch

sive. Thus "in order not to close the gate to debtors" (Sanhedrin 3a), our sages dropped this requirement, opening up the credit markets in the process.

Money Matters



By Rabbi Jay Kelman CA

The enactment by Hillel of the Pruzbul in the first century BCE is another measure that was taken to keep credit lines open. The Torah rules that loans still outstanding at the close of the shmittah year (the current one ends Sept. 30) are to be cancelled. It also forbids people from refusing to lend money in anticipation of the shmittah year. When Hillel saw that many were nonetheless refusing to lend money, fearing the inability to collect – in effect displaying a lack of trust in God – he instituted a legal mechanism by which loans were transferred to the beit din (Jewish court). As only individual loans are cancelled by the end of the shmittah year, this device enabled people to collect loans after the shmittah year, and thus the needy continued to have access to capital.

The ability of the sages to "circumvent" biblical law in monetary matters is a well-established principle of Jewish law, based on the concept of "hefker beit din hefker," that the court has the right

to declare property ownerless and to transfer title from one party to another. This idea has found an echo in western legal tradition, which allow governments to expropriate property when deemed necessary for the public good. While the court has the right when necessary to transfer property against a person's will, two willing individuals may also "make a condition against the law of the Torah." To cite one example: Torah law states that one who borrows an object is liable for damages, even if caused by events beyond his control. Yet, if the parties agree, a condition can be inserted into the loan agreement exempting the borrower from such unforeseen circumstances.

While Jewish law tried to ensure that even the poor had access to credit, lenders were not required to take on unnecessary risk. Proper collateral could be demanded and debtors were expected to go to extraordinary lengths to repay monies owing. In fact Jewish law has no provision for bankruptcy. Yet at the same time, Jewish law prohibits asking someone for a loan repayment when it's known that they don't have the ability to comply. A creditor is even forbidden from going out of his way to greet the debtor, since such encounters can cause a great sense of embarrassment to the debtor.



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1867 Yonge Street, Suite 600

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

Little did Rabbi Dov Behr Manischewitz know over a century ago that his name would become associated with one of the largest kosher wine companies in the world. Despite their popularity, labels like Cream Peach, Loganberry and the venerable Concord Grape haven't convinced wine drinkers that kosher wines can compare with the finest that France, Italy or California have to offer.

Many kosher winemakers say their products can rival the best in the world. And they are trying to get that message across by some pretty sophisticated sites on the Internet. So what better time to sample their sites as we begin the countdown for Passover!

Where did the idea that "kosher wine" equals "sweet wine" come from? According to the Kosher Wine Institute, the poor quality of some kosher wine is "due largely to historical circumstance. The Concord grape, the only available variety for Jewish immigrants arriving in the New York area, is an acidic grape which must be balanced with sugar to be enjoyed. Hence, sweet wine. Time passes, and compromise becomes tradition." [tinyurl.com/33qyou]

If extra sugar and Concord grapes don't make a wine kosher, then what does? [tinyurl.com/2v2jhg] The rules surrounding the production of kosher wine are much more stringent than those regarding other kinds of kosher food. Equipment to make the wine must be used exclusively for the production of kosher products. Only Sabbath-observant Jews can

Kosher wine: that was then

handle the grapes and wine. In fact, no non-Jew can come in direct contact with the wine or associated machinery unless the juice has been briefly heated (*mevushal*) to between 80 and 90 degrees Celsius. [simchawine.com/kosher.html]

Many critics of kosher wine claim that this heat-flash pasteurization damages the wine, but winemakers say modern techniques minimize effects of the heating. For a lively discussion, see Mevushal Need Not be Nasty. [tinyurl.com/2meowp]

Jewish winemaking goes a bit further back than the Concord grapes of New York. Israel's premier wine critic, Daniel Rogov, suggests that although the land has a tradition of winemaking that stretches back millennia, those ancient wines were nothing to write home about. "The wines shipped to ancient Egypt were so bad that they had to be seasoned with honey, pepper and juniper berries to make them palatable, and those sent to Rome and England during the height of ancient Roman civilization were so thick and sweet that no modern connoisseur could possibly approve of them. So bad were most of these wines that it was probably a good thing that the Muslim conquest in 636 CE imposed a 1,200-year halt to the local wine industry." [tinyurl.com/3x7q4f]

Jump forward a few centuries to the 1890s, when Baron Edmond de Rothschild felt the country vintners deserved another chance. He built two large wineries that would become Carmel Wines, Israel's

largest. [tinyurl.com/22qmhZ] On this side of the Atlantic, the Herzog family's giant Royal Wine Corporation traces its roots to 19th-century Czechoslovakia. The company is now based in New York and is known for its Kedem and Baron Herzog lines. [kedemwines.com] Another well-known name, Schapiro's Wines, was founded in 1899. The company's motto was "wine so thick you can cut it with a knife." [tinyurl.com/yuuV5m]

I found a delightful piece of Jewish wine trivia about the non-Jewish Martini Wine Company, one of the few wineries in the United States to remain in operation during Prohibition. When Narciso Martini found out that rabbis were each allowed 50 gallons of wine per year for religious purposes, "he shipped as much as 10,000 gallons of wine a year – all perfectly legal – to rabbis in New York for the duration of this period. 'It's amazing,' Elmo, his son, once recalled, 'how many more rabbis there suddenly were in New York during Prohibition.'" [tinyurl.com/2yb69q]

And Manischewitz? Actually Manischewitz wine is not produced by Rabbi Dov Behr's B. Manischewitz Company. [manischewitz.com] The famous brand was purchased by the Centerra Wine Company and is currently produced in Naples, N.Y. [manischewitzwine.com] You can take a virtual tour that shows you how their products are made. [tinyurl.com/34wkk8]

Next week, kosher wine: this is now. Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.



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History students plan women's seder at CHAT

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Students in Leila Roiter's class on "Women in Jewish History," a Grade 12 elective at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto's south campus, are putting on a women's seder next week.

The event was Roiter's idea, but students are doing all the planning and will lead the seder.

"We're all responsible for creating one or two pages in the Haggadah," said Spencer Hoffman, one of five males in the 22-person class, who added that he was put in charge of publicizing the event.

Familiar seder elements such as the "four sons" cited in the Haggadah will be replaced by "four daughters," and there will be a focus on Miriam's cup rather than Eliyahu's, because "Miriam is such an integral part of the Passover story," Hoffman said.

An orange on the seder plate has become a mainstay of feminist seders, which originated in the United States in the late 1970s or early 1980s.

The students' seder will feature seder plates with and without

oranges, however, to show both continuity and change, Roiter said.

The orange on the seder plate dates back to the early 1980s, when Jewish feminist and author Susannah Heschel, now a Jewish history professor at Dartmouth College, was invited to speak at Oberlin College.

The next Passover, she placed an orange on her family's seder plate, in response to a feminist Haggadah written by Oberlin students that included a crust of bread on the seder plate as a sign of solidarity with Jewish lesbians.

Bread, Heschel explains, renders everything chametz, so instead, she used an orange to express solidarity with lesbians, gay men and others who are marginalized in the Jewish community, including widows.

Also, she wrote in 2001, an orange represents "fruitfulness" when lesbians and gay men are contributing and active members of Jewish life.

"A Jew is a Jew," Heschel told *The C.J.N.* last week. "I think we need solidarity."

At the upcoming school seder — although the students have been made aware of the historical significance of the orange, which will be mentioned as part of the program — "we want to focus on the role of women having an opportunity for expression and participation," particularly in light of the focus of the course, Roiter said.

Hoffman, who signed up for the course after hearing positive things about it from his older sister, said that "it's really cool to see everything from a different perspective... We

end up having a lot of discussion."

Also, he added, he enjoys politics and history. As part of the course, he is working on a project about former Israeli prime minister Golda Meir.

About 100 family members and friends are expected to take part in the seder, which Roiter said symbolizes "an ongoing theme in Jewish history" — the balance between tradition and continuity.

Roiter, who helped develop the course in 2002, organized a women's seder for her students four years ago, but her wedding and an

extended maternity leave were factors in the event's ensuing hiatus.

Although women's seders are not traditional, there are observant women who participate in them, Roiter said.

She believes it's "good for students to see that not just one segment of the population owns that passion and tradition."

The school administration has been supportive of the project, she added.

"I'm hoping students will see that it's possible to maintain traditional Judaism and honour Jewish women's contributions."

Nisan elevates our happiness

Continued from page 12

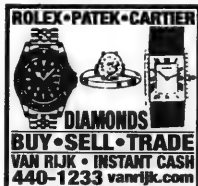
Within every 19-year cycle, years 3, 6, 8, 11, 14, 17 and 19 would be *me'uberet* (leap years); and all others not. This would always ensure that Pesach would come during spring.

But why add a second Adar and not a second Kislev or some other month? During the first and second Temple periods, every Jew was required to bring the Pesach sacrifice, as commemorated by the shank bone on our seder plates. The Sanhedrin wanted to ensure that enough sheep would be available for every family to do this. They estimated the herd's

numbers during Adar. Kabbalists point out that the Mazal (Zodiac sign) for Adar is Pisces, which is represented by twin fish. This corresponds to the two Adars.

During Adar, we are joyful because of the miracle of Purim. When Nisan arrives, this happiness is further elevated, as it's the month of our redemption from Egyptian bondage. May this festive time of the year be one of peace and celebration for all of us.

Rabbi Michael Stavsky received *smichah* last summer from Yeshivat Pirchei Shoshanim in Jerusalem. He works as a graphic artist in the The C.J.N.'s production department.



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ISRAEL@60 NATIONAL POST Shaarei Shomayim Congregation

Greater Toronto Area

Teacher puts positive spin on disability

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

When Batya Feigenbaum was born, she suffered a spinal cord injury so severe that doctors offered her parents little hope that she would live a normal life, let alone survive her first night.

Today the ebullient 23-year-old is a grade 9 and 10 Jewish studies teacher at the Orthodox girls' high school Tiferes Bais Yaakov who uses a motorized scooter – and, for brief periods, crutches – switching to a wheelchair for Shabbat.



"They are our teachers..."

In the classroom, Feigenbaum doesn't see her disability as an issue. Although it's difficult for her to write on the chalkboard, because her walking is limited, she says she uses her challenge as a "tool," getting students to write on the board instead.

She also has students hand out papers for her, and said that after the first few days of the school year – once they see that she is comfortable with her disability – they become comfortable with it too.

Her birth injury in the course of an emergency caesarian section at a hospital in Israel initially left Feigenbaum as a quadriplegic, not breathing on her own. She began to undergo therapy within days of her birth, and the family moved to Toronto when she was two years old to pursue new treatments that were not available in Israel at the time.

In Israel, she recovered movement in her upper body, but it wasn't until she came to Canada with her American-born parents and her siblings that she gained feeling in her legs and started crawling at age three, six months after beginning experimental therapy.

Feigenbaum's work day is divided into morning classes and afternoons working as the school secretary. She is also running student council activities to fill in for a co-worker until Pesach.

Her ability to multi-task is evident, as she tends deftly and kindly to the needs of a student who is writing a test by herself, barely interrupting the flow of her interview with *The CJN*.



Batya Feigenbaum says that once students see that she is comfortable with her disability, they become comfortable too. [Frances Kraft photo]

she attended for a year after high school.

"I love it," Feigenbaum says of her teaching career. "I can't imagine doing anything else."

"You're making a difference in someone's life."

The daughter of two educators – her mother Lani teaches kindergarten – Feigenbaum said her parents never pushed her to enter the field. "This is who I am," she said.

A lesson from the teacher: "I think that life is really what you make of it. There's a reason for everything. I very strongly believe that... You can become bitter, sad and angry, or rise above it and make the most of it."

Although she sees herself as "very easygoing" in the classroom, she said she always starts out "tough" at the beginning of the year.

"In certain aspects, I'm strict," she said. "I give [students] a quiz every class – just five questions, to review."

That doesn't always go over well at first, Feigenbaum admitted, but with time, she believes her students appreciate that it helps them learn the material.

Because she is "close enough in age [to her students]...

that I'm still sort of cool," Feigenbaum said it's easy to have a good relationship with her students.

"I think it's a balance. If the girls respect you, you don't need to be extremely tough with them."

While they know that she's "their friend," she said, "there's still that distance, because I'm their teacher."

Feigenbaum – who grew up doing household chores just like her siblings, and who got her driver's licence at 17 (to operate a vehicle with hand controls) – is being honoured this week at a fundraising dinner for DANI, an organization that helps young adults with special needs. She has been honoured in a similar way twice before.

She said that she agreed to be honoured, despite some discomfort with the idea, because it can raise awareness about the abilities of people with disabilities.

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Greater Toronto Area

Upcoming spring aliyah fair presents benefits for olim

The Israel Aliyah Centre spring fair is set for April 2, at the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre.

Israeli experts will be on hand to talk about topics of interest to people making aliyah or thinking about doing so, including the new tax regulations and the health system in Israel. Representatives from the ministry of absorption will talk about the job market and employment.

As well, there will be representatives from a number of cities that are offering benefits to new olim, and from Israel House who will talk to returning Israelis about benefits for those who return this year.

The fair also gives potential olim the opportunity to start networking and bring resumes to employment experts who can meet with them one-on-one after the presentation.

Liane Sela, regional director of the Aliyah Centre, affiliated with the Jewish Agency for Israel, said the new

partnership between the Aliyah Centre and UJA Federation of Greater Toronto is helping to create an "aliyah buzz in the community and put aliyah on the agenda."

Efforts by Israelis, such as offering benefits to olim who choose certain cities as their first home and opening the new absorption centre in Tel Aviv for young people, "show that Israelis have a real concern for western olim," she said.

She said the fair is useful even for those who are planning aliyah in the next year or two. "Information and intelligence are the most important tools in making aliyah and for immigration in general."

Sela said May 5 has been set aside as a special aliyah day. "Anyone who chooses to move to Israel on that day will enjoy an extended benefits package."

The fair begins at 7 p.m., and two consecutive sessions will run all evening. For information, call 416-633-4766.

YIDDISH CORNER

Edited by: ALEK SILVER

יידיש - ווינקל

רעדאגירט פון: אלעק סילבער

דערהאלטן א ניי בוך פון דעם שרייבער

משה דוד חיים פון ישראל

ווארעלען שפראכן פון דאס ניי - ח. ליוויק פארלאג

אן איבערבליק פון אלעק סילבער

דאס איז שוין דאס זיבעטע בוך, וואס אונזער פריינד משה דוד חיים האט ארויסגעגעבן זינט זיין עליה אין מדינת ישראל. דער שרייבער איז א פראליטישער מחבר פון א צאל ביכער און ער שרייבט, לויט מיין וויסן אין פיר שפראכן: יידיש, עברית, לעטיש און רוסיש. לויט ווי ליטעראטור-קריטיקער האבן אריינגע- דריקט זייער מיינונג וועגן די ביכער איז דער אפארן זייער א גוטער.

אין פערזענלעך בין גישט קיין ליטעראטור-קריטיקער און כיוויל זיך גישט אונטערגעגען דאס צו טאן. פארן בעסטער כוחות ווי אים און אים פארלאז זיך אויף זיי. אים וויל זיך נאר דא אפשטעלן אויף דער הילע, אויפן שערבלאט, וואס איז מיט שטארק געפאלן געווארן. כיוויל פרויבירן דאס פאר אים פארצושטעלן.

עס ווייזט אן אונטערגעגען בים ארויסגעגאנגען מיטן שווער פון דער ער. פון דעם געבליבענעם שטיקל בים הייבן אן ארויסוואקסן ווארצלען, צווייגלעך מיט בלעטער, וואס זענען אויס ווי יידישע אוניות. דאס האט זיכער א טאפלען באדייט: מען קען עס אריינטישן ווי א פערזענלעכע דערקלערונג און מען קען עס אויס- טיטשן ווי א פאליטישע דערוואכונג. אין ביידע פאלן קען עס אזוי אריינגעטישט ווערן, איר קענט צופאסן אייער אייגענע אינטערפערענציע.

כ'גליב, אז עס קומט א ספעציעלע אנערקענט צו סבטלע מריב פאר דער דאזיקער קאמפאזיציע. ווי א געראטעוועטער פון דער שווא, זיינען מינע שבוע מוריו גינגען אנדערש ווי זיינע. אבער עס איז מיר גרינגער צו פארשטיין, וואס ער און זיין משפחה זיינען דורכגעגאנגען אין דער צייט פון דער נאצי- טטאלן מגפה. דעריבער זיינען עס זיך גישט בלויז ווי א כראניק, נאר אויך ווי כמעט א נארוועל. דער מחבר באשיינט אויך דאס בוך מיט בילדער פון זיין משפחה אין דער אלטער היים. פון זיי קען יעדער ליענער, ספעציעל די פון דער שארית-ההלטה, זיך אריבער- טראגן אין דער פארנאגעהייט און ווי אים אן א הלום זיין ארומגערינגלט מיט נאענטע און געליבטע זיידע-באבע, טאטע-מאמע און אנדערע משפחה-מיטגלידער.

משה דוד חיים איז געבוירן געווארן אין ראסיין, ליטע. נאך פאר דער צווייטער מלחמה האט ער פאר- עפנטלעכט לידער און פראזע אין דער יידישער פרעסע פון ליטע און לעטלאנד. די מלחמה-יארן האבן איבער- געריסן זיינע ליטערארישע שאפונגען. ער איז דעמאלט געווען געצוואנגען צו דערהאלטן זיך און זיין נאענטע משפחה ביים לעבן. און אים קען גענוי פארשטיין זיינע לידן אין יענע יארן.

נאך דער באפריינג און רעהאביליטאציע האט חיים צוריק גענומען די פעדער אין האנט און באנייט זיינע ליטערארישע אקטיוויטעטן. ער ווערט אויך נאענט מיט א צאל שרייבער און דיכטער און ווערט געזעלשאפט- לעך שטייט. נאך זיין עליה אין מדינת ישראל האלט ער אן זיינע געזעלשאפטלעכע אקטיוויטעטן אין דער מדינה, ספעציעל אין שרייבער פארבאנד און ווי דער פארזיצער אין פארבאנד פון באליטישע יידן.

מען מוז אויך אונטערשטיין דעם פאקט, אז פאר זיינע ליטערארישע שאפונגען און פאר זיינע קולטור- רעלע שטייט אין משה דוד חיים באליינט געווארן מיט א צאל אויסצייכענונגען און א פרעמיע פון דער "מאקס שטיינער". מיר ווינטשן אונדזער פריינד משה דוד חיים נאך לאנגע שעפערשע יארן צוזאמען מיט זיין משפחה אין ישראל.

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Greater Toronto Area

Theatre group raises funds for abused women

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

A performance of song, dance and script by women for women will raise funds to bring awareness to domestic abuse in the Jewish community.

To be held March 31 at 7:30 p.m. at Leah Posluns Theatre, the show, *Koleinu*, features a group of six performers who have teamed up with Jewish Family & Child to support its programs for abused women.

Rivka Lomiansky, 24, who runs Neshamah, a musical theatre group for Torah-observant girls, said the women originally got together to look for an opportunity to perform in a way that expresses their values.

"We have created modern but modest dances," Lomiansky said.

The idea behind the show, she said, is to be a voice – *Koleinu* means "our voice" in Hebrew – for those who need it, and to let people in abusive relationships know that there are people who care.

Penny Krowitz, executive director of Jewish Women International of Canada, said that abuse in a relationship knows no bounds.

"It can happen in any group – high education or no education, rich or poor, secular or religious," she said.

Lomiansky said the evening will include a raffle, women artisans selling work, and kosher food. For information and tickets, call 416-636-5984, ext. 321, or visit koleinu.eventbrite.com.



SOUPER SUNDAY: Morris Winchevsky School students and friends display hand-painted soup bowls that they decorated at their Wacky Purim Party on March 9. A mishloach manot project, the bowls will be used at the Winchevsky Centre's community fundraiser, Souper Sunday, at 11 a.m. on March 30, to benefit the North York Harvest Food Bank and Jewish Family & Child. The event, which includes lunch, is open to the public.

YOUTH DIRECTOR BETH SHOLOM SYNAGOGUE

Beth Sholom Synagogue, a mid-town Conservative Synagogue in Toronto seeks an energetic, creative and committed professional to serve as Program and Youth Director.

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Barbara Berke, Executive Director via e-mail
barbara@bethsholom.net or via fax at 416-783-9923.
1445 Eglinton Ave. W., Toronto, ON M6E 2E6
The deadline for submissions is April 15, 2008



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ontariojewisharchives.org



A Sense of Spadina is a project of the Ontario Jewish Archives, part of the Centre for Jewish Knowledge and Heritage, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

And now for something completely different:

HEEBONICS

Rockin' Toronto's PR scene

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

To hear her tell it, Debra Goldblatt had an awkward adolescence. Somewhat chubby, less-than-popular and a late-bloomer to boot, she always felt a little out of place among her peers.

Not anymore.

Presiding over her successful boutique public relations firm, rock-it promotions, the 34-year-old has blossomed into a major publicist and a force to be reckoned with on Toronto's competitive public relations scene.

Somewhere, Goldblatt's inner child is beaming.

Her firm celebrated its eighth anniversary in February, and its resilience is emblematic of Goldblatt's desire to work in a milieu she loves.

Foundin the firm in 2000, around the time her mother was dying of cancer, Goldblatt set out on a mission to take control of her life and succeed as a businesswoman.

"That was the worst time in my life," she says, adding that her parents supported her new endeavour by buying her a computer.

"I had no idea what I was doing," she confides. "I had no car, no bank account."

Still, her business flourished, as did her sense of purpose, something that had been missing early on in her life.

After she quietly nurtured a talent for writing throughout her high school years in Toronto, a close friend encouraged her to apply to Concordia University's creative writing program.

Based on the strength of her writing, Goldblatt was accepted at the Montreal university and quickly determined she had found her new life path.

"From that point on I haven't looked back," she told *Heebonics* over lunch at a trendy St. Clair Avenue West eatery last month. "That's when I found myself as an adult and realized the importance of doing something that you love. I found this escape where I could sit and write all day and be with people who were a little quirky and not quite the kids I grew up with. I felt totally normal in this environment, and not everybody finds that."

Goldblatt took her love of writing and honed her skills working at various PR firms in Toronto in the late 1990s.

It was a career tailor-made for her, she said, noting that even as a child she always had an ability to mediate and troubleshoot quarrels.

"As a kid, I wanted to be a judge," Goldblatt confessed. "But then I learned you had to be a lawyer first

and that was too much school. I wasn't big on school."

She credits much of her inherent negotiating skills to her father, a former National Hockey League player representative.

"Watching him in his business informed me a lot more than I realized," she said, adding that growing up with a constant lineup of NHL players around made her immune to the star power associated with the status and lifestyles of high-profile athletes.

To this, Goldblatt modestly adds that boyfriends would come to her parents' home and be blown away by a basement full of official NHL paraphernalia. To her, it was just the basement.

That ability to downplay what others would thrill over has been a distinct advantage for her over the years, as rock-it promotions' roster of clients gradually built up a veritable who's who of popular Canadian artistic talent, including CTV's *Canadian Idol* judges, broadcaster Jian Ghomeshi and actor Kristin Booth among others.

Beyond that, the firm also represents business clients and events such as the L'Oreal Fashion Week, Conair Canada and the Worldwide Short Film Festival.

Rock-it's association with the entertainment industry stemmed from an incident in 1999, while Goldblatt was employed by a now-defunct Toronto PR firm.

She was able to cultivate a relationship with then-little-known Canadian actress-director and Oscar-nominee Sarah Polley, she said. When the PR firm decided not to represent her over what seemed a minor detail, Goldblatt took it upon herself to court Polley on her own time as a freelance publicist and ended up representing her for that year's Toronto International Film Festival.

Though rock-it no longer represents Polley, she's still in touch with Goldblatt. And Goldblatt still marvels at the way it all came together.

"Sarah was amazing and I'll always thank her for that. She gave me my first real break. She's a beautiful person."

That her firm continues to be so successful is a testament to both Goldblatt's personal ethos and her business philosophy.

Courteous, respectful, feet firmly planted on the



Rock-it promotions publicist Debra Goldblatt's determination keeps her PR firm a force to be reckoned with.

[Caitlin Cronenberg photo]

ground (though she admits she was a "party girl" in her younger days), Goldblatt seems able to confront any social or business situation with equanimity.

"I've never had to solicit a client. Not once. That's the truth," she swears. "It is imperative that younger people getting into this business understand the importance of word-of-mouth. If you do a good job for one client, you'll get 10 calls from it. Because people will want to know who did their PR. It's the first thing that people ask - if there's great buzz and a ton of press and people are going 'Holy moly! That project is everywhere,' people will call."

Beyond that, Goldblatt and her husband, actor Matt Austin, have rediscovered a need to celebrate their Jewish roots.

Looking forward to having children at some point, Goldblatt said, "It's interesting that [Judaism] has become more important all of a sudden in my life. I'd like to continue the holidays

and Shabbat dinners now with my family."

Goldblatt added that she makes it her policy to never work during the High Holy Days.

Eight years on and her love for the business is undiminished.

"Getting to work with real Hollywood stars really is amazing. That's what gets me going," she said. "There's something beautiful and shiny about the artists in this industry."



CHECK OUT OUR BLOG @ HEEBONICS.CA

Greater Toronto Area

Purim cards for Sderot kids



Students at Or Haemet Sephardic School hold Purim greeting cards for children in Sderot, the city in the Negev that has suffered Qassam rocket attacks from nearby Gaza for several years. With them is Michael Ettegui, founder of Yaldeinu, an organization that supports formal and informal Jewish education. The cards are part of Yaldeinu's Purim Drive for the Children of Sderot. Half a dozen synagogues and schools in Toronto and Montreal took part in the drive.

I BELIEVE IN
WIESENTHAL

For Toby and Joel Feldberg, the concepts of legacy leadership and continuity are intertwined when it comes to their community involvement. Toby is the president of Beit Hapohel Canada and is actively involved in numerous charities. Joel serves on the SWC Board of Directors and is the Canadian host of a past Co-Chair of the F&S Campaign. The Feldberg family was instrumental in creating the "Spirit of Hope" benefit concert.

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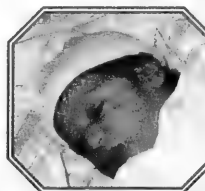
Mazel tov to
Josh Steinberg & Rina Bierman
on their recent marriage.



Mazel tov to
Sidney Shapiro & Shira Hertzberg
on their recent engagement.



Mazel tov to Moshe & Lori (Girun)
Applebaum on the birth of Eliana Nesha.



Mazel tov on the birth
of Erin Sydney Swaye.

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*What's
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NOTE PASSOVER DEADLINES: Monday, March 31, is the deadline for the April 10 issue, Wednesday, April 2, is the deadline for the April 17 issue and Monday, April 7, is the deadline for the April 24 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, March 27

LIFE IN A JAR

The play *Life in a Jar*, chronicling the deeds of Polish Holocaust heroine **Irena Sendler**, who rescued 2,500 Jewish children, will be performed at the Al Green Theatre, 750 Spadina Ave. 7:30 p.m. \$15, students \$10. 416-924-6211, ext. 133

MOSHE FEIGLIN SPEAKS

Jewish Defence League of Canada presents **Moshe Feiglin**, 8 p.m. at Shaarei Tefillah Congregation. 416-736-7000 or jdcanada@jdl.org

Friday, March 28

TOTS SHABBAT

Temple Har Zion invites parents, and grandparents to bring children ages 2-4 and siblings for a Shabbat celebration. 6 p.m.

Saturday, March 29

WHY ISRAEL?

Beth Tzedec Congregation presents **Daniel Gordis** speaking from the pulpit on "Why Israel? Who Needs a Jewish State?" Shacharit 8:45 a.m. 416-781-3511

SINGLES 20-40

Beth Emeth Synagogue hosts Shabbat services, at 8:45 a.m., and a kiddush "Meet & Greet" geared to singles 25-40. For information, Sharon, 416-633-3838, ext. 234.

SHABBAT SERVICES

The Kol Yisroel congregation resumes Shabbat services each week at the Borochoy Cultural Centre. 9:30 a.m. 416-630-9444

SOCIAL JUSTICE ADVOCACY

Darchei Noam Congregation presents MP **Ken Dryden** and city councillor **Joe Mihevc** offering advice on how to effectively advocate for social justice, 1:15 p.m., following Shabbat services. 416-638-4783 or www.darcheinoam.on.ca

CHARITY BINGO

Simcha/Kadima chapter of

Na'amat Canada holds a Charity Bingo Extravaganza at the Borochoy Centre. 7:30 p.m. \$20. 416-636-5425

SPRING BOUTIQUE PLUS

Bnei Akiva Spring Fashion Boutique, 12-4 p.m. at 45 Canyon Ave.

Sunday, March 30

KOLLEL YOM RISHON

Rabbi Benjamin Blech will speak on "Wall Street Challenges to Jewish Ethics" at Yeshiva University's Sunday learning program, 9 a.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. For information, www.kollelyomrishon.org or 416-783-6960.

GIFT SHOP SALE

Beth Emeth Synagogue Judaica Gift Shop Pre-Passover Sidewalk Sale of great gifts includes pashmi-

nas, bags, jewelry and Judaica. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 416-633-3838.

ART EXHIBIT & SALE

JIAS and the Bathurst JCC present the 5th Annual Artistic Creations Art Exhibit and Crafts Sale, works by Jewish immigrant artists new to the Toronto community. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. in the BJCC Loggia Gallery and Atrium.

SINGLES WALKING GROUP

Join Walk and Talk Etc., a walking club for Jewish singles 50+, for a walk in the Grange Park Area. Meet at The Four Seasons Centre, 145 Queen St. W. at 10 a.m. walkandtalketc@hotmail.com.

SOUPER SUNDAY

The Winchevsky Centre cele-

Continued on page 23

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What's New

Continued from page 22

brates its 80th year of secular humanist Jewish education and raises funds for the North York Harvest Food Bank and Jewish Family and Child, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. \$10, \$20 for a family of three or more, includes soup/stew and bread, and a bowl as a keepsake. www.winchevsky.org or 416-789-5502

RITUAL OBJECTS

Join the artisans and committee members as they discuss the ideas, visual references and processes that informed each of the handcrafted creations designed for Darchei Noam's new sanctuary, 7 p.m. at 864 Sheppard Ave. W. 416-638-4783 or www.darcheinnoam.on.ca

SHUL OF ROCK

The Varsity Jews, the University of Toronto's Jewish a cappella choir, presents its 4th annual charity concert, 7:30 p.m. at Holy Blossom Temple. Proceeds go to Latet, Israeli Humanitarian Aid. Tickets, \$8-\$72, in advance at 416-913-2424 or at the door. www.varsityjews.com

Monday, March 31

BETH TZEDEC BOOK CLUB

Beth Tzedec Library Contemporary Jewish Book and Film Club presents *Cynthia Good* discussing *A Thread of Grace*, by **Mary Doria Russell**. \$14/session. 1:30 p.m. For information, 416-781-3514, ext. 225 or library@beth-tzedec.org.

ISRAEL: TRIUMPH & TRIAL

Rabbi Avraham Feder will speak on "Israel at 60: Triumph and Trial," the achievements and challenges of the state. 8 p.m. at Beth Tikvah Synagogue. 416-221-3433

ARTIST OF JEWISH FATE

Beth Emeth Synagogue presents a lecture and slide presentation by **Rouhama Danto** on **Samuel Bak**, an artist in search of the meaning of the Holocaust. 8 p.m. 416-633-3838

MISSILES & MIRACLES

Westmount Shul and Learning Centre presents **Rabbi Shmuel Vaffer** on "Missiles, Masks and Miracles: The Invisible Shield Protecting Israel during the Gulf War." 8:30 p.m. www.westmountshul.com

Tuesday, April 1

HUMAN RIGHTS

The Speakers Action Group hosts a lunch lecture on "Human Rights Under Attack: How Can Canada Contribute to Significant Global Challenges?" with **Dr. Payam Akhavan** and **Jonathan Kay**. 12 p.m. in the offices of

Heenan Blaikie, 200 Bay St., Suite 2600. \$20, reservation required, 416-488-7468.

HEREDITARY CANCERS

Beth Tikvah Sisterhood presents a panel on "What Everyone Needs to Know About Hereditary Breast and Ovarian Cancer: The Medical, Genetic and Jewish Perspective." with **Dr. Maria Ash**, **Dr. Wendy Meschino**, **Rabbi Jennifer Gorman** and **Natalie Witkin**. 8 p.m. \$5 for non-members. 416-221-3434

CHUG HATANACH

Dr. Mark Smiley will lead a discussion of *The Book of Ezra*, Chapter 8. 8 p.m. at Beth David Congregation. All welcome.

Wednesday, April 2

CATERING SHOWCASE

Temple Sinai presents a "Catering Showcase." Sample food and discuss your next simchah. 7 p.m. 416-487-3281

CHRISTIAN-JEWISH TALKS

The Christian-Jewish Dialogue presents "Mending relationships, Mending the World." 7:30 p.m. at St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Virgin Parish, 670 Sheppard Ave. E.

BEREAVEMENT SEMINAR

Temple Har Zion continues its bereavement seminar with **John Fleming** discussing "Acceptance and Loss." 7:30 p.m. 905-889-2252

PASSOVER HAGGADAH

Rabbi Moshe Stern of Shaarei Tefillah Congregation continues a series on the Passover Haggadah through April 16. 8 p.m. 416-787-1631

Other News

CHRISTIAN ZIONISM

Beth Tzedec Congregation presents "Christian Zionism: Modern Issues in Age-Old Context" with **Marc Hirshman**, of Hebrew University. Tuesday, April 1, 7:30 p.m. "Fabulous Interpretation: Jewish and Christian Battles Over the Bible." Wednesday, April 2, 7:30 p.m., "Jews for Jesus in Late Antiquity: The Christian and Jewish Stance on Jewish-Christians." 416-781-3511

CELEBRATE ISRAEL @ 60

Join Solel Congregation as they celebrate Israel at 60 with the Jerusalem Lyric Trio, dinner and auction at the Burlington Cultural Centre, Thursday, April 3, 6:30 p.m. Tickets 905-820-5915 or info@solel.ca

PURIM FOR SHYLOCK

Beth Tikvah Synagogue presents

Rabbi Avraham Feder on "A Purim For Shylock," two strategies for Jewish survival - Shylock's and Esther's. Thursday, April 3, 8 p.m. 416-221-3433

MUSICAL WEEKEND

Beth Shalom Synagogue hosts a weekend featuring **Cantor Sol Zim**, April 4-5. Friday, April 4, Kabbalat Shabbat, 6 p.m., followed by dinner. Reserve by April 1. \$29, children (3-12) \$10, non-members \$36, children \$15. Call 416-783-6103. Shabbat morning services at 8:45 a.m. with Cantor Zim and the Beth Shalom Choir.

IRWIN COTLER SPEAKS

Beth Tzedec Men's Club presents **Irwin Cotler** on "The Gathering Storm: Israel at 60 and Beyond." Saturday, April 5, service 8:45 a.m. 416-781-3511

REENA EVENT

Reena Foundation presents "Not Just Another Saturday Night." Saturday, April 5, 9 p.m. at the Dominion Club. Tickets, www.reena.foundation.org or 905-764-1081

SAR-EL REUNION

A reunion with buffet and auction for volunteers who worked on Israeli army supply/maintenance bases, Wednesday, April 9, 6 p.m. \$13. RSVP, toronto@sarelcanada.org or 416-781-6089, by March 31.

JEWISH MUSIC IN COMEDY

Beth Shalom music series presents "A Night of Jewish Music in Comedy" with cantors **Herschel and Judy Fox**. Wednesday, April 9, 8 p.m. \$18. Tickets, 416-783-6103.

TIKKUN TORONTO 2008

Join Jewish youth repairing the world one day at a time. Give back to the community, gain service

hours. Beth Radom Congregation, Sunday, April 13, 12-5 p.m. For grades 5-12. Information and registration, www.tikkuntoronto.org or **Missy**, 416-398-2004, ext. 223.

SEDER HOSTS NEEDED

If you would like to welcome a newcomer family to your seder table, contact Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, 416-630-6481, ext. 30.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. Information/registration 416-638-7800 or www.jfandes.com. Call **Shawna**, ext. 215 for info and registration.

Widow/Widower 65+ bereavement group. Six sessions begin Tuesday, April 1, 1-2 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

Adult Children Losing a Parent. A six-session group for adult children. Begins Tuesday, April 1, 7:30-9 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

When You're About to Separate: What to Tell The Kids, a workshop for parents about to separate or in the early stages of separation on how to best meet your child's needs. Tuesday, April 8, 9:30 a.m.-noon at The Promenade Mall, Suite 313.

Will This Feeling Ever End? An 8-week group for those having trouble moving on or feeling stuck after experiencing a loss through a death or divorce. Begins Tuesday, April 8, 7:30-9 p.m. at The Promenade Mall, Suite 313.

FOR SENIORS

Chai Shalom Social Club hosts a lunch with entertainment, Sunday, March 30 at noon. \$20. Information or reservation, 416-633-3838.

55+ Forward for Seniors at the MNJCC hosts a guided tour of a new exhibit at the Gardiner Museum, Wednesday, April 2, 1:45

p.m. RSVP by March 31, 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or phyllisf@mnjcc.org.

LZA Seniors Cultural Club meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Borochoy Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 416-630-9444

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Casino Rama, April 9. Bingo, Tuesdays, 12:30-3 p.m. Information Tuesday to Thursday 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 416-395-7881.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

"Current Events: Is there Life After George Bush?" Tuesday, April 1, 10 a.m. \$3, non members \$6.

East Asian Fashion and Culture Show, Wednesday, April 2, 1-2:30 p.m. \$5, non members \$8.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

JCC Maccabi Spin-a-thon supports Maccabi athletes, Sunday, March 30, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Call **Grant**, ext. 257.

The JVIAnetwork, a group for Jewish vision impaired active adults holds its first meeting on Monday, March 31, 7 p.m. Bess, 905-508-2892.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www.mnjcc.org

"Rock 'n' Roll Jews: The Brill Building" with **Jordan Klapman**, Sunday, March 30, 11 a.m. \$9, includes bagels and coffee.

Toronto Jewish Film Society presents 2 documentary films, *Sendler's List* and *Life in a Jar*. Monday, March 31, 7:30 p.m. \$10

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REAL
SALES

SINGLES EVENTS WILL RETURN

OBITUARIES and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Harry Blay	Mar 9/08	15 Baintree Crt
Shirley Laskin	Mar 9/08	355 St. Clair Ave W
George Keller	Mar 10/08	5444 Yonge St
Shayna Ross	Mar 7/08	76 Orchard View Bl
Esther Hands	Mar 10/08	260 Heath St W
Murray Horenblas	Mar 9/08	31 Lynnhaven Rd
Lester Parks	Mar 10/08	15 Peterborough Ave
William Gladstone	Mar 11/08	10 Torresdale Ave
Anne Davis	Mar 11/08	1925 Steeles Ave W
Doris Naiman	Mar 13/08	3560 Bathurst St
Sidney Kling	Mar 14/08	3270 Bathurst St
Paula Licht	Mar 14/08	62 Gloucester Grove
Frances Shurman	Mar 14/08	361 Glencairn Ave
Ruth Salamon	Mar 14/08	29 Gilgrom Rd
Samuel J. Sable	Mar 14/08	1 Ava Rd



Sydney Kuttner

Mar 8/08 484 Steeles Ave W

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Green, Stanley John	Mar 6/08	120 Rose Green Dr
Katz, Morris Joseph	Mar 6/08	3000 Bathurst St
Rosen, Helen	Mar 7/08	86 Almore Ave
Kideckel, Mildred	Mar 7/08	784 Centre St
Suleimanov, Sonia	Mar 8/08	101 Bentoak Cres
Melrose, Joan	Mar 7/08	59 Vinci Cres
Bonin, Simon	Mar 8/08	28 Oakhurst Dr
Phillips, Murray	Mar 7/08	3560 Bathurst St
Buzaglo, Fortuna	Mar 9/08	3705 Bathurst St
Zelener, Janina	Mar 9/08	8501 Bayview Ave
Applebaum, Joyce	Mar 10/08	Private
Linden, Manuel	Mar 10/08	333 Clark Ave. W.
Maderer, Lea	Mar 10/08	1131 Steeles Ave. W
Sokol, Marija	Mar 11/08	
Schatzker, Zigmund	Mar 12/08	15 Bayhampton Court
Goldshtein, Fridrich	Mar 13/08	300 Antibes Dr
Korenwasser, Hana	Mar 13/08	718 Sheppard Ave. W
Thaler, Genek	Mar 13/08	9 Harlock Blvd
Aptekar, Yakov	Mar 14/08	Private

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The Family of

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would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to our
extended family and friends for the support and
sympathy shown during our recent bereavement.

Your kindness and compassion was greatly appreciated
by the family during this very difficult time.

MYER (MIKE) RABOVSKY

Peacefully at Summit Place in Owen Sound on Sunday morning
March 16, 2008. In his 86th year, 'Mike' Myer Rabovsky,
beloved husband of the late Miriam Rabovsky (nee Levinson),
loved father-in-law of Bruce Ronald, loving grandfather of
Kayla and Seth. Remembered by his nieces and nephews.
Predeceased by his loving daughter Goldie (Mrs. Bruce
Ronald), by his three sisters Bertha, Lillian and Sandie, and by
his three brothers Moses, Irving and Max.
Funeral services were held at the Beth Ezekiel Synagogue, 313
- 11th Street East, Owen Sound on Monday afternoon March 17
at 2pm. Interment in Greenwood Cemetery. As an expression of
sympathy, memorial donations to the Beth Ezekiel Synagogue
would be appreciated by the family. (and may be made by
calling Breckenridge-Ashcroft Funeral Home 519-376-2326)

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Obituary

Community stalwart worked to age 95

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

A stalwart of Toronto's Jewish community, Sam Sable died at Baycrest Hospital on March 14. He was 95 years old.

One year ago, he was honoured by Associated Hebrew Schools for more than 60 years of work on behalf of the school and the Jewish community. A fund was established in his name at the time to provide tuition assistance.

A strong proponent of Jewish education who helped establish a fund in support of Jewish education in 1947, Sable was a founder and the first president of Toronto's community Jewish high school, now known as the Anne and Max

Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto.

He was also involved in the Dr. Abraham Shore She'arim Hebrew Day School, and was a veteran fundraiser for Associated and other causes.

A former president of Shaarei Shomayim Congregation whose history with the shul goes back to the 1940s, Sable was also involved with many Israel-based hospitals and universities, as well as Baycrest, and the United Jewish Welfare Fund (a forerunner of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, where he served as the organization's first president).

Sable's efforts extended outside the Jewish community, too, where he was a board member of the Columbus Centre, an Italian Canadian community centre. He was honoured by the City of Toronto for his volunteer work.

Born in Zhitomir, in what is now Ukraine, in November 1912, Sable left with his family for Winnipeg as an infant. They later settled in Toronto, where he attended the Toronto Hebrew Religion School, known as the Simcoe Street Talmud Torah, an early incarnation of Associated.

Sable's father, who had a store on York Street, used to seek out Jews arriving at the nearby train station and offer them assistance. Sable thus learned to show concern for other Jews and help those in need, Rabbi Asher Vale said in a eulogy.

A graduate of Jarvis Collegiate, Sable entered the University of Toronto but left during the Depression to work in the family shoe store after his father suffered a stroke.

He later achieved financial success buying and managing properties, and continued to go to work almost every day until January. A regular at Shabbat morning services, Sable switched in later years to Beth Tzedec Congregation, which was closer to his home.

In his volunteer work, Sable gave not only of his money, but of his "time, effort, body and soul," Rabbi Vale said at the funeral.

Sable's grandson, Jordan Sable, a teacher at TanenbaumCHAT, recalls his grandfather telling him, "After family, community is everything."

He remembers his grandfather as a voracious reader and a "loving, strong, constant and incredibly energetic" force. The family patriarch took on a more nurturing role after his wife Jean died 15 years ago, taking his family out for dinner and attending his great-grandchildren's birthday parties and school functions, Jordan said in a eulogy.

Sable was "one of a kind," said Jordan's brother Josh, who like his brother is an educator at TanenbaumCHAT.

Sable had "a real zest and passion for life, and was always very positive. He was an extremely warm, and loving, and giving grandfather," Josh Sable told *The CJN*.

Sable is survived by his three children Marlene Weller, Martin, and Heather Sable, five grandsons, and eight great-grandchildren. He was predeceased by his wife Jean, and by his siblings Rose, Lily, Sam (from whom he differentiated himself by adding a middle initial to his name) and Florence.



Sam Sable

An era has come to a close

By DONALD CARR

Sam Sable was slight of physical build, but to the community, he was a giant.

There was hardly a position in a community organization that he did not hold during his many years of service.

It wasn't until the 1950s that I saw Sam in action at community meetings. I marvelled at his grasp of convoluted, even tortuous, issues facing the kahal.

Sam's clear voice rang out in the halls of 150 Beverley St. at the offices of the United Jewish Welfare Fund, as he took principled position after principled position. While he was a strong advocate for the day school system at every opportunity, his purview was not restricted to that. There wasn't an issue involving Jews and the Jewish community – locally, across Canada, in Israel and throughout the rest of the Jewish world – that didn't attract his attention. And, while he could become exercised and even irate, he never lost his gentlemanly approach.

Over the years, as he withdrew from active participation, he maintained his interest in everything going on in the Jewish world around him. I recall that he attended a meeting of past presidents of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto just a year or two ago and offered comments and suggestions on each agenda item.

To be at a simchah attended by Sam, was to know that he would lead the *Birkat Hamazon*, for he delighted in doing so, and in a voice that required no microphone and in a manner that demonstrated – every time, all the time – his love for his people and his religion.

Notwithstanding his commitment to Orthodoxy and his presidency of Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, he never shied away from participating fully in services conducted by the other streams of Judaism. It was neither in his personality nor in his religious belief to question the appropriateness of such participation. To him, a Jew was a Jew, and he never subscribed to boycotting a different mode of prayer to the same God.

An era has come to a close. I will miss him, as will so many others. He left not only a good name, but also an indelible mark on so many facets of this Jewish world. He left legacies for generations of schoolchildren and citizens, who knew him not, but who benefited from his good works and his benevolence.

Donald Carr is president of The CJN.

The Board of Governors and the Membership of
Shaarei Shomayim Congregation
deeply mourn the passing of

Sam Sable ז"ל

A pillar of the Toronto Jewish Community who served as
President of Shaarei Shomayim Congregation,
President of CHAT and
Chairman of the United Jewish Welfare Fund.

We extend our condolences to:
Martin and Gayle Sable
Marlene Weller
Heather Sable and Peter McClelland
and to the entire family.

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים
May they be comforted together with all the mourners of
Zion and Jerusalem.

S. Jeffrey Hertz, President
Charlene Arje, Chair of the Board

On Campus

Hillel president receives UWO award

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Kyle Lichtman, president of Hillel at the University of Western Ontario, received the Honour W Award last week for his "outstanding contributions to the community."

The award, which was presented to Lichtman on March 19, is given annually to a maximum of six members of the Western community and is sponsored by the University Students' Council.

Lichtman, a 21-year-old politics and philosophy student at UWO who is originally from

Toronto, said that growing up as a Jewish student and involving himself in community activism has been an integral part of his life.

"I challenge myself to engage people. People aren't coming to university to necessarily be Jewish, but we provide programming through Hillel that makes them feel comfortable and makes Hillel more approachable than anything else. It shows them that doing such a simple act is acting Jewish and staying involved in the Jewish community."

He said that he's been involved with London Jewish Campus Service, under which two clubs, Hillel and Israel on Campus, operate, and he's been involved with both since his second year on campus.

But since last year, he has been on the executive of Hillel, Israel on Campus and the Canadian Federation of Jewish Students.

Lichtman suspects that he was anonymously nominated for the award by someone he works with at Hillel.

"The person had to send in a write-up of what you had done on campus and I guess [the award goes to] whoever fits the criteria of making the most contributions to the Western community," he said.

As Hillel president, Lichtman has been involved in programs that help the less fortunate and raise money for a number of causes.

"We ran a program called 'Manicure For a Cure,' where we did \$5 manicures and all the money went to breast cancer research. We brought in estheticians who needed community service hours and we decorated the University Community Centre pink," he said.

Lichtman said Hillel recently ran a program in which members served coffee, with all the proceeds going to a women's shelter.

He also had his hand in a fashion where all the money went to Africa isReal, a non-profit organization based on the values of tikkun olam "that funds leading AIDS researchers and doctors while aiming to raise awareness of the real issues plaguing Africa today through social action."

Earlier this year, Lichtman spent a week doing community service in New Orleans on a Hurricane Katrina disaster relief trip.

While Lichtman is being recognized by the wider UWO community for his contributions, he said he is proud to be representing the Jewish community on campus.

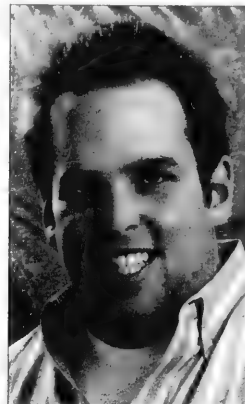
"Throughout high school as well as university, it has been important to me to represent myself, as well as the Jewish student community, in the best manner possible," he said.

His goal is to try to "get more people involved on

campus and show people that Hillel isn't only for Jews and show what Jews are capable of and how acting in a charitable manner is Jewish."

Lichtman said that the most rewarding part of the work he does is getting students like him to engage in the Jewish community on campus and focus on positive, community-building events.

"I'm really proud of the type of programming that we're doing... Accepting this award gives me great pride in knowing that I have acted in a way that makes a difference and I hope that it inspires others to act in a similar manner as I have learned from those before me."



Kyle Lichtman

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is saddened by the passing of our beloved friend

SAMUEL J. SABLE ז"ל

In whose name, together with his late wife and their friends, established the **Samuel J. and Jean Sable Chair in Jewish Family life at the Wurzweller School of Social Work at Yeshiva University in New York City** and who was a devoted leader on behalf of our university and many other significant institutions in Toronto.

Heartfelt condolences are extended to his children:
Marlene Weller, Heather Sable, Martin (and Gayle) Sable and his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

*May his entire Sable family
be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem*

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Dr. Herbert C. Dobrinsky, Vice President for University Affairs and Liaison to CFYU

Mo Lidaky, National Director, CFYU

PASSOVER FOOD IDEAS



Shifting into Passover mode

Passover customs vary from country to country, community to community and family to family, but what rarely changes is the gathering of family and friends for the ritual seder that is decidedly different from any other holiday meal.

Editorial

Not only do we tell the story of the ancient Hebrews' liberation from slavery in Egypt about 3,000 years ago, we also prepare a number of foods that commemorate the event.

These symbolic foods include wine, matzah, a lamb bone, roasted eggs, bitter herbs, a green vegetable and charoset.

Families, however, often put their own twist on the traditional foods. Some replace the lamb bone with a turkey or chicken bone, while vegetarians may use a roasted beet and feminists add an orange to their seder plate.

Recipes for charoset, which represents the mortar used by Hebrew slaves to make bricks, vary the most, often according to country.

While a typical east European charoset is usually made of apples, walnuts, spices and wine, Sephardi charoset may include raisins, figs, dates and sesame seeds.

We've included a number of charoset recipes this year, for those who want to add a global influence to their table, and we are offering a variety of recipes for first-time cooks, seasoned chefs or those who just want to add something different to their Passover menu.

In the midst of your cleaning, preparing and planning for Passover, we want you to take a break and enjoy our holiday food pages. You might find something totally new to you, or you might discover an alternative way to make an old favourite.

The ingredients in all our recipes are acceptable for Passover use, and can be purchased kosher for Passover in most large Jewish communities.

From all of us at *The CJN*, enjoy your Passover meals, and we wish you a chag kasher v'samayach. —C.B.



MATZO BREI: as seen in *passover by design* by Susie Fishbein; Photography by John Uher, Mesorah Publications.

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Passover Food Ideas



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Matzah

Seder Plate

Karpas, Chazeret, Chateaufort
Zroa and Beitzah

Roses Gefilte Fish with Salmon & White Fish

Light Beef & Chicken Chopped Liver

CHOOSE 1

Homemade Mini Matzo Ball Soup

or

Fresh Green & Yellow Split Pea Soup

or

Butternut Squash, Nutmeg and Ginger Soup

CHOOSE 1

Farm Fresh Baby Spinach, Oyster Mushroom,
Mandarin Orange & Pecan Salad

or

Four Tomato Salad with Fresh Basil
and Extra Virgin Olive Oil

or

Spinach, Jicama and Orange Salad
with Ginger Dressing

CHOOSE 1

Lean Brisket with Braised Carrots,
Sweet Potatoes, Onions, Apricots,
Dates and Prunes

or

Slow Roasted Boneless Turkey Breast
Stuffed with Sautéed Mushroom, Spinach
and Onion Matzo Stuffing

or

Supreme of Chicken with an Apricot Glaze
or
Baked Salmon with Olive & Sun Dried
Tomato Tapenade

CHOOSE 2

Roasted Peppers, Zucchini, Mushrooms,
Sweet Potatoes, Roma Tomatoes, Vidalia
Onion Wedges, Yukon Gold Potatoes with a
Balsamic & Olive Oil Vinaigrette

Garlic Infused Yukon Gold Mashed Potatoes
with Caramelized Onions

Yukon Gold and Sweet Potato
Mashed Potatoes

Roasted New Potatoes with Kosher Salt

Roasted Asparagus, Sliced
Brazil Nuts and Lemon

Potato Kugel with Caramelized Onions

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À La Carte

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Oyster Mushroom, Mandarin Orange
& Pecan Salad \$4.95 pp

Four Tomato Salad with Fresh Basil
and Extra Virgin Olive Oil \$4.95 pp

Spinach, Jicama and Orange Salad with
Ginger Dressing \$4.95 pp

Lean Brisket with Braised Carrots,
Sweet Potatoes, Onions, Apricots,
Dates and Prunes \$9.95 pp

Slow Roasted Boneless Turkey Breast
Stuffed with Sautéed Mushroom,
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Supreme of Chicken with
an Apricot Glaze \$9.95 pp

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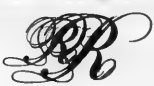
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Mix meat with fruit to add sweetness

By DAPHNA RABINOVITCH

Special to The CJN

I'm not sure if it's the thought of warmer climes during our months-long winter cold that has me pairing fruit with meat. Or if it's because I'm from Montreal where residents, I'm told, have an unusual affinity for sweet and savoury combinations. Or, perhaps, it's as simple as the fact that I have a sweet tooth.

Whatever the reason, I'm especially fond of roasting all manner of meat, red meat or fowl, with fruit stuffings, glazes and accompaniments. The fruity, sun-ripened flavour of fresh and dried fruit, in my opinion, helps bring out all the meat's succulence and adds an extra note of depth to the dish. For Passover this year, my recurring theme is to add a hint of fruit, be it to lamb shanks, turkey breasts or the finale of the meal.

So, even though the first seder falls in April, with its promise of sun in the following weeks, it's easy to provide a delicious jump-start to warmer weather with these pleasing fruit-enhanced main courses.

BRAISED LAMB SHANKS WITH RED WINE AND PRUNES

This deeply satisfying dish, with its richly coloured and flavoured sauce, can be made ahead. In fact, it's even better made the day ahead, to let the flavours mingle and develop.

1/2 cup finely ground matzah meal
1/4 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. pepper
6 lamb shanks (each about 1/4 lb.)
3 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
1 large onion, chopped
4 cloves garlic, minced

3 carrots, finely chopped
2 stalks celery finely chopped
1 tbsp. dried basil
2 tsp. dried thyme
1 tbsp. finely grated lemon rind
2 bay leaves
2 cups chicken stock
2 cups full-bodied kosher for Passover red wine
1 cup canned crushed tomatoes
2 tbsp. tomato paste
1 cup dried pitted prunes
1/2 cup halved dried apricots
chopped fresh parsley

In large shallow bowl, combine matzah meal, salt and pepper. Coat each lamb shank lightly. Reserve leftover matzah meal.

In large Dutch oven, heat half the oil over medium heat. Brown lamb in batches to avoid overcrowding, for about 8 minutes, turning to brown on all sides. Transfer lamb to roasting pan.

Heat remaining oil in Dutch oven. Add onion, garlic, carrots and celery, stirring to scrape up any brown bits. Cook, stirring occasionally, for about 5 minutes or until softened. Stir in basil, thyme, lemon rind, bay leaves and 1 tbsp. of reserved matzah meal and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Pour in stock, wine, tomatoes and tomato paste; bring to a boil. Stir in prunes and dried apricots. Pour over lamb in roasting pan.

Bake in centre of preheated oven at 350 for about 2 hours or until meat is very tender and almost falling off the bone. (Recipe can be made ahead to this point, covered and refrigerated. Before serving, bring meat and sauce to room temperature. Reheat in oven at 250 for 1 hour).

Continued on page 31

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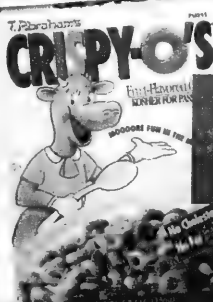
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Passover Food Ideas

Lots of ways to make charoset

By EILEEN GOLTZ
Special to The CJN

I was once told by a chef that there are as many recipes for charoset as there are Jews in the world. I never truly understood that saying until I was a guest at a seder where two sisters, both in their 70s started discussing their grandmother's recipe. Their suggestions were similar, yet not quite the same. Neither had it written down, yet both thought that their version was the "one" they remembered from their childhood.

Charoset is one of the Pesach dishes that showcase the vastness of the Diaspora when it comes to Jewish culinary traditions. As people moved and settled into different geographic and ethnic areas, they incorporated local ingredients. Ashkenazi Jews used apples as their base. Sephardi Jews from the Mediterranean and other countries in the Middle East opted to make charoset with dates, figs and other dried fruits.

Although most North American Jews favour a mixture of apples, almonds, cinnamon and wine, this is by no means the only "real" combination possible. Walnuts, pine nuts, pecans or even chestnuts may be combined with apricots, coconuts, raisins, dates, figs or even bananas. Traditionally, charoset is eaten only during the seders. However, in my house, if there isn't any left over, I have to make another batch because everyone loves to eat it as a snack or a side dish long after all the guests have gone.

COCONUT AND LEMON CHAROSET

A touch of coconut lends this charoset an exotic flavour, and its chunky texture makes it a good accompaniment for roast

chicken and carrots.

- 4 tsp. sugar
- 1 tsp. grated lemon rind
- 1 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 2 gala apples, peeled, cored and cut into 1/2-in. pieces
- 2 Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored and cut into 1/2-in. pieces
- 1/2 cup coarsely chopped almonds
- 2 tbsp. coconut, toasted

Combine sugar, rind, juice and apples in a large bowl. Stir in almonds and coconut. Cover and refrigerate 2 hours. Garnish with parsley, if desired. Makes 4 cups. This recipe can be doubled or tripled.

MAPLE CHAROSET

- 3 cups finely diced apple
- 1/2 cup sweetened dried cranberries, minced
- 1/4 cup Concord grape kosher wine
- 4 tsp. maple syrup
- 1/2 cup ground walnuts

Combine first 4 ingredients in a large bowl. Stir in ground walnuts. Refrigerate 2 hours in an airtight container. Makes 3 cups. This recipe can be doubled or tripled.

SEVEN-FRUIT CHAROSET

Submitted by Ari Rosenthal of New York

A thicker, dense, almost jam-like consistency created by the dried fruit makes this charoset very different from the usually

fresh fruit based variety.

- 8 oz. unsweetened coconut
- 8 oz. walnuts, chopped, or almonds, grated
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 tbsp. cinnamon
- 8 oz. raisins
- 8 oz. dried apples
- 8 oz. dried prunes
- 8 oz. dried apricots
- 8 oz. dried pears
- 4 oz. cherry jam
- sweet red wine



Combine everything except the jam and wine in a large, heavy pot. Add water to cover. Simmer over a low fire, stirring occasionally with a wooden spoon. Add small amounts of water periodically, so that the mixture does not stick to the pot. Continue stirring. Cook for at least 90 minutes. When the mixture is cohesive, stir in the cherry jam. Let stand until cool. Add enough sweet wine to be absorbed by the charoset mixture. Refrigerate. Makes about 5 cups.

DATE CHAROSET, SEPHARDI STYLE

Sephardi charoset can be made in various ways, but usually contains dates.

- 1 cup pitted dates
- 1 cup raisins
- 1/2 cup walnuts
- 1 medium apple, peeled and diced
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp. ground ginger

3 to 4 tbsp. sweet red or white wine

Combine all the ingredients in a food processor; process until finely chopped. Put into a serving container and cover until serving time. Makes approximately 3 cups. This recipe can be doubled or tripled.

TURKISH CHAROSET

- 1 cup seedless raisins
- 1 lb. pitted dates
- 1 orange, peeled, sliced and pitted
- 2 apples, peeled, cored and sliced

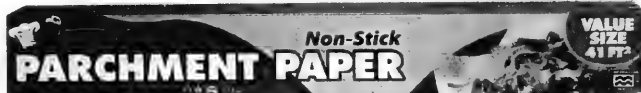
3 to 4 tbsp. sweet wine

In a large bowl, soak the raisins for about 30 minutes in hot water to cover. Drain. Place the raisins, dates, orange and apple together in the bowl of a food processor and process to combine. Add sweet wine to make a thick and chunky mixture. Cover and refrigerate until 1 hour before serving. Makes 3 to 4 cups.

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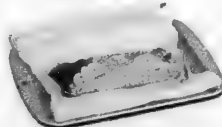


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Passover Food Ideas

Turkey always a crowd pleaser

Continued from page 28

Transfer meat to platter. Pour sauce into saucepan. Bring to boil; boil gently for about 15 minutes or until thickened and reduced by half. Spoon over lamb and garnish with chopped fresh parsley. Makes 6 servings.

ROASTED CORNISH GAME HENS WITH HONEY AND PEACH GLAZE

Grocery shelves are lined with an amazing array of differently flavoured honeys. Pick your favourite for this easy recipe. Cornish hens may be a bit more expensive than regular chicken, but the presentation of half a hen for each guest makes up for the budgetary lapse.

- 2 Cornish game hens
- 1/2 cup kosher for Passover dry white wine
- 2 tsp. honey
- 2 tsp. chopped fresh thyme
- 1 tsp. chopped fresh basil (or 1 tsp. dried)
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tsp. grated orange rind
- 1/2 cup peach juice
- 2 small onions, sliced
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 1 tsp. pepper

Glaze:
1/2 cup basil leaves
1/2 cup kosher for Passover peach jam

Cut wing tips from hens. Cut through backbones to divide hens in half; trim excess fat and skin. Set aside.

In large bowl, stir together wine, honey, thyme, basil, bay leaves, grated orange rind, peach juice, onion slices and half of the salt and pepper. Stir in hens, coating well. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 4 hours or for up to 24 hours, stirring occasionally.

Preheat oven to 425. Discarding marinade, lay hens, skin side up, on foil-lined baking sheet. Gently loosen skin from each breast and leg, leaving skin attached on one side; place 2 basil leaves under skin of each hen. Brush peach jam evenly over skin. Sprinkle with remaining salt and pepper. Roast in centre of preheated oven for 40 to 45 minutes or until lightly browned; juices run clear when hens are pierced with a fork and meat thermometer registers 180F. Broil for 3 to 5 minutes to finish caramelizing the jam. Makes 8 servings.

DATE AND DRIED CRANBERRY STUFFED TURKEY BREAST

This impressive roast is destined to be a crowd pleaser. The date, cranberry and nut stuffing so expertly complements the turkey that it may just become a year-round entertaining specialty.

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup pitted and finely chopped dried dates
- 1/4 cup dried cranberries (preferably unsweetened)
- 1/4 cup finely chopped hazelnuts
- 1/4 cup finely chopped fresh parsley
- 1 tsp. chopped fresh sage
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. pepper
- 14 lb. boneless turkey breast, skin on
- 2 tsp. balsamic vinegar
- 2 tsp. potato starch
- 1/2 cup chicken stock

In large ovenproof skillet set over medium heat, heat half of oil. Add onions and garlic, and cook, stirring, for about 3 minutes or until softened. Stir in dates, dried cranberries, hazelnuts, parsley, sage, 1/4 tsp. of the salt and half of the pepper. Cook for 1 minute. Remove from heat and let cool slightly.

Butterfly turkey breast by slicing almost in half horizontally. Then open up like a book. Flatten slightly with meat mallet if necessary. Leaving 1-inch edge uncovered on all sides, spread date mixture evenly over meat. Starting at narrow end, roll up. Tie at 2- or 3-inch intervals with kitchen string. Combine 1 tsp. of the olive oil and 1 tsp. balsamic vinegar, and brush all over top of breast. Sprinkle with remaining salt and pepper. Heat remaining tablespoon of oil in skillet. Brown turkey for 2 minutes per side until well browned on all sides.

Transfer to preheated oven at 400 and roast for 30 to 40 minutes or until juices run clear and meat thermometer registers 170F.

Transfer meat to cutting board; tent with foil. Place skillet over medium heat; sprinkle with potato starch, whisking. Whisk in remaining tablespoon of balsamic vinegar and chicken stock, whisking to loosen any brown bits on bottom skillet. Bring to boil. Boil slightly for about 3 minutes or until juice is glossy and lightly thickened. Slice meat and serve with juices. Makes 8 to 10 servings.



POACHED CHICKEN IN LEEK BROTH: as seen in *passover by design* by Susie Fishbein; Photography by John Uher, Mesorah Publications.

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Hurtig is 2008 Winnipeg Negev Dinner honoree

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — In choosing to honour community leader Larry Hurtig at this annual Negev Gala this year, the Jewish National Fund is recognizing an individual who has been involved in community work for more than 20 years and who is universally liked.

"Everyone I have spoken to who has heard that we are honouring Larry has expressed their delight," said Mel Lazareck, JNF's new president for Manitoba, Saskatchewan and northwestern Ontario and a previous Negev Gala honoree. "There is a real meeting of minds about Larry."

This year's gala is scheduled for June 17 at the Centennial Concert Hall.

Hurtig, the son of Bert and Rae Hurtig, was born in Winnipeg, spent his first few years in Saskatchewan and grew up in Thunder Bay. He came to Winnipeg to attend university.

A chartered accountant by training, he worked in public practice for 20 years. In 1981, he was invited by one of his clients, the Imperial Group, a property development company, to become the firm's vice-president.

When the Imperial Group went into receivership in 1986, Hurtig and Bob Shaer, an associate at Imperial, found themselves looking after some of the company's real estate properties that survived the bankruptcy. That association evolved into their present company, ASH Property Management and Chartered Financial Services.

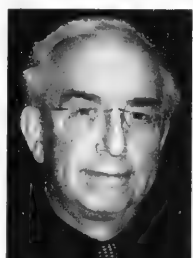
Hurtig's community work began through the Talmud Torah when his children were attending the school. He organized the lottery campaigns.

Hurtig began volunteering with the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg more than 20 years ago. He served as president from 1996 to 1999.

The highlight of his term in office, he recalls, was helping to inaugurate the Argentine Jewish immigration to Winnipeg. He made his first visit to Argentina in 1995 on behalf of the federation, accompanied by his son Jack, a representative of the provincial government. This was in response to contacts that then-premier Gary Filmon had made with a member of the Argentine Jewish community shortly before.

"I didn't know what to expect," he said. "All our meetings are arranged in advance. We visited the ORT school, syna-

gogues, the university, and met with government representatives. When we returned to our hotel in the evening, there were always people waiting for us to ask us about Winnipeg and the Jewish community here. The Canadian Embassy was particularly helpful."



Larry Hurtig

Hurtig said he thought maybe four to six Argentine Jewish families would come in the first year, and maybe a dozen in the next. It turned out that more than 100 families have come to live in Winnipeg.

At first, Hurtig and his wife, Roberta, would greet all of the new arrivals and have them over for Shabbat dinner — until the numbers became too large.

Although the number of Argentine immigrants has dropped considerably in the last couple of years, Hurtig noted, there are still families coming from elsewhere in South America, and he expects the numbers from Argentina to start growing again soon.

The Hurtigs were also among the founders of the original

Shalom Residence (which is similar to Toronto's Reena). Their son Bradley is one of the residents. Larry Hurtig has been president of the Shalom Residence Foundation since its formation 21 years ago.

As a teenager, Hurtig contracted polio. Although he recovered fully, about 15 years ago, he began to suffer from post-polio symptoms, which have limited his ability to walk.

As someone who understands the barriers faced by people with disabilities, Hurtig is now part of a group that has been lobbying new home and condominium builders to make sure their buildings are accessible to the disabled.

"It's not just for people who live in these homes," he said. "We want homes to be accessible for parents who may be handicapped who wish to visit their children."

Hurtig has been honoured in the past with the Jewish community's Sol Kanee Award and a Golden Jubilee medal.

He said he's humbled to have been asked to be a Negev honoree.

"It was a complete surprise to me. I thought Mel [Lazareck] was calling me to sell tickets. I am very honoured I have always been a strong supporter of the JNF," he said.

Israel puts out welcome mat for Que. tourists

BY JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Bienvenue.

That's the greeting the Israel Government Tourist Office (IGTO) is extending to Quebecers and other francophone Canadians through its new French-language website.

The site is designed specifically for the Canadian market, Jewish and, most importantly, non-Jewish. It's more than a translation of the existing English websites geared to Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom, and it differs somewhat from the one for France.

"It was long overdue," Jerry Adler, the IGTO manager of marketing and public relations, said of the creation of the site. The IGTO has had an English website for many years, and it revamped its English Canadian one last year.

While geared to any French-speaking Canadian, the IGTO is aware that Quebec, with its strong Catholic tradition, represents a potential source of many more tourists.

Accessible at www.goisrael.ca, the website offers infor-

mation on Israel's history, government, geography, people and culture, as well as tips on how to plan a trip to Israel. Visitors to the site will learn that 25 per cent of Israelis speak French, and the site includes a Hebrew-French glossary of words and phrases that are useful to tourists.

"This website will create a new window to Israel for Québécois and for francophones across Canada, which will undoubtedly help foster greater understanding about this young country and its rich history, diversity and beautiful landscape," Yoram Elron, Israel's consul general in Montreal, said at the official launch.

"It was imperative for us to create this French-language site to improve our ability to reach out and address the needs of Canada's francophone communities, the majority of whom reside in Quebec," said Oded Grofman, director of the IGTO's Canadian office, which is based in Toronto.

The number of Quebecers travelling to Israel is not negligible.

Grofman said 30 per cent of the 60,000 visitors from Canada to Israel last year came from Quebec. Overall, 60 per cent of the Canadians were Christians, but only about one-fifth of them could be categorized as pilgrims or motivated by religious reasons.

Ideas are offered on tailoring a trip to specific interests whether they be religious, health-oriented, business-related or in a relaxing and interesting vacation.

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Coast to Coast

Family raises funds to fight legal battle in life-support case

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Special to the CJN

WINNIPEG — The daughter of an elderly Orthodox man whom doctors tried to remove from life support against his relatives' religious beliefs says her family is relying on outside support to pay its legal bills as it fights the case through the courts.

Miriam Geller, the daughter of Sam Golubchuk, 84, said her family "hopes to have the financial means to go to trial" against doctors who unsuccessfully tried to remove Golubchuk from life support more than 3½ months ago.

Geller said that as of last week, the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition of Canada "is the only one that has given us financial assistance."

But she also noted that Joseph Ben-Ami, president of the Canadian Centre for Policy Studies — an independent, non-partisan and non-profit think-tank — has set up a website for the Golubchuk family.

"[Ben-Ami's] organization has undertaken to assist us in fundraising so as to enable us to be in a position to go to trial," Geller said.

"If this case goes to trial, there will be a number of groups that will seek intervenor status"

"Although our organization does not usually get directly involved in fundraising, we see this as an important case, as there are some significant health care issues at stake," Ben-Ami said. "We don't want to see this issue lost because the family may not have the same amount of money at their disposal as the doctors and hospital."

Ben-Ami added that, "I fully expect that if this case goes to trial, there will be

Justice Schulman's well-rendered decision," he said.

The doctors and hospital have 30 days to file an appeal of Schulman's interim decision from the date the order is signed.

In a March 17 interview, Kravetsky said the order would "be signed in the next day or two."

Golubchuk's son, Percy Golubchuk, an advertising salesperson for the local *Jewish Post and News*, said his family is gratified with the backing they've received.

"There are over 3,500 people from all around the world that have been writing to us on our website telling us that they support our position."

A trial would involve the testimony of two American doctors who reviewed the case and disputed the position of hospital physicians who said Golubchuk has minimal brain function.

Schulman ruled that until the trial, the hospital must provide Golubchuk with antibiotics, blood transfusions and CPR if necessary.

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Life After Retirement

By: A. Goldman

An aging boomer... isn't that what they call us? Yes, I'm getting older, but I am enjoying my golden years—there is life after retirement! Like most people, I looked forward to retiring — days of leisure with piles of books to read. Of course I wanted to spend lots of time with the grandchildren, start an exercise regimen and even devote more time to communal activities.

Since my retirement, however, I've learned that leisure time is a bit over-rated. There are lots of hours in the day to fill. So I began looking for part-time employment — but not something monotonous and dull. After 40 years of work, I had a lot of experience to offer. Fortunately I found the perfect place for me. The work is very interesting and stimulating and I am able to choose the days that fit my schedule. It's a real pleasure collaborating with like-minded people in an informal, yet business-like atmosphere. And of course I bring home some extra money as well — which I can lavish upon my grandchildren!

Located in the Bathurst/Finch area, the company specializes in business-to-business, customer-related services. Each of us is responsible for 2 or 3 business clients, engaging in a variety of activities such as

communications, market research, customer-service and project administration.

At first I thought my inexperience in these areas and my limited computer skills would be a problem. However, with onsite training I was brought up to speed very quickly. One delightful, yet unintended consequence of this training is that now I am able to teach my grandchildren a thing or two about using the computer.

Incidentally my wife points out that this would also be a wonderful opportunity for



"empty-nester" moms returning to the workplace. When our last child went off to university, she felt ready for a new challenge that would stimulate her mind and get her back into the work force. A job like this would have been perfect for her at that time.

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a number of groups that will seek intervenor status."

Last month, Justice Perry Schulman of the Manitoba Court of Queen's Bench granted the family an interim injunction preventing Grace Hospital from removing Golubchuk from life support until his case goes to trial. Schulman ruled that a court could intervene when doctors want to end a patient's life against the religious convictions and wishes of his family.

In November, the hospital took the position that Golubchuk had minimal brain function and that the decision to remove him from life support ought to be made solely by his doctors. But Schulman ruled that since doctors are not infallible and can make mistakes, a patient's family has the right to seek redress through the courts.

The family's lawyer, Neil Kravetsky, said last month that Golubchuk's condition had improved since the fall and that he was awake and "slowly being weaned off" life support.

Lawyers for the family and the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, which oversees the hospital, were in court earlier this month trying to set a trial date.

That date looks to be at least nine months off — likely in December — partly because of a court backlog in Winnipeg, Neil Kravetsky told Sun Media.

He said a number of things would have to occur before the case would be ready for trial. "There has to be a full exchange of documents, we would want to have independent medical examinations of Mr. Golubchuk done, and examinations for discovery would have to take place," he said.

Kravetsky added that he hasn't heard from lawyers for the hospital as to whether they will appeal Schulman's interim ruling granting the injunction. "They may decide they would rather proceed to trial as opposed to appealing

New book's optimism doesn't jibe with Mideast reality

Dreams and Shadows: The Future of the Middle East, a new book by veteran Middle East correspondent Robin Wright, has garnered mixed reviews due to its seemingly misplaced optimism about the future of the region.

According to Reports

By
PAUL MICHAELS

likelihood of an end to conflict in the Middle East... Hunkered under a siege mentality, Israel remains unwilling – and possibly unable to – satisfy the demands of Palestinians, Syrians and Hezbollah.

Obviously, Israel is unwilling to comply with the Hezbollah demand that it cease to exist. And to which Palestinians does Preston refer? Is it the Fatah faction, led by Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, which at least is officially committed to a negotiated peace with Israel? Or is it the Gaza-based Hamas, which is committed to Israel's destruction?

To be fair, Preston went on to describe Hamas as "a group of religious zealots that is not only deeply opposed to Israel's right to exist, but one that is also hostile to almost all of the norms and rights we consider essential for a just society."

In *Dreams and Shadows*, Wright, who reported for over a decade from the Middle East for the *Los Angeles Times* and now writes from Washington for the *Washington Post*, profited democratic and reform-minded activists in Iraq, Iran,

Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Morocco, Turkey, the Gulf states, and the West Bank and Gaza.

Wright explained: "This is a book about disparate experiments with empowerment in the world's most troubled region. My goal was to probe deep inside societies of the Middle East for the emerging ideas and players that are changing the political environment in ways that will unfold for decades to come."

But, Preston noted: "Even [Wright's] own stories are full of admissions, caveats and concessions – and above all direct evidence – indicating that her optimism is largely misplaced because her local heroes aren't representative of local conditions, to say nothing of the realities of autocratic state power. Wright's encounters with the Middle East's democrats leave the impression that they are undoubtedly heroic, but also ineffective."

Ethan Bronner, in a *New York Times* review ("Undercurrents of Hope in a Region of Turbulence," Feb. 28), reached a similar conclusion, arguing that Wright's impatience to witness change in the Middle East led her to exaggerate the influence of liberal reformers.

Bonner wrote: "The spirit in the region that animated her quest three years ago [during the 'Cedar Revolution' in Lebanon, and Egyptian and Palestinian elections a few years ago] has been exposed as more illusion than real." He calls her reformers "marginal-

ized and powerless."

Recent examples include Hamas' violent takeover of Gaza; Syria's and Egypt's crackdowns on reformers; Syria's and Iran's continued interference in Lebanese politics; and Iran's recent farcical elections in which conservative forces banned reformers from running for office.

A more realistic, if dire, view, was provided by Yossi Klein Halevi in "The Iranian-Israeli War" (*New Republic*, Mar. 11).

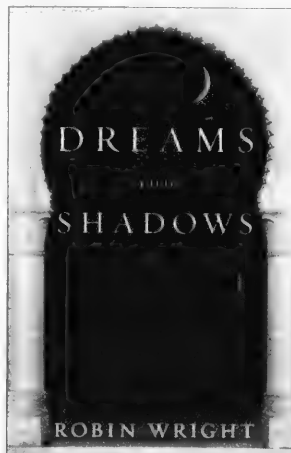
Wrote Halevi: "The Palestinian struggle is no longer about creating an independent state. It is about being a front-line participant in the Iranian-led jihad to destroy Israel, evolving from a nationalist to a religious war."

"Hamas [like Hezbollah] is an integral part of the Iranian war against Israel. Iran has trained hundreds of Hamas operatives and... continues to fund individual members of Fatah's Al Aqsa Brigades."

Halevi warned that a "ceasefire with Hamas... may well be the worst option of all. Hamas will likely use that interim period to turn itself into a second Hezbollah, equipped with Iranian weapons. And when Hamas feels empowered to break the ceasefire

and resume its attacks, Israel will face a far more formidable enemy."

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.



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Canada, Israel sign security declaration

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF

Staff Reporter

Canada and Israel have signed a "declaration of intent" to allow both countries to co-operate further on security matters of mutual concern.

The document – signed in Tel Aviv on Sunday by Canada's minister of public safety, Stockwell Day, and Israeli Minister of Public Security Avi Dichter – is intended "to enhance co-operation in the area of public safety" and is another indicator of continued warm relations between the two countries.

In a statement released by Canada's Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Day said the declaration would help both countries address "common threats" to national security.

"Today's declaration demonstrates the longstanding co-operation between Canada and Israel on public safety

issues, and we welcome this increased co-operation in order to improve our countries' capacity to protect our citizens," Day said.

Among the items listed in the declaration, the two gov-

ernments stated their intent to co-operate in the areas of border management and security; correctional services and prisons; illegal immigration; money laundering; organized crime; terrorist financing and trafficking in persons.

The document also outlines both countries' desire to set up "clear lines of communication and points of contact" between them; to "identify and share public safety concerns on the basis

of threats, risk assessments, priorities, vulnerabilities, future. and consequences" and to "facilitate technical exchange

co-operation, including education, training, and exercises," among other objectives.

The two countries also agreed to meet annually and "as needed" to work on and maintain security programs and "best practices."

Last October, Dichter and Day met in Ottawa while the Israeli minister was on a week-long trip through North America.

At the time, a report in the *Jerusalem Post* announced the two countries had signed an "interim agreement" on security matters after their meeting.

That report was premature, but on Monday a spokesperson for Day confirmed to *The C/N* that the new agreement was the result of "ongoing talks" between the two governments and is only intended as a "preliminary declaration" to help solidify the framework for more substantive work in the

No fixed schedule has been set, the spokesperson said.



Stockwell Day



Avi Dichter

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Rights Council hears from Jewish refugee

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

A United Nations body with a history of passing anti-Israel resolutions heard about a different side of the Arab-Israeli conflict last week when a Jewish refugee described her family's eviction from the home they had occupied in Libya for hundreds of years.

Regina Bubli-Waldman told the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in Geneva that her family was expelled from Tripoli by the Libyan government after the 1967 Six Day War.

During that conflict, mobs turned out in the streets shouting "Slaughter the Jews." They burned her family's warehouse and it was only thanks to a neighbour's intervention were they able to flee. One month later, the Libyan government ordered all the

country's Jews — there were 36,000 in 1948 — to leave. Their homes and other property were confiscated, she said.

Speaking under the auspices of Justice for Jews from Arab Countries (JJAC), Bubli-Waldman, who lives in San Francisco, said her family's fate mirrored that of many other Jews.

"I appear before you today not alone, but representing the nearly one million Jews resident in North Africa, the Middle East and the Gulf region at the turn of the century," she said. "Today, less than 5,000 Jews remain. Their plight and flight from 10 Arab countries has been ignored by the international community."

Bubli-Waldman — a co-founder of the San Francisco-based group JIMENA, Jews Indigenous to the Middle East and North Africa — appeared before the UNHRC in her great grandmother's wedding dress "to celebrate my heritage and mourn its loss."

She was only six years old when she first experienced hatred. During an arithmetic class in the local school, her teacher posed an arithmetic question: "If you have 10 Jews and you kill five of them, how many Jews do you have left to kill?"

"That was a traumatic and painful experience. I came home crying," she said.

Bubli-Waldman told the rights council that "after having to rebuild my life, I do not appear here with a bomb in my hand nor with hatred in my heart, but armed with these truths:

"That Jews are an indigenous people of the Middle East," that Jew were victimized by the state policy of various Arab regimes; and that the UN High Commissioner for Refugees has ruled Jews from Arab lands were bona fide refugees and "victims of the Arab-Israeli conflict."

She added: "The exclusion and denial of these truths will prejudice authentic negotiations and undermine the justice and legitimacy of any Middle East peace negotiations."

Bubli-Waldman's presentation was received respectfully, said Sylvain Abitbol, co-president of Canadian Jewish Congress and a member of JJAC's executive.

Her presentation was important in ensuring the UN body

recognized that "Jews from Arab lands are refugees and should be considered as such," he said.

It also corrects the international record on behalf of the children of Jewish refugees, who have lost "a whole culture of Jews from Arab lands," he added.

Abitbol, himself a refugee from Morocco, said the speech was part of a broader campaign to bring attention to the plight of Jewish refugees. The day before Bubli-Waldman's presentation to the council, the same speech was given to a gathering of non-governmental organizations, he noted.

Stan Urman, executive-director of JJAC, said the organization is dedicated to raising the issue of Jewish refugees to all members of the so-called "quartet," which is supervising Mideast peace efforts. The "quartet" consists of the United States, the European Union, Russia and the United Nations.

The UNHRC has been notorious for its "assault on Israel," Urman continued. "We thought it necessary to make a statement that, thanks to Israel, there was a home for the one million Jewish refugees."

The United Nations and the UNHRC continue to focus on alleged Israeli misdeeds, but "not one UN resolution has ever dealt with the issues of Jewish refugees from Arab countries. JJAC seeks to restore the plight and the truth of the Jews from Arab countries to the Middle East narrative from which they have been expunged and eclipsed," Urman said.

Late last year, JJAC researchers uncovered a 1947 Arab League document that outlined a policy of expulsion and robbery of longtime Jewish citizens.

The Arab League's proposed law was approved by Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Iraq and implemented by other nations. It provided that Jews would be considered "members of the Jewish minority of the state of Palestine" and have their bank accounts frozen and used to finance "resistance to Zionist ambitions in Palestine..." Jews believed to be active Zionists would be interned as political prisoners and their assets confiscated.



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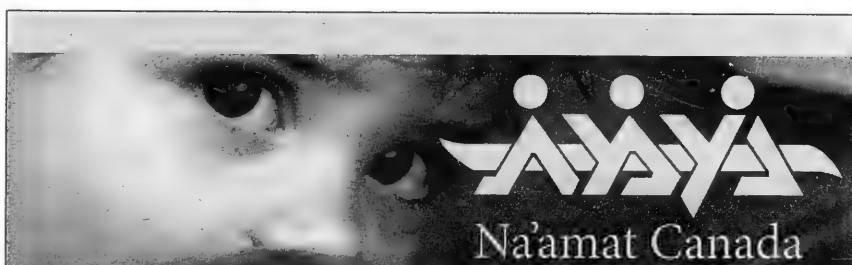
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Israel & the Jewish World

Strike Jews 'everywhere,' Al Qaeda No. 2 tells Muslims

© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

TEL AVIV — In a new audiotape released Monday Al Qaeda's deputy leader called on Muslims to strike Israeli, Jewish and U.S. interests in revenge for Israel's ground incursion in the Gaza Strip earlier this month.

Ayman al-Zawahiri said attacks should not be limited to places in Israel and the Palestinian territories.

"Today there is no room for he who says that we should only fight the Jews in Palestine," he said. "Let us strike their interests everywhere, just like they gathered against us from everywhere."

The recording by al-Zawahiri came on the heels of a message earlier this month from Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden calling a holy war to liberate Palestinian lands — a new push by the terror network's leadership to use widespread anger over the Gaza violence to whip up support.

The authenticity of the four-minute, 44-second audiotape could not be independently confirmed. But the voice on it resembled that of al-Zawahiri on previous audio and videotapes confirmed to be his. It was posted on an Islamist website where Al Qaeda usually releases its statements, and a banner advertising the tape had the logo of Al Qaeda's media arm, Al-Sahab.

"Muslims, today is your day. Strike the interests of the Jews, the Americans, and all those who participated in the attack on Muslims," al-Zawahiri said.

Al-Zawahiri continued: "Monitor the targets, collect money, prepare the equipment, plan with precision, and then — while relying on God — assault, seeking martyrdom and paradise."

Israel launched the Israeli Defence Forces operation in early

March to combat terrorists' rocket attacks on communities bordering the coastal strip. Two IDF soldiers were killed and eight were wounded, one moderately. Some 120 Palestinians were killed in the operation.

Speaking of Jews outside Israel, al-Zawahiri said: "Let them know that they will get blood for every dollar they spend in the killing of the Muslims, and for every bullet they fire at us, a volcano will turn back on them."

He added: "They cannot expect to support Israel, then live in peace while the Jews are killing our fugitive and besieged people."

Al-Zawahiri also referred to the publishing of a cartoon seen as insulting Islam's Prophet Muhammad in Danish papers. The cartoons, which were first printed in 2006 and reprinted this month, angered many Muslims.

"They will never be able to insult and make a mockery out of our Prophet, peace and prayers of Allah upon him," al-Zawahiri said.

Al-Zawahiri also accused Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak of colluding with Israel in besieging Gaza. Egypt has sealed its border with Gaza since the Palestinian terror group Hamas took over the territory last year.

He said Mubarak repeats "the same dirty role as the Lebanese Phalangists" — a Christian militia that was allied with Israel in Lebanon's 1975-1990 civil war and was blamed in the massacre of Palestinian refugees in the Beirut camps of Sabra and Shatila.

In an audio recording aired by Al-Jazeera last week, Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden called on Palestinians to use "iron and fire" to end the Israeli blockade of Gaza and liberate their country. The pan-Arab satellite TV station said the tape was new.



Ayman al-Zawahiri

Little progress on books
Palestinians have made scant progress in removing anti-Semitic passages from school textbooks, a new report says.

Palestinian Textbooks: From Arafat to Abbas and Hamas, the fourth such report published by the American Jewish Committee and

the Center for Monitoring Peace in the Middle East, found little mention of Israel in the books and said anti-West hatred was a "prevalent theme." The report examined 42 Grade 11 and 12 textbooks. It found most maps don't include Israel and that Jewish links to some holy places aren't mentioned. Some Grade 11 books showed improvement, the study said.

African refugees in Israel

Some 2,400 African refugees have crossed into Israel from Egypt so far this year, officials told Ha'aretz. The total number that have entered Israel is

estimated at 6,000. Some 2,600 of them live in Tel Aviv, many in poor conditions in shelters and parks in south Tel Aviv. Mayor Ron Huldai said the refugees will be moved to a tent compound with better conditions.

Swiss gas deal protested

The Swiss ambassador was summoned March 19 to the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem to receive a formal complaint after Switzerland agreed last week to buy Iranian natural gas worth as much as \$30 billion (US). Swiss Foreign Minister Micheline Calmy-Rey announced the deal in Tehran. Her trip, the Foreign Ministry said in a statement, was "an act unfriendly toward Israel" and threatened U.S.-led efforts to isolate Iran via economic sanctions. Calmy-Rey, whose government favours talks to curb Iran's nuclear program, denied the gas deal violates UN Security Council sanctions against Tehran.

Israel Briefs



The President, Board of Directors and Board of Governors of Associated Hebrew Schools express their sincere condolences to

the family of

Samuel J. Sable ז"ל

Beloved husband, loving father,
devoted grandfather and great-grandfather.

Life Member of our Board of Directors, generous benefactor, tireless supporter and founder of the Samuel J. Sable Education Fund at Associated Hebrew Schools. His dedication and work as a champion of Jewish education and the Toronto Jewish community will always be remembered.

May his family be comforted with the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

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Israel & the Jewish World

Violence, political future worry South African Jews

By MOIRA SCHNEIDER

JTA

CAPE TOWN — Violent crime, political change and an energy crisis are fuelling a growing sense of panic among South African Jews.

Several weeks ago, the Jewish community was shaken when a Jewish man in Johannesburg named Sheldon Cohen was shot to death while sitting in his car waiting for his son to finish soccer practice.

In the past few months, at least two other Jews were murdered in the same city, including an elderly man on his way to synagogue on Shabbat morning who was shot for the contents of his tallit bag.

The violence comes amid growing concerns among South African Jews about threats to the rule of law in the country following the election last December of the controversial Jacob Zuma to the presidency of the ruling African National Congress.

At its December meeting, the ANC passed a resolution to push for disbanding the country's crack crime-fighting unit, the Scorpions, whose probes resulted in an indictment against Zuma on counts of racketeering, money laundering, corruption and fraud.

With Zuma now leading the ANC, he is the favorite to succeed South African President Thabo Mbeki in 2009.

The Jewish community is "very nervous — the worst I've seen in the eight years I've been in leadership," said Michael Bagraim, president of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies, the community's umbrella group.

To make matters worse, a local energy crisis has prompted frequent power outages in South Africa since the beginning of the year, hurting the mining industry, the bedrock of the nation's economy.

"People want me to look in a crystal ball," Bagraim told JTA. "They want to know if we're going down the same road as Zimbabwe, whether the crumbling infrastructure will destroy the

economy and whether there'll be a future for their children."

Many Jewish leaders here are afraid that concerns about the country's future could fuel Jewish emigration, further depleting a community that has declined to 75,000 from a peak of 120,000 in 1970.

Zev Kregel, chairman of the Board of Deputies, in a recent open letter to the country's Jews, acknowledged "a great deal of negativity and uncertainty."

Kregel told JTA he sees a wave of emigration as "inevitable," yet he insisted that South Africa remains a good place to be Jewish.

"Our rights are protected as a minority, and we have the lowest anti-Semitism in the world," he said.

Though Jews may not be singled out here for being Jewish, as well-to-do South Africans, they remain targets of violent criminals who don't discriminate.

The Jews' exposure to crime, coupled with the country's political direction, is prompting many to rethink their future here.

One Jewish woman interviewed by JTA recalled her upbringing in Congo in the 1960s, when at age 12 she and her family fled the civil war there. She believes her family may encounter a similar scenario of violence in South Africa.

"I feel that the young people and those that can afford it are definitely going to see a future away from South Africa, because they have seen the writing on the wall," she said.

Ivor Davis, a London native who as a journalist saw his fair share of African history first-hand during 33 years in Kenya, 12 in Zimbabwe and the last five in Johannesburg, is also concerned.

A resident of the affluent Johannesburg suburb of Sandton, Davis has a guard stationed inside his house at night, and his property is secured with palisades and barbed wire.

"It's a shame that our homes have to be turned into fortresses," he said.

Aside from having to live under the threat of muggings, burglaries and car jackings, South Africans face the prospect of a president who himself has been charged with crimes.

In 2005, Mbeki dismissed Zuma as the country's deputy president after Zuma was implicated in a corruption scandal. The next year, Zuma went on trial for raping a family friend at his home. He was acquitted.

Zuma is under indictment now on charges of fraud and corruption relating to a bribe he allegedly received from a French arms company in connection with a controversial arms deal.

One Jewish property administrator, Frank Stuppel, said the prospect of a Zuma presidency is "most disturbing and very worrying."

"He has an unsavoury history, and I think that's a problem," he said.

But other Jews said they're not overly worried by Zuma.

Kregel contrasted the situation with B.J. Vorster, the president of apartheid-era South Africa from 1978 to 1979 and prime minister from 1966 to 1978, who had expressed support for Hitler.

"It's not like when Vorster came into power and Jews were scared — this was a member of the Nazi Party," Kregel said. For the time being, Jewish leaders are urging the community not to panic.

In his letter, Kregel wrote that Jews should maintain a sense of perspective and remember that South Africa has gone through "far more difficult" periods in recent history.

South Africa's chief rabbi, Warren Goldstein, urged listeners in a recent radio address "to see the bad and the good," noting that "South Africa is really the quintessential comeback kid."

Bagraim says media reports and dinner-party conversations rather than hard facts, are fuelling negative perceptions of the situation.

"My answer to people is, 'Let's not get panicked because of the herd mentality,'" he said. "The main and only factor which is a real issue is crime, and there we've taken the bull by the horns."

The Jewish community's 13-year-old Community Security Organization has assisted in rolling out a community watch program that puts armed guards on some street corners, runs vehicle patrols 24 hours a day and has a centralized call centre.

Community Active Protection, as the program is called, has reduced violent crime by more than 80 per cent in its areas of operation.

Nevertheless, Jews still live under the threat of violence.

Hayley Pogrud, an information technology specialist, was held up at gunpoint and robbed two years ago while visiting a friend in the Cape Town suburb of Constantia.

"There is an underlying tension that we all live with," Pogrud said. "But at the moment, we've chosen to be here."

Telling the Lost Stories

A German-Canadian storytelling exchange

Featuring three celebrated storytellers from Germany

Gidon Horowitz, Martin Ellrodt & Regina Sommer

Wednesday, April 2, 2008, 8:00 p.m.

Congregation Habonim

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Three founders of the contemporary German storytelling movement — Gidon Horowitz, Regina Sommer, and Martin Ellrodt — will share stories from their multicultural repertoires, and discuss their experiences as storytellers in modern Germany, using stories to build new cultural awareness, spark wisdom, and help their fellow-citizens to ask difficult questions about German history.

They will be hosted by Toronto storytellers Dan Yashinsky and Eli Rubenstein.

ADMISSION FREE



This program is produced by the 2008 Toronto Festival of Storytelling (a program of The Storytellers School of Toronto), and is co-sponsored by The Goethe Institute, The Koffler Centre of the Arts, Holocaust Centre of Toronto, Lufthansa, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and Congregation Habonim.

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BEAUTY SHOP

By
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Dedicated in memory of Carol Wise.



shades of red are hot this season. Try these tips on cuts, styles and colour at your next hair appointment.

STACEY'S TIPS

SPA AND SKIN CARE: Introducing **Dermaglow** NuVage Hydration Fix, a highly advanced treatment clinically proven to deliver an instant surge of moisture deep into the skin to immediately minimize fine lines and wrinkles and restore moisture balance, while also offering long-term hydration benefits with innovative ingredients that repair, restore and prevent dry, dehydrated skin and leave a supple, radiant and more youthful complexion behind. Targeted to people with dry, mature skin, as well as to those with normal and combination skin going through a dry phase, this hydration-packed treatment is clinically proven to instantly boost moisture in the skin by 45 per cent in one hour, with moisturizing benefits that last a full 24 hours.

One of **Dermaglow's** signature products that's great for spring and summer preparation is **Dermaglow** NuVectin Advanced Cellulite Therapy. This is a stellar product that takes a two-tiered approach to battling cellulite, firming and toning the skin and reducing fat.

Imagine if time could stand still, if time's precious luxury could be suspended, so that you could look younger longer. Your skin would be fresh, vibrant and beautiful. Your look would radiate the qualities of youth — life, energy, health. And the appearance of aging would be postponed indefinitely.

Estée Lauder introduces **Re-Nutriv** Ultimate Youth Creme, a revolutionary moisturizer that helps prolong the skin's youthful appearance. This extraordinary cream brings you a perfect fusion of science and luxury. The luxurious formula offers the ultimate youth-keeping benefits to help visibly prolong youthful vitality, preserve youthful smoothness and promote youthful tone. **Re-Nutriv** Ultimate Youth Creme changes the way you will face the future. It is the first product to incorporate the power of **Estée Lauder's** exclusively engineered **Youth Molecule**, extending our skin's youthful appearance so that time can virtually stand still. **Re-Nutriv** Ultimate Youth Creme puts time on your skin's side in a way never dreamed of — skin looks more visibly radiant, energized and glowing with health.

Continued on page 40

A collection of
Revlon's LEC
products.

We are almost through the toughest time of year — and what a winter this has been! The days are beginning to get longer and the temperatures are not nearly as cold. It's time to put away the heavy coats and boots and bring out your spring collection. Do keep in mind that your face, body and legs are still stressed out from the cold temperatures.

Spring beauty begins with cleansing, toning and moisturizing, morning and night — and don't forget to apply a mask at least once a week. Spring is a great time to renew your image and test out new products and trends. Matte foundations are in — even bronzers are matted!

This season, makeup trends include bright candy colours during the day and deep plums and purple for the evening. Smoky eyeshadow still remains hot; however, it is a lighter version with grey and metallic silver tones. Pastel eyeshadows such as eggshell blue, light green and lilac are being seen on the runways. Full eyebrows are the hottest look this spring, so don't be afraid to accentuate them with a dark-coloured liner. Cat eyes are back, so choose your favourite liquid liner or extra-dark pencil. Lips also make a statement, with colours ranging from pink, orange, hot coral, fuchsia and brown to the sexiest of reds. Make sure to finish your look with the same colours, and if you feel you want to be daring, try navy blue.

Eat your fruits and vegetables and make sure to drink plenty of water. With the weather now beginning to improve, make sure to put aside at least 20 minutes for your daily walk. Put that smile back on your face. Spring is here!

FIORIO — Hairstylist Maurice Fiorio tells us that for spring, layers and movement are in, leaning away from structure, and that sweeping fringes are staying in for the season. For styles, ponytails are popular, either loose, messy, wavy and to the side, or tight, high on the head, sleek and straight. For colour, natural monochromatic colour is in, meaning subtle shades of a single colour and tone on tone with little contrast. To brighten up your spring colour,

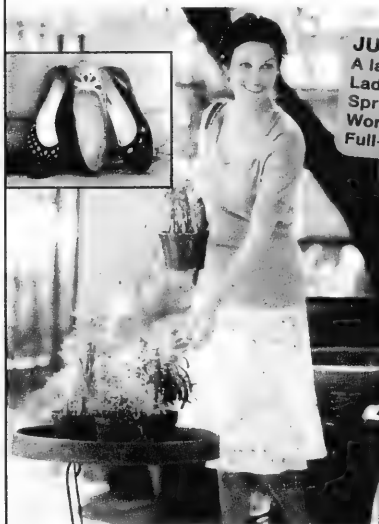


MAKE A CLEAN SWEEP AT MARK'S THIS SPRING!

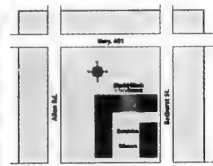
Join us for the launch of
Clothes That Work for the Community,
a charitable clothing drive benefiting United Way of Greater Toronto agencies in the Lawrence Plaza neighbourhood.

Sweep out the OLD in your wardrobe and save on NEW Spring purchases for ladies and men from Mark's Clothes That Work, now conveniently located in Lawrence Plaza!

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A Mark's Work Wearhouse concept



United Way
Greater Toronto

Spring Fashion

Continued from page 39

New from **Good Skin Laboratories** is **Citra-Peel High Intensity Resurfacing Peel**, an especially sweet new option for at-home facial peel treatments. The dual-purpose system provides a highly effective, sugar-based citric peel that restores important healing and moisturizing properties. Citra-Peel is an innovative two-step system that works in phases to dramatically help retexture the skin and is clinically proven to immediately improve skin clarity with noticeably improved skin tone and a visible reduction in lines and wrinkles.

Caryl Baker Visage is thrilled to introduce the **High Performance Solutions** collection, which includes four new groundbreaking skin-care products that are good for all skin types. **Capillary Correction** with **Anti-Rosacea Complex** incorporates two capillary-inhibiting complexes that together reduce skin inflammation around broken capillaries and make them less noticeable; **Line Deflection** with **Wrinkle-Filling Ceramides** targets fine lines and wrinkles to smooth and fill them in; **Light Reflection** with **Skin Brightening Complex** restores the skin's healthy glow to help diminish the appearance of dark spots and brighten skin's complexion; and **Light Injection** with **Haloxyl™** for **Dark Circles**, a brightening gel, targets under-eye circles, darkness and local inflammation. Try one of them today!

The key to great skin is simple: daily exfoliation and protection. **Artistry's Essentials Hydrating System** and its **Balancing System** offer simple, effective skin care in three easy steps – exfoliating cleanser refines and smoothes the skin, renewing toner

treatments and preps, and moisturizer protects from loss of hydration and defends against environmental aggressors. Both are designed to enhance the natural moisture barrier of the skin.

The **Hydrating System** maintains optimal moisture for normal to dry skin types. The system adjusts to individual skin needs to brighten, refine and hydrate. All products feature natural ingredients chosen specifically for their ability to help skin stay hydrated. The **Balancing System** maintains optimal oil control for combination to oily skin types – leaving skin with a balanced matte finish. The system adjusts to individual skin needs to brighten, refine and balance. All products feature natural ingredients chosen specifically for their ability to control

excess oiliness.

Whether you are looking to achieve Patrick Dempsey's trendy short stubble or David Letterman's full beard, the **WAHL Beard Cord/Cordless Trimmer** comes with everything necessary to keep a bearded man looking suave. The six-position guide with a convenient memory function ensures consistency with each trim, so beards are always even and well defined, perfect for that three-day growth look. The trimmer also features **Wahl's Self-Sharpening Precision Blades**, specifically designed for beards.

For Johnny Depp's eye-catching whiskers, the **WAHL Moustache Trimmer** is designed for precision to give smooth, clean results time and time again. The compact, cordless, ergonomic design offers easy handling and portability, so that the moustache is always in tip-top form.

Steer eyebrows in the right direction with **Tweezerman Mini**

Slant Tweezer, a brilliant tool that lets you successfully remove hair to reveal your perfect brow shape. Once you've reached your desired arch, enhance them with **Tweezerman Brow Shaping Brush**, a customized tool that brushes brows up and follows their natural line. Chic travellers know that style knows no borders so it should come as no surprise that they carry **Tweezerman Professional Brow Brush** onboard to preserve their charm. Boasting an angled nylon brush, specially designed for precise and easy application of brow powder, it maintains its shape through a smooth, retractable case that also ensures the brush stays clean and protected.

Visiting warmer climates can leave skin feeling gritty, but travelling beauties armed with **Tweezerman Blotting Paper** can confidently fend off grease and sweat. Remarkably powder-free, it won't leave your face looking ashy but will instantly revitalize skin by eliminating excess oil. Toss the purse-size dispenser of blotting papers in your bag and carry it with you across the world to keep skin radiant and stunning.

Ask any seasoned travellers and they'll assure you that smooth nails and shapely brows are accepted around the world, and high quality grooming tools should top your packing list.

FEET: **Tweezerman Disposable Callus Shaver** lets you improve the condition of your feet by removing dull, rough skin in one simple step. For gorgeous on-the-go feet, turn to **Tweezerman Safety Slide Callus Shaver/Rasp**, a retractable tool that brings comfort and good health to heels. Offering two utensils in one exceptional product, it successfully removes thick calluses and smoothes jagged skin to revive tired and tattered feet.

FRANCINE'S TIPS:

CONCEALER AND FOUNDATION: **Artistry Essentials** Enhancing Concealer is silky, blends easily and is perfect for any skin type. It is a creamy concealer that can be used to disguise blemishes and dark circles as well as a base or primer for under-eye makeup.

Yves Rocher introduces **Second Skin Fluid Foundation**, a liquid foundation with an ultra-fluid texture, enriched with natural physio-fibres that fuse with your skin. It blends away any imperfections and leaves your complexion flawless.

For that suntanned look, **Elizabeth Arden Sun Goddess Bronzing Powder** will make your skin look natural and healthy with a rich, sun-bronzed glow. Make sure to sweep this bronzing powder onto cheekbones, décolletage and shoulders.

EYESHADOWS, EYELINERS, MASCARA: **Revlon** continues to set the trend in colour cosmetics with the new 2008 limited edition **Make a Sheen Lustrous Shadow**, a powder eye shadow trio with inspired shades, set in an abstract design. Shades can either be blended together or applied individually.

Looking for a neutral look? **Lise Watier** presents **Les Basiques** eyeshadow quartet. This palette includes four neutral eye shadows that mix and match ivory, brown, bronze and chocolate. You can achieve a sophisticated look with any combination you choose.

Lancôme's Spring 2008 makeup collection reveals, for the first time ever, "colourless colour." **L.U.C.I. Eyes Compact** is a stunning eye-shadow duo whose transforming textures illuminate the eye. It is available in three versions and packaged in an exquisite, mirror-decorated seashell white case.

For an easy, long-lasting eyeshadow and liner, **Lise Watier** has created oversized crayons for a shimmering colour effect on the eyelids. Available in four exotic hues, this can also be used as eyeliner.

Continued on page 41

BEAUTY SHOP

BY
STACEY MICHAELS
AND
FRANCINE BIRKEN

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Spring Fashion

Continued from page 40

To achieve the cat-eye look, define your eyes with Elizabeth Arden Color

Intrigue Gel Eyeliner with Brush, available in fabulous Bronze Pearl and Black Pearl shades.

All eyes are on mascara! Revlon announces New 3D Extreme Mascara! Lashes appear multiplied from every angle. Lashes look up to 25 times fuller, 70 per cent curvier, and 80 per cent visibly longer, with beautiful separation.

Rimmel London introduces one of its newest additions, Volume Flash Mousse Instant Thickening Mascara. The mineral complex and mousse-like texture deliver oxygen to lashes, allowing them to breathe, while adding length. It leaves lashes feeling soft rather than brittle.

BLUSH: The spring look is to appear as though you have just returned from a brisk walk. Artistry Essentials Power Blush brings your complexion to life with just a soft brush. The creamy, velvety soft, powder colour is to be applied over your foundation.

Revlon presents Golden Affair Sculpting Blush from its new 2008 Limited Edition Collection – a sculpting blush and highlighter in one. Bold colours with golden accents dramatically sculpt and contour cheeks.

LIPS: Winter weather may have left your lips feeling cracked, chapped and dry. Before applying any lipstick or lipgloss, make sure to treat your lips with a good lip balm or even a smear of vaseline before you go to bed. This will help rejuvenate those lips for the spring season.

Revlon's Super Lustrous Lipstick feels creamy and silky smooth on lips because it contains silk-enriched moisturizers and vitamins. It's available in 48 shades.

For all my brides to be, Lise Watier is proud to introduce Waterproof Lip Crayon in Soft Plum, a complement to go with your shades of Lise Watier lipsticks.

Lancôme's L.U.C.I. Colour Fever Shine melts into the lips and ensures a vibrant shine. It's available in an array of colours.

FRAGRANCES: Every season, a large array of new fragrances appears, and the question is, which is the right one for you? With the warmer temperatures approaching, fragrances are lighter and fresh.

Nautica My Voyage for Her is aquatic and has a floral scent. This light blue fragrance captures the elegance and fluidity of the sea. The bottle design is modern and yet classic, with the feminine lines of a boat.

Its sexual, feminine, energetic and vibrant scent is what the new Burberry The Beat is all about. The scent is floral and woody, and the bottle reflects the cool attitude of the model who is serving as its face.

Truly unique, Kate Moss introduces her first fragrance, Kate by Kate Moss. Kate is a floral musk fragrance that is sophisticated, wild and unforgettable. The bottle is a timeless jewel – sensual, rounded and very feminine.

Do you know what your man likes to wear? Chanel introduces Allure Homme.Edition Blanche, a crisp, clean,

warm and sexy scent. The fragrance comes to life with its Sicilian Lemon

and Calabrian Bergamot notes followed by Sandalwood and Tonka Bean. It will be available in Eau de Toilette Concentrée and After Shave Lotion.

Enjoy all these wonderful tips and get yourself ready for the beautiful spring days just ahead!

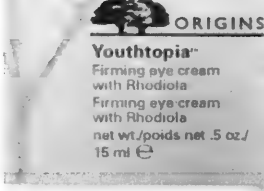
BEAUTY SHOP

BY STACEY MICHAELS AND FRANCINE BIRKEN



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Spring Fashion

Sightsee while having a beauty treatment

At the Lotus Spa & Beauty Salon on Princess Cruises' Golden Princess, you can sightsee while having a beauty treatment. Have a facial while leaving one port, and the next day enjoy a body treatment on arrival at another.

From fall to spring, pampering on the 15th deck of this ship allows you to view California and the Mexican Riviera; from spring to fall, the Golden Princess heads north to Alaska.

Jeanette Oevering is the manager of the Lotus Spa. Trained as an esthetician, she hails from Holland. "Our staff consists of two estheticians, two ionothermists, two fitness instructors, three hairdressers, one teeth-whitening technician, two nail technicians [and] eight massage therapists," she says.

"We have international staff. We are all trained in different services using techniques from where we are from – Africa,

America, Europe and Asia. There are treatments on this floating spa, such as the Ionothermie and La Therapie Facial, that are hard to find on land."

Oevering describes the atmosphere in the spa as calming but also very fresh. It is painted in tones of yellows, greens and whites, with a lot of light in the spa and salon. All the rooms have tiled walls. There are 10 treatment rooms, as well as a salon and a well-equipped fitness centre. Two of the treatment rooms are in the beauty salon are used for La Therapie Hydralift Facials and acupuncture treatments for pain management, weight-loss, stress and to detox.

Nine of the treatment rooms have one-way windows facing the ocean, so the client can look out without passengers who are walking the deck being able to see in. Soothing music completes the ambience of the rooms.

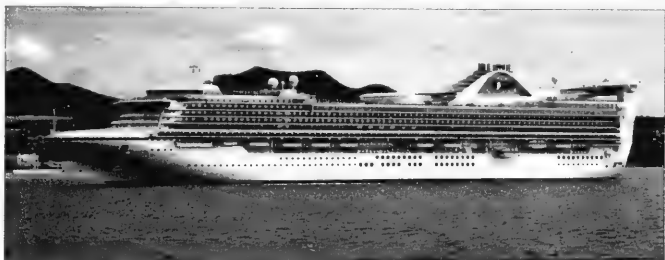
"A new service we do on the ship is the GoSmile Tooth Whitening Treatment that is used by many celebrities. This is a cosmetic service, not a dental procedure. The tooth whitening is extremely popular. It doesn't hurt the enamel," Oevering stresses.

She says Ionothermie is a detox firming treatment with which you can lose up to three to five inches in a single session. It is the most popular treatment on board, and she adds it will make you bathing suit ready. People normally book a course of three treatments. Afterward, the therapist recommends a followup program to achieve the best results. Oevering says you can still eat a lot of the ship's delicious food, as long as you make healthy choices.

"Our newest treatment is an Oxygen/Collagen Facial. It is a resurfacing and regenerating facial with instant results," she says. "We have the La Therapie Hydralift Facials – it is not just for mature skin, but for those from 18 years old. The Aroma Spa Seaweed Massage is our most beneficial massage as the seaweed is very cleansing and detoxifying. It is good for people with arthritis or muscle tension – it breaks down the lactic acid around the muscles.

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icures, pedicures, and hair and barbering services. Men's barbering services are offered in packages. One package includes an express shave, frangipani scalp massage, haircut and spa mini facial for \$79 (U.S.). The spa's clientele usually consists of 70 per cent women and 30 per cent men.

Products used in treatments and available for sale at Lotus Spa include European lines – La Therapie facial products, Elemis for face and body and Steiner hair-care products.

Also offered at the Lotus Spa are fitness classes such as Pilates, circuit class and yoga, and free seminars on topics ranging from weight loss and life extension to acupuncture and energy assessment. For \$60, you can sign up for a partner massage class.

Those who make one too many trips to the buffet line and find their waistsline expanding can combat weight gain by exercising with a personal trainer during the cruise.

Spa hours are 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on sea days and 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. on port days, to accommodate guests who have taken a land excursion while at port and want to relax at the spa once back on the Golden Princess.

For those who wish to have spa treatments and not go into port, there are specials advertised on the back page of the Golden Princess' daily newsletter, *The Princess Patter*. The information is also at the reception desk.

One port-day special is the Pick 'n' Mix. For \$69 (U.S.), passengers can choose any three treatments from a selection that includes frangipani scalp massage; conditioning hair treatment; re-polishing of hands or feet; foot and ankle massage; hair comb out; or mini manicure.

To book a cruise on the Golden Princess, contact your travel agent or call 1-800-Princess. Services at the Lotus Spa and Beauty Salon can be pre-booked online or once on board. It is advisable to book early, especially on sea days and formal dress nights.

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Spring Fashion

A million girls would kill for my job, right?

Dining with designer Michael Kors, drinking with fashion stylist Rachel Zoe, dancing with actress Selma Blair — a million girls would kill for my job, right?

I've been in New York for the past seven months working as an intern at *Teen Vogue* and *Interview* magazine, and quickly advancing to the ranks of front-row seating at Fashion Week. Sounds too good to be true, but before I go on, let's get a few things straight.

First, interning in New York City could not be further from glamorous if it involved dressing up in lederhosen. (Yes, gals, that means all fond memories you may have of L.C. and Whitney having a gay old time in the *Teen Vogue* office on the TV reality series *The Hills* can escape your mind now...) Although interns are the foundation of the fashion industry, they are treated as cheap commodities: willing and able bodies who salivate at the very thought of running into the likes of Anna Wintour, the editor-in-chief of *Vogue* magazine.

Second, attending Fashion Week in New York is far from fun and games. For more than a week, my schedule consisted of running

across town, tape recorder in hand, from 9 a.m. to 3 a.m., and writing from 3 a.m. to 6 a.m.

But let's start from the beginning. After graduating from the fashion communications program at Toronto's Ryerson University last spring, I decided to try my hand in New York. Since I had no experience in the United States, I had to start at square one, the world of not getting paid — standing on my feet for more than 10 hours a day, lifting boxes heavier than anvils, running around town doing pickups and drop-offs at the whims of anyone who felt like it... yipee!



By **RANDI BERGMAN**
Special to The C/JN

My first day at *Teen Vogue*, I headed for 4 Times Square (the headquarters of *Vogue*, *Vanity Fair* and *GQ*) with an optimistic head on my shoulders and one-size-too-small boots on my feet. Just after I got there, I stepped into a closet chock-full of American Apparel leggings, Marc Jacobs dresses and Miu Miu heels, and I dropped my bags and got right to work.

Although a handful of interns were already there, the work never seemed to subside. Halfway through the day, my boss mentioned that one of us would have to run over to Louis

Vuitton. Like any fashion enthusiast, I jumped at the chance!

With mock importance, I pranced into the store. Surely mentioning *Teen Vogue* had got to give me some clout, right? As soon as I mentioned the name, however, I was shuffled into the dingy delivery office to pick up the package. As I hurried back to the office, I realized that my brilliant plan of wearing size eight boots was starting to backfire. By the end of day one, I had cut into multiple layers of skin. Très classy.

After a few gruelling days at *Teen Vogue*, I was ready to switch gears into the arty world of *Interview*. Not only was the magazine known for keeping its finger on the pop-culture pulse, but more importantly for me, the magazine was also started by the absolute love of my life — artist Andy Warhol. Working there would be like walking in his footsteps.

The closet would be the closest I'd ever get to the likes of designer Halston, model Edie Sedgwick or the singer Nico, never mind that the office has changed location at least twice since Warhol's heyday and that Halston, Sedgwick and Nico have long since bit the dust.

The atmosphere at *Interview* proved to be more relaxed than *Teen Vogue*, though no less fascinating. Instead of editors barking orders, this time it was fellow interns! While out of the boss' earshot, my intern counterpart whispered sweet nothings such as "I just want to



Randi Bergman, the intern, was a cheap commodity.

let you know, if anyone's going on a photo shoot, it will be me." Much to his chagrin and to my surprise, I was asked to help on the set on my second day at the magazine.

One sample-ridden day in the *Teen Vogue* closet, the boss called all the interns into his office for a meeting. It turned out that the actress Sarah Jessica Parker was coming to our office! Oh. My. God. My legs were jelly.

Scenes for the *Sex and the City* movie that included Parker's character, Carrie, were to be filmed at *Teen Vogue*. The very reason I moved to New York was going to be standing in front of me within a matter of hours! What to wear!

The next day, the office had been transformed into a movie set. Parker was in the building. May I repeat: Oh. My. God. After filming was through, I sneakily followed SJP into the bathroom. To say what? I had no idea. As I ogled her, dumbfounded at how truly beautiful she was, she smiled and made pleasanties. My only reply was "ummmmm."

Continued on page 45

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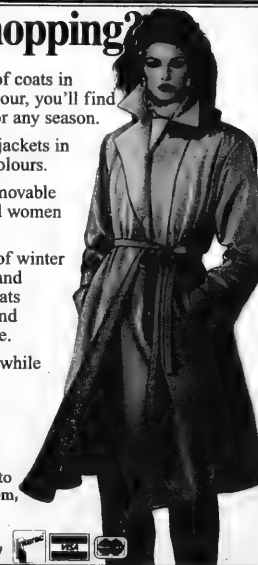
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Spring Fashion

Picking clothes for Chloë

Continued from page 40

As my internships were coming to a close, I was hooked up with the fashion department at *Page Six Magazine*, the new magazine offshoot of the *New York Post* column, to pick clothes for a photo shoot with indie actress and fashion icon Chloë Sevigny. A million girls would kill for my job, right? A million Americans may be. A week or so into the job, and thankfully after the photo shoot, I was called into the human resources department and scolded for not having the right visa to be working there. Not only would they not help me with getting a new visa, but I was also out of the magazine, for good.

After a few weeks of panicking, I was miraculously hired by *Fashion Week Daily*, the cult magazine read by fashion insiders across the globe, to report during Fashion Week. Since my visa was problematic, they agreed to pay me per day. It was my job to talk to every designer, model and celebrity who crossed my path.

My first assignment with the *Daily* was to attend a private dinner given by Banks Fifth Avenue in honour of Michael Kors' spring collection. Hard life, right? Arriving at the dinner, however, was a different story. I stood

paralyzed at the door, imagining a group of editors inside, forks in hand, glaring at whoever had the nerve to interrupt their dinner. My ears were ringing: "A million girls would kill for your job!" More like, a million girls would kill themselves if they had your job.

After the initial freak out, I had no choice but to quite literally eat, breathe and live fashion. It was lunch with fashion critic Steven Cojocar, then off to the Marc Jacobs and Louis Vuitton party (oozing with actress Anne Hathaway, model Heidi Klum, actor Josh Hartnett and actress Ellen Pompeo, just to name a few). And as for my obsession with the ghost of Halston past? I got to sit front row at the label's relaunch... across from Liza Minnelli. At night, I shuffled between parties for fashion designer Matthew Williamson, model Agyness Dean, Sevigny and the list goes on. Afterward, I'd limp home, gift bags bursting, and drag my tired body to the computer and write what would then be put into print for the next day's magazine.

As my stint during Fashion Week has long since passed, this front rower is back at square one, Canadian passport hidden in her back pocket.

JOY AFTER RETAIL:

The story of Toronto's Cherry fashion dynasty turns a new page. Joy Cherry, last in a long line of Cherry-branded fashion boutiques, will be closing after nearly 40 years of dressing Toronto's best-dressed women. For decades, the fashion-forward have turned to Joy for their seasonal infusion of Valentino, Lagerfeld or Givenchy – among the many greats whom Joy has been privileged to know – or for firsts such as the Canadian launch of Vera Wang or Yumi Katsura bridal creations.

The petite Joy Cherry is part of a fashion dynasty of epic proportions. Four generations of her family have been transposing fashion from the runways of Paris or Milan to the wardrobes of Toronto. Joy is the daughter of Esther Cherry and sister of Alan Cherry and Linda Cherry, each a banner name in high-fashion retailing. She is also mother of Barry and Deena Weinberg, the names behind Toronto's Max Mara and Marina Rinaldi boutiques.

In recognition of Joy's place amongst Canada's fashion royalty, she was the only Canadian retailer honoured with a presentation to HRH Diana on the Princess of Wales' trade mission to New York.

As tireless on behalf of charitable causes as in the art of business building, Joy has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars in support of organizations such as the Art Gallery of Ontario, Montcrest School and Rosalee Hall. She and her late husband were the major donors behind the creation of the Dr. Fred Weinberg and Joy Cherry Weinberg Judaica Collection at the Royal Ontario Museum.

Today, Joy Cherry is preparing to say goodbye to retailing. Yet, the fashion world still fascinates her, as it always has – and will continue to be part of her life. The closing of her store, therefore, is not the end of the story, but the beginning of the next chapter. We invite you to stay tuned ...



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New book on Richler published this spring

By NORMAN RAVVIN
Special to The CJN

For a time after his death, Mordecai Richler's profile seemed to recede. The recent CBC production of his mid-career novel, *St. Urbain's Horseman*, did little to affect this development, as it garnered largely negative reviews. But this trend may change with the publication of this spring of Reinhold Kramer's *Mordecai Richler: Leaving St. Urbain*, the first major effort to take on the Richler canon and his personal and political impact on Canadian culture since the 2003 publication of Joel Yanofsky's *Mordecai & Me: An Appreciation of a Kind*. And there is more to follow, as novelist Charles Foran is at work on what might be called the



Norman Ravvin

"authorized" biography.

The book to read alongside these contemporary takes on the writer's legacy is Richler's 1955 novel, *Son of a Smaller Hero*. Published first in England, it did not receive a Canadian reprint for more than a decade, when McClelland & Stewart brought it out with an introduction by the B.C.-based critic and editor George Woodcock, who recognized Richler as one of the key young Canadian writers of his time. Woodcock began his introduction by quoting from the novel's opening paragraphs, in which Richler provocatively depicts what he calls the Montreal Jewish "ghetto." The streets he grew up on, Richler tells us, are guarded by "atavism," the attendance to ancient and outmoded custom.

This was the beginning of the Canadian Jewish love-

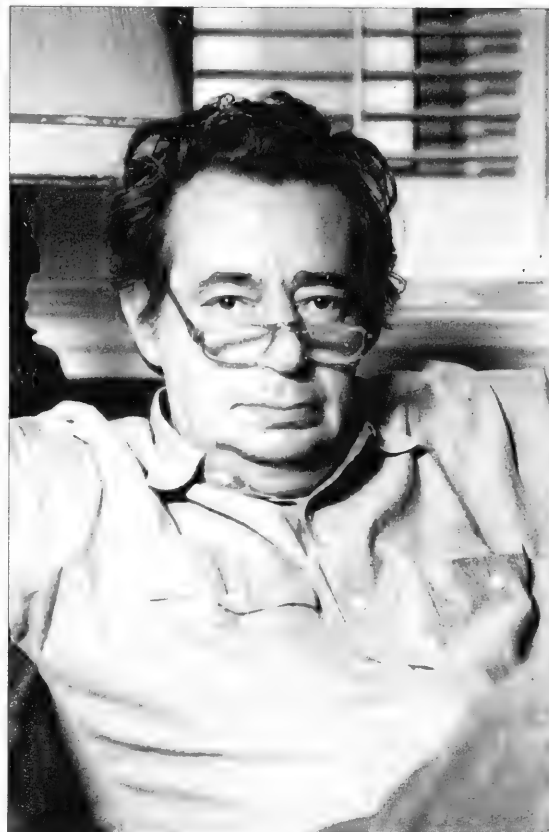
hate relationship with Richler, but Woodcock correctly saw the novel as prescient of changes in both Canadian society and literature. The young man's view of a minority upbringing and the vistas provided by assimilation, had, in Woodcock's view, become the pre-eminent Canadian story.

Son of a Smaller Hero is an edgier book than *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*, which appeared in 1959. It covers some of the same material and is, in some ways, a tryout for the later breakthrough novel. It is more obviously an autobiographical fiction. The main character, Noah Adler, has a mother and father who mirror Richler's own, as well as a maternal grandfather who closely resembles Richler's grandfather, Yudel Rosenberg, a Polish-born rabbi who came to Montreal. The fictional rabbi is referred to as a Chassid and "poet,"

while the actual grandfather is undergoing a rather quirky renaissance in Jewish studies circles, as his writings about the Golem and Kabbalah receive renewed attention.

Son of a Smaller Hero is a young man's book, and it has

the rough edges to prove it. Its portentous epigraph from Dostoyevsky signals

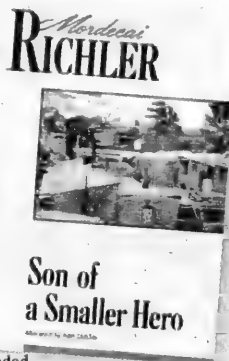


Mordecai Richler

the author's postwar existential ideals, but Noah, the Richler alter ego, is not a true hard-boiled Hemingwayesque quester: no matter how much his maker would wish him to be. Noah abandons his St. Urbain Street family, but spends a good deal of the novel mooning about nearby, mourning his loss of male intimacy, bathroom humour and corner-store camaraderie. He even stands by his mother when she enacts what is obviously a high anxiety attack dramatized as a true collapse. A dalliance with a non-Jewish woman is a disaster from the moment it starts.

Son of a Smaller Hero captures Montreal in the 1950s. It alights again and again on St. Catherine Street, which was clearly a different sort of strip after the war than it is today. Richler would have his reader take it to be the city's Times Square, where streetcars and neon lend the pavement a cinematic sheen. The early '50s, too, was the time of an influx of Holocaust survivors to Montreal, and Richler is fierce in his satire of the established community's discomfort with Park Avenue being overtaken by what his characters refer to as greenhorns. Here we have one of Richler's strong suits: his willingness to say things out loud that others only whispered to themselves. With *Son of a Smaller Hero*, Richler became a key Canadian voice, as well as a writer ready to make enemies.

Norman Ravvin is chair of Concordia University's Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies. His essays on Canadian Jewish literature, including Mordecai Richler, are collected in *A House of Words: Jewish Writing, Identity and Memory*.



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Toronto singer keeps her passion for music alive

By JOSEPH SERGE
Arts Editor

It's been about 10 years in the making and she's had lots of ups and downs since but Ofir has finally released her self-produced CD *The Passion Show*.

The eight songs on *The Passion Show* are full of vibrant energy and dance rhythms that would be at home in the hottest dance clubs in Europe.

Ofir (Ronit Ofir Engel) combines Eurobeat with world music and American pop to create her own unique style, and her vocal range is truly beautiful and impressive. She also throws in some Spanish flavour on *Never Call Me Babe*, and on *It's Awesome* she mixes Chinese styles with a dance beat.

It's hard to find a basis of comparison but songs like *Task of Mind* and *Outrageous* bring Madonna's *Ray of Light* and Geri Halliwell's *It's Raining Men* to mind.

"People definitely keep saying Madonna," the Nahariya-born singer/songwriter says of her sound. "And even Celine Dion gets mentioned. When people tell me I can write for Celine Dion that makes me feel, 'Wow! That's great.'"

Ofir spent some time in New York (where she had a role in the pilot for TV's *Sex in the City*) before moving to Toronto in 2004.



Ofir combines Eurobeat with world music and pop.

While her music is pop/dance oriented she doesn't feel her lyrics are as throw-away as many pop songs. "I have a unique style. My words are not cheap. They're very calculated."

The song *Fire Escape*, for instance, was written after 9/11 when she was worried about the fate of a firefighter friend of hers. "I tried to imagine what it's like to be the wife of a husband there and you don't know if he survived."

Ofir has won poetry competitions in the past and last year released a spoken-word CD of her poetry *Poetry of the Brilliant Silence*.

She has also won several song-writing awards. An earlier version of the title track she recorded in 2004 placed in the Top 5 of VH-1's Pop Song of the Year Contest.

Some of the songs on *The Passion Show* were written 10 years ago and others are more recent. Despite all the promises and accolades she's had, getting this album out has been an

arduous journey.

Shortly after coming to Toronto she was seduced by a shady producer who offered to record and distribute her album on

his label. She was told she had to put \$35,000 up front, of which she came up with \$17,000.

Long story short, that deal fell through and she never got her money back.

Undaunted, Ofir finally decided to do it all herself and set up her own record label Passion Show Records.

While she admits it's been tough, it has been rewarding. "I sold 1,500 CDs on my own. That's very good for a small label. I'm working towards getting a good manager now and a booking agent to make this bigger."

Ofir has had some radio exposure in the United States and *Toronto Exclusive* magazine nominated the song *Task of Mind* for best dance song for 2007.

Ofir also does lots of charitable work. After the tsunami in Southeast Asia, she organized a toy drive for hospitalized children. In 2005 she recorded *Natalee*, a song for Natalee Ann Holloway who disappeared in Aruba.

You can hear and purchase her songs on her website www.thepassionshow.com and her Myspace page www.myspace.com/goldced. Try these: *Task of Mind*, *It's Awesome*, *Outrageous* and *She Breaks Windows*.

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Arts & Travel



Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

OXFORD ECONOMIST WINS \$15,000 LIONEL GELBER PRIZE FOR THE BOTTOM BILLION

Oxford University economist **Paul Collier** has won the 2008 Lionel Gelber Prize for his book *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It* (Oxford University Press).

Judith Gelber, chair of the prize board and niece of the late Canadian diplomat **Lionel Gelber**, announced the winner recently in Toronto. The Lionel Gelber Foundation, in partnership with the University of Toronto's Munk Centre for International Studies and Foreign Policy magazine, presents the award annually to the author of the world's best book on international affairs.

Collier is to receive the award on April 1 at the Munk Centre, where he will deliver the Lionel Gelber Lecture. The event begins at 6 p.m. People wishing to attend may register online at www.utoronto.ca/mcis/gelber.

Jury chair **Barbara McDougall**, Canada's former Secretary of State for External Affairs, said *The Bottom Billion* "provides a penetrating reassessment of why vast populations remain trapped in poverty, despite endless

debate over foreign-aid policy among wealthy countries and institutions."

In *The Bottom Billion*, Collier sees 980 million people around the globe living in "trapped countries clearly heading towards a black hole." Many are in Africa, but there are large pockets of severe poverty in Bolivia, Cambodia, East Timor, Haiti, Laos, North Korea, Myanmar, Yemen and elsewhere.

Collier asserts that the challenge of lifting them out of poverty is akin to rebuilding Europe after World War II, requiring not only immediate aid but also trade and military security. The sad fact of the new millennium, Collier writes, is that even as rich countries get richer, the bottom billion are sinking into intractable poverty that will have disastrous consequences for future generations unless practical – and sometimes controversial – policies and measures are enacted.

Names in the News: American playwright **Marv Chernoff** flew from balmy Los Angeles to Toronto a few weeks ago to see Teatron Jewish Theatre Company's production of his play *Chaim's Love Song* at the Leah Posluns Theatre. Arriving in the middle of a snowstorm, he initially regretted making the

trip. Then he saw Teatron's production of his play and was thrilled.

"I expected a good production. My expectations were way too low," he wrote to director **Ari Weisberg**. "From start to finish, it was done naturally. The actors disappeared and became the characters they played. Each plot change came logically, properly motivated. The laughs were there. The dramatic theme even more so. The audience was movingly affected."

Chernoff said he'd been "mostly satisfied" with the many previous productions of the play he'd seen, but Teatron's seemed to surpass them all. "Never have I felt the script handled so lovingly, carefully and naturally," he wrote. "The acting, the direction, the work of the crew were all integrated, warm and first-rate." Kudos to Weisberg and cast.

Teatron has just announced that *A Glimpse of the Light* by **Ben Finn** and *The Dybbuk* by **S. Anski** will be part of its upcoming season. Tickets are on sale now. For more information, visit www.teatrontheatre.com or phone 416-781-5527.

Stellar Lineup: Stars on Spadina, a musical gala celebrating the heart and soul of the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, features **Daniel Barnes**, **Andrew Craig**, **Ron Davis**, **Mary Lou Fallis**, **Jacques Israelievitch**, **Amanda Martinez**, **Adrianne Pieczonka**, **Jackie Richardson**, **Theresa Tova**, **Bora Kim**, **Laura Tucker** and **Bruce Dow** from Stratford.

Produced and hosted by **Richard Ouzounian**, the show is a tribute to the significant contribution the MNjcc has made to the cultural evolution of downtown Toronto, with proceeds going towards arts and culture programming. \$180 per ticket includes dessert reception. Miles Nadal JCC, Tuesday, April 15, 7:30 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 0

Arts in Brief



Amanda Martinez

• **The Varsity Jews**, the University of Toronto's Jewish a cappella choir, performs their fourth annual charity concert, Shul of

Rock, to benefit Latet – Israeli Humanitarian Aid. Tickets are \$8 to \$72, available in advance or at the door. Holy Blossom Temple, 1950 Bathurst St. Sunday, March 30, 7:30 p.m. 416-913-2424, www.varsityjews.com.
• The Great Jewish Composers music lecture series continues at the Miles Nadal JCC with **Jordan Klapman** addressing the topic, "Rock 'n' Roll Jews: The Brill Building." \$9 admission with bagels and coffee. Sunday, March 30, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 0

• Toronto Jewish Film Society is screening two documentaries – *Sender's List* and *Life in a Jar* – as a 30th anniversary bonus film event. General admission rush seats (\$10) are available at the door, 7:15 p.m.

the event is free for TJFS members who reserve in advance. MNjcc, Monday, March 31, 7:30 p.m. esthera@mnjcc.org, 416-924-6211, ext. 606

• Standup comedian **Alex Kojfman** performs the third instalment of *The Colours of Comedy*, a "diversity" comedy show that may be quite "racy" (caveat emptor). Tranzac Club, 292 Brunswick Ave. \$12. Saturday, March 29, 8 and 10:30 p.m. www.coloursofcomedy.com

• **Joseph Kertes**, founder and dean of Humber College's School of Writers, reads from his new novel *Gratitude*, about the Jewish-Hungarian Holocaust experience at the end of World War II. He shares the podium with **Daphne Marlatt**, reading from *The Given*, and **Manil Shuri**, reading from *The Age of Shiva*. International Readings at Harbourfront, Wednesday, March 26, 7:30 p.m. www.readings.org

At the Galleries

• **Alief-Bet**, an exhibition of new works by **Myriam Nafte**, is on view in the Jacobs Lounge, Miles Nadal JCC. An opening reception with music and refreshments, and the artist in attendance, is set for Sunday, March 30, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. A portion of proceeds of sales goes toward the Downtown Jewish Community School. Until April 20.

• Those who missed *The Common Thread*, the colourful exhibit on Toronto's garment industry that originated at Beth Tzedec's Helen and Reuben Dennis Museum several years ago have another chance to see it. Museum curator **Dorion Liebgott** has remounted the exhibit for viewing at the Market Gallery above the St. Lawrence Market on Front Street. Until June 15.

• Toronto artist **Ingrid Kay**, who has exhibited at the Toronto Art Expo for several years is the focus of the first solo show at Petrof Gallery's new south location on Dundas Street across from the AGO. An opening reception is scheduled for April 3, and the show remains on view until April 30.

• MNjcc's 55+ Forward For Seniors offers museum adventure that features a guided tour of a new exhibit at the Gardiner Museum. \$9 Wednesday, April 2, 1:45 p.m. Please RSVP by March 31 to phyllisfien@mnjcc.org or 416-924 6211, ext. 155.

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Arts & Travel

Survivor's sculptures exhibited at Hamilton art gallery

By ABIGAIL CUKIER
Special to the CJN

HAMILTON — Upon meeting Ora Markstein — who is big as a minute and had a bubbly-like concern for a cold visitor on a snowy day — I could not grasp the commanding talent behind that sweet smile.

Markstein, 83, is an accomplished sculptor. Her current show, "Atelier: Ora Markstein," is on exhibit at the Art Gallery of Hamilton until April 27.

Carved by hand, her sculptures are formed from blocks of soapstone, marble and alabaster in every imaginable colour.

Born and raised in an Orthodox Jewish family in a town near Budapest, Markstein studied drawing and painting. When she was 15, the Holocaust began. She had met her fiancé, Francis, weeks before the men were taken away for slave labour.

Markstein, her sister and her parents, as well as her fiancé, survived the war. But at least 35 other relatives, uncles, aunts and cousins, died.

A survivor of Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen, Markstein returned to Hungary and reunited with Francis on Sept. 15, 1945. They were married 10 days later.

"It was the poorest wedding I've ever attended. And it was mine," Markstein says.

The town's synagogue was destroyed and the Jewish community was virtually wiped out. The wedding took place in an old age home, with cake and wine and a challah baked by Markstein's mother.

"Who cared at that time. It did not bother anyone," Markstein says. "What bothered us was that there were no Jews."

In 1946, the Marksteins travelled in an illegal transport organized by the Jewish Agency to a UN-sponsored refugee camp in Germany, where Markstein gave birth to their son, Igor.

A year later, the Marksteins went to France and then back to Hungary, which they left for Israel in 1949.

"We lived in utter poverty. We had no electricity for six years," Markstein says.

Igor demonstrated musical talent and began to study violin with a master teacher.

"I picked the violin because my sister played the violin. She saved herself and me by playing in the Auschwitz orchestra, which was ordered by the Nazis," Markstein says.

She also found a teacher and



Ora Markstein's sculptures are formed from soapstone. Her exhibit runs at the Art Gallery of Hamilton until April 27. [Mike Lalich photo]

learned how to sculpt in clay and plaster.

Igor moved to Illinois in the early 1970s, and Markstein and her husband went to Montreal in 1974.

"I felt I needed some peaceful years. I started to carve stone here. I couldn't have done it anywhere else," she says.

In Montreal, Markstein received a scholarship to the Saidye Bronfman Centre. Her instructor saw her talent immediately. "You don't need me. Just work," he told her.

Markstein's husband was also an artist. He wrote poetry and translated classic works into English, French, German, Hungarian, Hebrew, Italian and Spanish. He found employment in as a teacher at Hamilton's Beth Jacob Synagogue's afternoon school, and the couple moved to the city in 1975.

Markstein soon had an exhibit at Hamilton's Jewish Community Centre. Many other exhibits followed, including two one-person shows in the 1980s at the McMaster Hospital gallery.

Her son, Igor, became a professional musician, even though Markstein would rather that he had chosen a more practical profession. Igor and his wife, both successful musicians, live in Florida.

In 1991, Markstein's husband died, and she did not sculpt for two years. She eventually realized she couldn't live without it.

"I had to. There was no use to punish myself. It did not bring back my husband," she says.

In 2006, Sara Knelman, the Art Gallery of Hamilton's curator of contemporary art, visited Markstein's studio.

According to literature accompanying Markstein's current show, her work often describes the pain of death and loss. "More often, though, she counters with explorations of love and spiritual renewal," it states.

The works explore her expression of three themes: love, loss and renewal.

"I think she is an exceptional sculptor. Regardless of her biography, she is exceptional," Knelman says.

"She has a beautiful classical style, which sometimes moves into a more abstract, almost deco style of sculpture. She finds life in these slabs and creates an emotional tension in the works and a kind of purity that comes through."

Markstein can't wait for spring, so she can return to her outdoor studio.

"It's like an obsession. You have a drive, you feel you have to do it. You just have to," she stresses. "It's a dusty dirty job. It's physically demanding. But what I get out of it gives me so much pleasure. I forget about the dust, the dirt and everything else."

Markstein's home is filled with sculptures, as well as her own drawings and paintings.

She says that as long as you are in good health, age should not slow you down. "I am just as interested in everything as I was 50 years ago. I am not going to sit down and stop."

"Life is hard. Some are harder than others. Our background is not normal, but life is still beautiful."

For more information about Ora Markstein's exhibit, contact the Art Gallery of Hamilton at 905-527-6610 or visit the gallery's website at www.artgalleryofhamilton.com.

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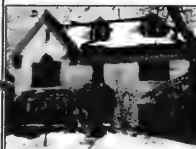


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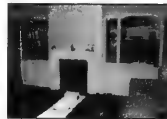
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Coast to Coast

Jailhouse violence threatens Itzhayek

BY DAVID LAZARUS

Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Saul Itzhayek's sister and an interfaith group of clergy issued a desperate appeal to Prime Minister Stephen Harper last week to increase Ottawa's advocacy on behalf of the Montreal businessman after violence erupted in the Indian jail where he's been held for the past 10 months.

They made the plea at a March 20 press conference at Montreal's Imani Family and Full Gospel Church, six days after rival gang warfare broke out in Motihari Prison and five days prior to Itzhayek's latest appeal in the local district court — scheduled for March 25 — in an effort to overturn his conviction for entering India from Nepal with an expired visa.

That motion was originally slated to be heard on March 17, the same day another prisoner was killed by two bombs smuggled into the prison, which has also been the site of riots and shooting deaths. Itzhayek, 42, was arrested last May for crossing into India from Nepal with a lapsed visa, despite ostensible assurances of safe passage.

"He's terrified," his sister, Sylvia Itzhayek, told *The CJN*. "He is in a cell adjacent to a man who might be the next victim. My brother refuses to come out of his cell."

"He called me five minutes after the bombing and said, 'I'm really, really afraid,'" she said.

"Now he's in a self-imposed lock-down."

The letter to Harper said the signatories — Rev. Daryl Gray, Father John Walsh, and rabbis Reuven Bulka, Reuben Pouppou, Michael Whitman, and Chaim Steinmetz — were "frightened" for Itzhayek's life, and it denounced the "blasé attitude" of Indian authorities. It called on the Indian government, "in the name of justice and security," to release Itzhayek immediately and allow him to return home.

It said Canada should follow up on its petitioning of India to pardon Itzhayek and "escalate and pursue" other remedies, such as deportation, a suspended sentence, and transfer to a Canadian prison.

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Aspirals girls excel at rhythmic gymnastics meet

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

In one of the first competitions of the season, Jewish athletes from the Aspirals Rhythmic Gymnastics Club captured four of the club's six medals and took the first step toward the provincial championships in early June.

Performing in the 2008 Aspirals Valentine Classic, seven-year-old rookie Sasha Garber finished second overall in level 1B, in which she demonstrated her abilities with rope and in a free routine. (The free routine is the execution of rhythmic body movements without the use of one of the sports' hand apparatus — rope, hoops, balls, clubs and ribbon.)

Katerina Shimansky, age nine, came second all round in level 3A, working with hoops and in a free routine.

Ilana Enoukov and Ella Gutman, both 14, finished second and third, respectively, in level 5A, working with rope, ribbon and in a free routine.

Ayelet Reiss, 13, finished ninth overall in level 4A, working with a ball and performing a free routine.

The Valentine Classic, which was held at Bur Oak Secondary School in Markham, is an annual event hosted by

the Aspirals. This year, it attracted 120 athletes from nine clubs in southern Ontario, including London, Burlington, Newmarket and Markham.

Reiss' accomplishment was noteworthy in that she is Orthodox and cannot compete on Shabbat, putting her at a disadvantage to other girls. "She's a really, really dedicated girl," said Sima Studin, president of the Aspirals club.

Dedication and hard work are necessary qualities for all top performers in the sport, she continued.

To excel in rhythmic gymnastics, athletes must possess "high flexibility, technical skills and good eye-hand coordination." Equally important is that performers "must be driven" and should possess a good measure of aggressiveness, Studin said.

"You have to be able to present yourself in front of judges," she said. "When your name is called and even before you step onto the carpet, you're competing, by the way you hold your head. Even before the music starts, you should look like a winner, and you should fight like a winner."

Top athletes combine all these characteristics while manipulating one or two apparatuses. The sport combines elements of dance and acrobatics and requires good balance

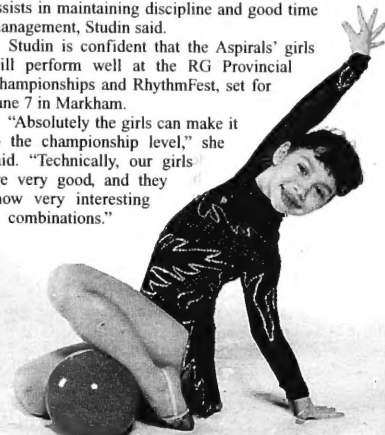
and presentation. Competitors are judged for leaps, balances, pivots, flexibility, apparatus handling and artistic effect.

About 25 per cent of the Aspirals club — which holds some of its lessons at the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre — consists of Jewish girls, Studin said. A good number are children of immigrants from eastern Europe.

Most enjoy the sport as a recreational activity, but others are more competitive. Many parents like the atmosphere at the club, which keeps the girls busy, provides a sense of accomplishment, creates lasting friendships and assists in maintaining discipline and good time management, Studin said.

Studin is confident that the Aspirals' girls will perform well at the RG Provincial Championships and RhythmFest, set for June 7 in Markham.

"Absolutely the girls can make it to the championship level," she said. "Technically, our girls are very good, and they show very interesting combinations."



Katerina Shimansky

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Vienna sports club re-opens after 70 years

JTA

VIENNA — A Jewish sports club confiscated by the Nazis 70 years ago has reopened in Vienna.

Hakoah reopened recently in Prater Park on the site of its former headquarters.

The Karl Haber Sport and Leisure Centre features a jogging track, tennis

courts, swimming pool, solarium, fitness room, cafe, restaurant and child-care facilities. Karl Haber was a Hakoah member who sought to have the club's property returned to the Jewish community after World War II.

The city of Vienna and the Austrian government covered the \$11.5-million (US) cost of the new building. The reopening

took place on the eve of the 70th anniversary of the Anschluss, Nazi Germany's annexation of Austria, which was mostly welcomed by Austrians.

Some 180,000 Jews lived in Vienna before World War II, when Hakoah was the city's biggest sports club. Approximately 10,000 Jews, many from central Asia, now live in the Austrian capital.

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The creative spirit in seniors

By MICHAEL GORDON

The scene opened with old faces, withered and lined. Then the scene shifted to rural Alabama, and multi-coloured quilts filled the screen as they were hung on rope lines. These were the creations of Arlonzia Pettway, now 84, along with her friends and neighbours – a group of quilt makers from Gee's Bend, Ala.

It was at the end of the first full day of the annual conference of the Canadian Association on Gerontology, held this year in Calgary. The documentary *Do Not Go Gently* (the title comes from a poem by Welsh poet Dylan Thomas), produced by Melissa Godoy and her mother Eileen Littig and directed by Godoy, was being premiered to those at the conference.

Moving effortlessly from narration by quilt-maker Pettway, who started to make her creations when she was a small child in Alabama, to the story of Frederick Franklin, a 90-year-old ballet instructor whose illustrious career in classical ballet spanned decades, to comments on the world of music by Leo Ornstein, a 109-year-old classical pianist whose musical journey spanned continents and almost a century of playing, the film extols the creative forces that exist in all of us.

The segments highlighting the featured "stars" of the film are interspersed with scenes showing creative programs in long-term care facilities and senior centres where poetry, dance, music and art are produced by and integrated into the lives of individuals in the later years of life, many of whom suffer from complex medical conditions, including cognitive impairment.

The film was narrated by Dr. Gene Cohen, co-founder of the Creativity Discovery Corps, whose mission is to identify and preserve the creative accomplishments of under-recognized talented older adults. He is the first director of the Center on Aging, Health & Humanities at George Washington University, and a

renowned scholar and researcher in the field of aging whose most recent focus has been on the creative spirit in seniors. His narration helped focus not just on the accomplishments of the unusually creative "stars" of the film, but on the marvellous and often untapped potential of seniors at all stages of life and in all living situations.

The message of the film was moving and uplifting. For those involved in eldercare, the plight of many in institutional settings is often a major challenge and cause for concern. Godoy has said that one of her motivations for producing the film was her experience with another project that took her to nursing homes where she observed the severely limited interactions of the residents and the lack of emotional, verbal or creative stimulation or programs.

In organizations and jurisdictions that recognize the intrinsic desire of seniors, including those with severe disabilities, for music, dance, art and words, and their responsiveness to these stimuli, programs are developed to seek out and promote the creative spirit often locked up in frail elderly individuals.

Over the years, I have observed and personally experienced remarkable expressions of talent by individuals and groups who have been given the opportunity and the means to express themselves. I have seen rhythm groups of people with substantial cognitive impairment playing drums and tambourines and xylophones create unadulterated joyous and compelling beat-filled music. Choirs made up of seniors of all ages entertain others. I have had patients undertake memoirs in their late years, in their quest to preserve their past and leave a legacy for their families.

The movie *Do Not Go Gently* is an eloquent reminder of the power of artistic creativity, which can and should be tapped in the elders we care for as family members and professionals, so that their talents can enrich their lives, the lives of others and the world.



The Senior Side of Life

Dr. Michael Gordon is medical program director of palliative care at Baycrest and co-author with Bart Mindszenty of *Parenting Your Parents* (Dundurn Press).

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

Shabbos. The Day of Rest. What then would make more sense than the Shabbos nap?

According to the pundits at the Boston University's Center for Psychological Rehabilitation, a midday nap is a great remedy for a bad night's sleep. Studies at the Henry Ford Hospital's Sleep Disorders and Research Center in Detroit revealed that a two- or four-hour nap before being up all night helped individuals stay alert the following day. Research published in the Archives of Internal Medicine recently linked obesity to a lack of sleep; the less people sleep, the heavier they tend to be. Therefore, the Shabbos nap makes scientific sense.

There are variations on the Shabbos nap, which takes place Saturday afternoon. It changes depending on what time Shabbos starts and finishes, and what your responsibilities within the family are. As an example, if Shabbos starts at 4:30 p.m., it concludes at

about 5:30 p.m. There is then little time to crawl into bed and get some rest because one needs to return to shul for the afternoon services shortly after lunch is over. The Shabbos nap will be short, and likely on the couch.

On the other hand, if Shabbos starts at 7 p.m. or later, there will be plenty of time to grab a nap. The napper might then likely climb upstairs and formally go to sleep in bed.

It is not uncommon in a household for the father and mother to split a Shabbos nap, especially if the children in the house are babies or toddlers. If Shabbos starts early, a good husband will tiredly suggest to his exhausted wife she finds some time to *shluf* (Yiddish for "sleep"). A good wife will respond this is unfair, but upon coaxing will give in and ultimately settle into their comfy bed, under their thick duvet, exhale and grab the moment and the gift she has received.



URBAN WRITER

DRUNKEN CHICKEN

- 2 1/2 lbs. drumsticks & thighs, remove skin and fat
- 2 tsp olive oil
- 1 head garlic
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 bay leaves
- Pinch dried or fresh thyme (optional)
- 1 onion, quartered and sliced
- 1 c dry white wine
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tsp paprika

Heat oil in a heavy pot over medium heat; brown the chicken pieces very slowly (approx. 10-15 min.). After turning chicken pieces, add onion and garlic to brown. Sprinkle with paprika. Add garlic, wine, salt, pepper, bay leaves, and thyme to the pot. Bring to a boil, then cover and simmer. Cook until chicken is very tender, 45-75 min. Remove bay leaves before serving.

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Camp can bring Torah to life

Epi on Education

While most of my columns deal with formal education – schooling – the work I do deals with the informal sphere as well.

Traditionally, one thinks of schools as an educational base for literacy and informal activities such as youth groups, camps, and Israel tours as places to nurture Jewish identity. But there are two flaws with that premise.

First, Jewish education, or talmud Torah has always had two functions: it is instruction for the future, but also a meaningful mitzvah in its own right. Studying a sacred text involves learning lessons to apply in one's life and, in itself, should be a significant spiritual moment. Experiencing the joy



Seymour Epstein

of Shabbat in a summer camp is, many times, a memory for life, but it can also translate into bringing more Shabbat into one's future life.

Second, the old walls separating formal from informal and literacy from identity are crumbling. Camps always taught swimming. Now, some teach Hebrew poetry. Schools run Shabbatonim so that some of the lessons taught in class can be applied to real life over a 25-hour period.

With that understanding, it's clear why so much effort is currently going into the promotion of high-quality Jewish camping. Camp has the potential to mix the forms of education in the most imaginative ways. One can be playing baseball and learning Jewish values at the same time. The forests and

lakes of Ontario have messages in them that are straight out of our talmudic tradition. The 24/7 aspect of summer camp makes the educational experience a life-connected one, and not as artificial as the classroom can become.

But there is one other quality of camping that makes it unique among our educational options. Unlike school, camp is all about creating your own life away from home. Officially, you get to do things you can't do at home – and off the record, sometimes you get to do things you dare not do at home. In that respect, it's a creative and imaginative experience.

If an inspired educator can show children how to be creative and imaginative Jewishly, the kids are being trained to not only continue Jewish life, but to change it for the better. As my readers well know, I value Jewish creativity much more than Jewish continuity.

Epi (Seymour Epstein) is the vice-president of Jewish Education at UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

The shabbos nap

Let's go back to where the Shabbos nap takes place. If you were to enter a home of a family that celebrates Shabbos, you will witness much debating, laughing and discussion. This normally begins in the foyer, then moves into the living room or den, and ultimately makes its way to the dining room table. Once the *Kiddush* and *Hamotzi* have been said, it is time for lunch, which often includes a hearty slow cooker full of cholent. According to Wikipedia.com, cholent is a food of Ashkenazi Jews, a type of stew (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashkenazi_Jews) that has simmered (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simmering>) over a very low flame or inside a slow oven for up to 24 hours before being served. It is usually served hot as the main course of the Shabbos lunch meal. A cholent can include potatoes, barley, beans, carrots, garlic cloves, mushrooms, fried onions and brisket. Sephardim have their own form of cholent.

This heavy and intense Shabbos afternoon dish will make even a type A personality tired. After lunch, those sitting around the table will make their way over to the couch or a large armchair and quickly doze off. Interestingly, many of the people I have known over the years who take a Shabbos nap prefer to do so on the sofa. This is likely because the couch is in greatest proximity to the table and allows the Shabbos napper to continue schmoozing with his family and friends while he/she falls asleep.

Studies show most of us are sleep deprived, slaves to schedules dotted with meetings, family responsibilities and a frequent need to extend the day so as to maximize its potential.

A Shabbos nap on the Day of Rest therefore makes a lot of sense. If you are a novice to this Jewish ritual, ask around to determine the best way and place to take a Shabbos nap. It is simple once mastered and marvellous for the digestive system, longevity and the soul.

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